

DOMINICANS*Provincial
Office**Order of Preachers***PROVINCE OF ST. ALBERT THE GREAT**1909 South Ashland Avenue
Chicago, Illinois 60608-2994

January 21, 2003

Dear [REDACTED]

Our Provincial, Father Edward M. Ruane, O.P., is presently out of the office for a couple of weeks thus I am responding to your letter regarding Patrick Baikauskas.

Before commenting on the article itself, I want to be clear as to our expectation of future priests in our Order. Our seminarians are given very careful instruction on the meaning of celibate chastity required of a Roman Catholic Priest and Religious. Indeed, they are expected to live a completely celibate life for at least two years before entering our formation program. After that they are given psychological testing to help determine their ability and commitment to live celibately.

Given the times we live in, as well as the fact that some men are entering at an older age, they may not have lived a celibate life before entering. However, they must have demonstrated a genuine conversion of grace, understanding the full, integral requirements of a life of celibacy, and a commitment to live in this manner without any reservations. This is the expectation and requirements of the Church and of us. We do not accept anyone into our seminary who is sexually active, nor do we tolerate any ambiguity on the meaning of celibate chastity, nor do we allow anyone to push either a homosexual and/or heterosexual agenda. I want to assure you that we are very serious about a thorough discernment when someone seeks our way of life. We do not want anyone to live our life as a hypocrite or a liar. This would run counter to our vocation as preachers of God's truth.

I fully understand your dismay, and that of many other Catholic people, upon reading the article in the *Illinois Times* highlighting the life of Patrick Baikauskas. I share that dismay. It was imprudent at best given these times in which the Church's credibility concerning celibacy is being called into question. This has been pursued with Bro. Patrick by those responsible for his formation. Patrick has assured us that he presented this as a story of genuine conversion and was surprised by the emphasis the reporter took:

RE: Patrick Baikauskas, O.P.

I hope this letter offers some satisfaction to you. Please keep me, our seminarians and future priests in your prayers.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "David F. Wright, O.P.". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Very Rev. David F. Wright, O.P.
Socius to the Prior Provincial

Cc: Archbishop Gabriel Montalvo, Apostolic Nuncio
Francis Cardinal George, Archbishop of Chicago
Archbishop Justin Rigali, Archbishop of St. Louis
Bro. Patrick Baikauskas, O.P.
Fr. Michael Mascari, O.P., Director of Formation
Fr. Andrew-Carl Wisdom, O.P., Director of Vocations