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An apology to Bishop Thomas Paprocki

Eugene Cullen Kennedy | Dec. 20, 2013 Bulletins from the Human Side

In my column last week [1]I repeated a story I had gotten from several sources claiming that Bishop Thomas Paprocki of Springfield, Illinois, had remonstrated with his priest brother for not realizing the harm his leaving the priesthood might do to the bishop?s career. Bishop Paprocki has objected to this on the best of grounds: he has no brother who is or was a priest.

I therefore retract the use of a false story about the bishop and apologize to him for accepting this report as the truth. While I did check this out with three Chicago area priests I should obviously have dug deeper to get at the truth of what turned out to be some kind of gossip that took on a spurious currency in clerical circles.

This reveals my all too human side and, whatever its origin, I accept the responsibility and the blame for using this fable as a fact. Neither Dennis Coday, the editor of *National Catholic Reporter*, or Pam Cohen, *NCR* web editor, bear any responsibility for this unfortunate error and I apologize to them as well as to my readers for including this incorrect information in my column.

Editor Dennis Coday adds:

For my part, I am sorry that we allowed that misinformation to appear on our website. Our copy editing procedures are designed to catch mistakes and problems like this. Obviously we failed this time. I apologize to our readers and Bishop Paprocki.

Bishop Paprocki adds:

Dear Mr. Coday:

I accept the apologies of Eugene Kennedy and Dennis Coday regarding the misinformation that appeared on the NCR website. They have demonstrated their journalistic integrity in making this correction and expressing their regret. I have made my share of mistakes and so appreciate the grace that comes from forgiveness and reconciliation. May the peace and love of this joyful season of Christmas be with you and your readers.

Peace and blessings,
+Bishop Paprocki

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[1] http://ncronline.org/node/66096