

VOLUME XL11

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PETITION FOR SEPARATION

VATICAN ARCHIVES Vicariate of Rome

CITTA DEL VATICANO Arco delle Campane

Citta del Vaticano, 8 Nov 1958

Si attesta che dalla raccolta dei " DECRETA anni 1845 " di questo Vicariato risulta quanto segue :

f.233 – Beatissimo Padre, Fin da quando Pietro Connelly nativo di Filadelfia dopo essere stato nove anni ministro della Setta degli Episcopali, ebbe nel 1836 qui in Roma la gran sorte di abiurare i suoi errori, e riunirsi alla vera Chiesa di G.C. in un con la sua consorte Cornelia, egli ed essa altro piu non ebbero a cuore che corrispondere alla santita della Fede abbracciata, e seguire senza riserva le ompressioni di quella Divina Grazia che avevali con tanta misericordia tirati all'Arca unica di salute.

In effetto de' movimenti continui e gagliardi di questa grazia celeste la prima risoluzione che da tre anni e mezzo di comune pienissimo accordo presero entrambi di vivere in castita perfetta, risoluzione sempre di poi mantenuta, per cosi predispori alla grazia della vocazione religiosa alla quale sentivansi ambedue dal Signore invitati.

In questo triennio essi vie meglio esplorato il divino volere con assidue preghiere al Dator d'ogni bene, e con sottomettersi interamente agli indirizzi e consigli d'illuminati e pii Direttori; i quali cosi in America, come qui in Roma han sempre in entrambi riconosciuti i segni i piu manifesti della celeste chiamata. Giovi qui ricordare il solo venerando Monsignor Flaget vescovo del Kentucky nella cui approvazione della cosa avvi alcunché di straordinario.

Ora dunque trovandosi i due coniugi in Roma, e tutto per divina bonta cospirando a facilitare la pronta esecuzione del loro saldissimo proponimento sottopongono rispettosamente



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alla [ p.2 ] S.V. quanto si e stabilito a tal fine.

La consorte del supplicante Cornelia, ora in eta di 34 anni e gia accettata nel Monistero [ sic ] delle Dame del Sacro Cuore alla Trinita de ' Monti, ove entrera come postulante facendo subito voto solenne di castita perpetua. L'Oratore in eta di 39 anni e stato del pari benignamente accettato dal M.R./ f.133' – Preposito Generale della Compagnia di Gesu per entrare a far parte di essa alla quale egli sentesi particolarmente chiamato di Dio.

Si e poi provveduto nel miglior modo all'educazione e sorte futura de'tre figliuoli che la Divina Provvidenza ha loro dati. L'uno di undici anni e nel Collegio di Stonyhurst in Inghilterra diretto da Padri Gesuiti, ed il Conte di Shrewsbury si e espressamente impegnato a prendere special cura di esso. La figliuola di anni nove sta gia come educanda nel Monistero stesso del Sacro Cuore qui in Roma, ove e per entrare la madre. Resta un figliuolo di anni tre, e questo sara opportunamente collocato in tal luogo ove possa essere governato ed allevato con ogni cura, e ricevere eziandio fin che per l'eta tenere ne abbisogni gli aiuti stessi materni. Di questo ultimo figliuolo per la sorte sua avvenire ha voluto il Sig. r Principe Borghese assumere il generoso pensiero: oltre che l'Oratore del suo particolare patrimonio formera un capitale in pro di ciascuno de' figliuoli medesimo.

Cosi la Divina bonta dirigendo soavemente e fortemente le cose al lor fine mette ora in istato i due coniugi di compiere perfettamente e tosto quell'olocausto di se, a cui essa fortemente li sprona ed attrae: come pure avvenne teste nei due coniugi Svizzeri convertiti alla cattolica Fede i Signori Chaudet, di cui l'uno e entrato ne' Lazzaristi, l'altra



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nel Noviziato delle Dame del S. Cuore.

A far paghi per altro i voti dell'umile Ricorrente, resta una [ p.3.] grazia ch'egli viene qui ad implorare da Vostra Beatitudine. Con intelligenza del M.R.P.Praeposito Generale della Compagnia di Gesu, prima di entrare in questa, si propone egli di asendere al sacerdozio, e quindi di prendere subito nella corrente Quaresima gli Ordini Minori. Si richiede pertanto che la S.V. medesima degnisi accordare all' Oratore d'essere promosso alli detti Ordini qui in Roma per le mani dell'Emo Card. le Vicario, senza ricorrere al Vescovo di Filadelfia per le lettere dimissoriali, f. 253 – il che porterebbe lunghissimo/ indulgio, e forse qualche sconcerto in affare si delicato. Umilissimo ed obbedientissimo figlio. f.253' – Pietro Connelly. / Alla Santita di N. Signore [ sic] Papa Gregorio XV1. 15 marzo 1844. Al Card. Vicario colle facolta. Ex Audientia SS. mi. Die 16 martii A. 1844. SS. mus benigne annuit pro gatia; mihique referenti opportunas facultates tribuit ad hoc ut absque dimissorialibus litteria R.P.D.Episcopi Philadelphiensis ad sacros ordines usque ad Presbyteratum inclusive Orator in Urbe promoveri possit, ea speciatim causa quod ipse habeatur tanquam non habens ultra domicilium in ea Dioecesi suae originis, in qua post conversionem suam ad Catholicam Ecclesiam versatus minime est. Quoad vero modum, ac tempus praefigendum pro eius Ordinationibus Santitas Sua conferendum esse duxit cum R. mo P. Praeposito Generali Societatis Jesu. Mandavit tandem ut antequam ad S. Subdiaconatus Ordinem Orator promoveatur, debeat eius uxor votum Cas[ t ] itatis emittere. + L'introsritto Oratore. ( Per copia conforme ).

In fede, ecc.

[ Stamp: ] Archivio Vaticano Vicariato di Roma

[ Signed :] p. Nicola Occhioni archivista



DEED OF SEPARATION

Citta del Vaticano,

11 novembre 1955.

Si attesta che dai registri dei " Decreta " dell'anno 1844, f.476 e 495/b, esistenti in quest'Archivio, risulta quanto segue:

" Nel nome di Dio. Amen.

Essendosi degnata la Santita de Nostro Signore Gregorio Pp. XV1 di annuire, ed approvare l'istanza fatta dalli Sig.ri coniugi Pietro Connelly figlio del q. Enrico, e della vivente Sig. a Elisabetta Piers, nativo di Filadelfia entrato nel seno della S. Chiesa Cattolica dopo di aver abiurato gli errori eretici Episcopali nell'anno 1836 qui in Roma, nonche quella contestualmente della Sig.ra Cornelia Pico di lui consorte, figlia del q. Raffaele, e della q. Maria Suopp parimenti di Filadelfia, i quali coniugi si sono determinati di vivere in castita perfetta dopo matura deliberazione, ed in sequela dei consigli di riguardosissime persone Ecclesiastiche, e tuttora son fermi nel proposito di effettuare la loro determinazione; il primo cice, il Sig. Pietro Connelly di abbracciare l'Istituto della Compagnia di Gesu, essendo gia stato accettato dal Rev. mo Preposito Generale di essa, e di dedicarsi interamente allo Stato Ecclesiastico, e di esser promosso agli Ordini Sacri; la seconda, cice, la Sig. ra Cornelia di abbracciare L'Istituto delle Dame del Sacro Cuore, essendo gia stata accettata dalla Comunita della SS. Trinita de'Monti per vivere perpetuamente in perpetua castita; avendo provveduto alla educazione, e sussistenza futura dei tre figliuoli chiamati Mercer, Adelina-Maria, e Pietro Francesco, la Santita Sua medesima nella udienza del 16 Marzo or ora scaduto ha commesso tutte le facolta necessarie ed opportune all'Emomo





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e Rev.mo Signor Cardinale Costantino Patrizi Suo Vicario Generale, affinché osservate le formalità richieste siano esauriti i voti di entrambi i postulanti.

Sua Em. Za Rev.ma pertanto in forza delle predette facoltà Apostoliche amando ben volentieri, che venga effettuato il pio desiderio degli lodati due Signori Coniugi ha deputato con speciale atto registrato nell'Archivio della Segreteria del Vicariato sotto questo giorno primo Aprile me sottoscritto Promotore Fiscale del d.o. Tribunale all'oggetto di ricevere dai predetti Coniugi Pietro Connelly, e Cornelia Pico il necessario ed opportuno consenso scambievole a forma dei sacri Canoni, col quale acconsentono liberamente ciascuno dalla sua parte a permettere l'adempimento della soprad. a determinazione di vivere in perpetuo nello stato di perfetta castità. Costituiti pertanto i Signori Pietro Connelly e Cornelia Pico avanti di me nella abitazione loro attuale posta in via di Ripetta al N° civico 115 primo piano, l'ho interrogati a dire se tuttora sono fermi, e costanti nella determinazione indicata, ed umiliati al S. Padre, ed avendo risposto affermativamente, ho soggiunto ad essi, se per veruna causa umana si sono indotti, e s'inducono ad eseguire la determinazione sudd. a hanno risposto che niun motivo umano l'ha indotti, ne l'induce, ma l'ispirazione soltanto divina, e il desiderio di una maggior perfezione.

Premesse queste proteste ho invitato la Signora Cornelia Pico moglie del Signor Pietro Connelly a prestare liberamente in consenso al suo marito Signor Pietro Connelly di permettergli di abbracciare l'istituto della Compagnia, di vivere perpetuamente in perfetta castità, e di essere promosso agli Ordini Sacri fino al Sacerdozio; ed ha prestato il pieno consenso.



STATEMENT OF FACTS

Mr Pierce Connelly and Cornelia Augusta Connelly his wife ( formerly Cornelia Augusta Peacock Spinster ) were both born of American Parents at Philadelphia in the State of Pennsylvania and intermarried at Philadelphia on the 1<sup>st</sup> December 1831 according to the rites of the Protestant Episcopal Church of the United States of America both being at the time Members of that Church.

Mr. Connelly who at the time of his Marriage was in Priest's Orders of the Protestant Episcopal Church in America immediately upon his Marriage was appointed Rector of that Church at Natchez in the State of Mississippi [ sic ] and in the same month of December 1831 he and his wife went to Natchez where they continued to reside until the month of October 1835.

For some time previous to October 1835 Mr. Connelly and through his inducement and with his perfect approval his wife also had been disposed to become Roman Catholics but Mr. Connelly was desirous in the first instance of visiting Rome itself. Accordingly in the same month of October he and his wife quitted Natchez and went to New Orleans thence

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to embark for Europe on their way to Rome. At New Orleans they were detained accidentally about six weeks and whilst there in November 1835 Mrs. Connelly having become a thorough Convert to Catholicity was unwilling to embark for Europe until she had made a formal profession of Faith which she did at New Orleans abjuring the Protestant and being formally received into the Roman Catholic Church. Mrs. Connelly took that step with the full sanction and approval of her Husband who was present on the occasion of her reception and of making her first Communion.

In December 1835 Mr. Connelly and his Wife embarked for Europe on their way to Rome where they arrived on the 24<sup>th</sup> February 1836 and there on Palm Sunday the 27<sup>th</sup> March in that year Mr. Connelly made his solemn abjuration of Protestantism [ sic ] and was received in to the Roman Catholic Church.

In January 1838 Mr. Connelly and his Wife having in the interval been successfully [ page 2 ]resident at Rome Vienna and elsewhere on the Continent of Europe returned to America and settled at Grand Coteau in the State of Louisiana where they continued to reside until the month of May 1842.

In the month of October 1840 whilst resident at Grand Coteau Mr. Connelly proposed to his Wife that thenceforth they should live in constant and perfect Chastity abstaining from sexual intercourse with each other in order the more fully to devote themselves to the Service of God and with a special

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view to the then declared wish and intention of Mr. Connelly to take Holy Orders in the Roman Catholic . Mrs. Connelly acceded to her Husband's proposal and a verbal Agreement to that effect was then entered into between them and was ever afterwards steadfastly maintained.

In furtherance of Mr. Connelly's declared wish and intention and as probationary to a final separation Mr. Connelly in the month of May 1842 placed his Wife in the Convent of the Sacred Heart at Grand Coteau and again left America and proceeded a second time to Rome for the avowed purpose of further proving himself as to his vocation to the Ecclesiastical State and in order if proved to make such preparations as were antecedently necessary in respect of his being a Married Man.

In the month of July 1843 Mr. Connelly returned to Philadelphia where his Wife by his direction joined him she having for that purpose left the Convent of the Sacred Heart at Grand Coteau where he had placed her and where she had resided during the whole period of his absence.

In the following month of August 1843 Mr. Connelly accompanied by his Wife quitted Philadelphia [ pencil cross over word " Philadelphia " and underlined in [pencil ] and again proceeded to Rome at which City they arrived together on the 7<sup>th</sup> December 1843 and where they lived in the same House but observing perfect chastity, until the 8<sup>th</sup> April, 1844.



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The sole object of this their second joint visit to Rome was to obtain a formal Separation from each other in order to carry out their several ulterior objects which were on the part of Mr. Connelly to embrace the Ecclesiastical State and to take Holy Orders and on the part of his Wife to enter into Religion and to become a Nun.

On the 15<sup>th</sup>. March 1844 a Petition from Mr. Connelly for these purposes [ page 3 ] was presented to His Holiness Pope Gregory XV1 and was referred with all necessary faculties to the Cardinal Vicar General and Judge Ordinary of Rome who by his Promotor Fiscal personally examined the parties and took their mutual consent to the Separation prayed. This was on the 1<sup>st</sup> April 1844 and on the 8<sup>th</sup> [ “ 8<sup>th</sup> “ has in pencil “ 9<sup>th</sup> “ marked over it ] of the same month being Easter Monday [ word “ Monday “ has word “ Tuesday “ marked over top of it ] Mr. Connelly placed his Wife in the Convent of the Sacred Heart of the Trinita di [ sic ] Monti at Rome and on the following day he entered himself in the Collegio di [ sic ] Nobili in that City and on the then next day being the 10<sup>th</sup> April 1844 he received the first Clerical Tonsure and assumed the Ecclesiastical dress.

Copies of this Petition and of the proceedings consequent upon it will be found in the Appendix.

In the month of June 1845 Mr. Connelly had completed his Course of Study and was prepared to take Holy Orders, By the Act of Separation it was provided that before





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Mr. Connelly should be promoted to the Office of Sub Deacon his wife should first bind herself by a solemn Vow of perpetual Chastity. Accordingly on the 18<sup>th</sup> June 1845 Mrs. Connelly pronounced and took with the requisite formalities and signed a Solemn written vow of perpetual Chastity. This she did in furtherance of her Husband's objects and with his full knowledge and approbation testified by his presence and by his signature at the foot of the written Vow. Mrs. Connelly had previously solemnly warned her Husband of the difficulties and trials of the State into which he was about to enter and of the obligations to which he was about to bind himself irrevocably and she had offered to release him from their difficulties and to sacrifice every wish and will of her own and to return to their married life but Mr. Connelly persisted notwithstanding these warnings and representations and on the 22<sup>nd</sup> June 1845 he received Sub-deacon's Orders and on the 29<sup>th</sup> of the same month Deacon's Orders and on the 16<sup>th</sup> [sic] July following he was ordained Priest by the Cardinal Vicar of Rome.

In May 1846 Mr. Connelly left Rome and came to England where he became and officiated as Private Chaplain to the late Earl of Shrewsbury. In the previous month of April in the same year Mrs. Connelly also left Rome in the first instance for Paris where she resided for three months in the Convent of the Assumption. In the month of August following she came to England to seek a residence for the

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Community she was about to establish and finding at Derby a Building then near completion and suited to her purpose she settled there with her Companions in the month of October 1846 and there founded an Institute or Community of Religious Women under the Title of the Congregation of the Holy Child Jesus of which she became and now is the Superioress.

The design of founding this Institute had been formed by Mrs. Connelly before leaving Rome with the full knowledge and approval of her Husband and she had brought with her to England Rules for its Government which had been framed by her with the advice and assistance of her Director [ page is torn a little and the word " Director " has been written over the word " Husband " – in a different hand to the rest of the paper ] and had been submitted to and sanctioned by the proper Ecclesiastical Authority before she quitted Rome.

The time had now arrived and the necessary arrangements had been made for Mrs. Connelly completing her entrance into Religion by taking the Vows of Poverty and Obedience supplementary to that of Chastity already taken by her.

In the month of April 1847 Mr. Connelly had been anxious and had so expressed himself that Mrs. Connelly should take these Vows without delay but later in that year he drew up and sent to the Reverend Asperti then the Spiritual Director of the Community at Derby to be presented if necessary to the Ordinary a written Protest against Mrs.

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Connelly “ being required or allowed to take any Vow or Vows binding her to any Religious Congregation whatsoever until he had been fully satisfied of the sure proper and permanent endowment and sufficient means of the said Religious Congregation.”

This Protest was sent by Mr. Connelly to Dr. Asperti from Alton Towers the residence of the late Earl of Shrewsbury at which place Dr. Asperti a few days afterwards met Mr. Connelly at his request when the several matters connected with the Protest and the taking of the Vows by Mrs. Connelly were fully discussed between them and the Reverend Henry Winter [ Page 5 ] who was also there present. The result of this interview was that Mr. Connelly withdrew his Protest and signified his wish that it should not be presented to the Ordinary nor any step taken upon it and no obstacle therefore interposing Mrs. Connelly on the 21<sup>st</sup> December 1847 solemnly took the Vows of Poverty and Obedience in the Congregation of the Holy Child Jesus at Derby at the same time renewing her former Vow of perpetual Chastity in the presence and with the sanction of the Roman Catholic Ordinary.

In January 1848 Mr. Connelly again went to Rome with the secret object of effecting certain Modifications in the Rules of the Congregation and to procure the same to be exempted from Episcopal Visitation in all which he failed. In the month of May in the same year he returned to England and on the 2<sup>nd</sup>. or 3<sup>rd</sup>. June following he presented himself

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at the Convent at Derby and insisted upon an interview with Mrs. Connelly. To this interview no obstacle was interposed by any person save by Mrs. Connelly herself who declined to see Mr. Connelly for reasons which she then communicated to him in writing. [ From the words " To this interview... to... " him in writing" a Roman figure ' I ' and a line in pencil drawn in the margin with the words " Not correct " written in pencil beside it. ]

In December 1848 the Community not being then provided with the means of purchasing the property which they had occupied up to that time at Derby were required to quit the same and they then removed to St. Leonard 's on Sea in the County of Sussex where they are now established.

The proposal to live apart in perfect chastity and the subsequent formal separation of Mr. and Mrs. Connelly and his taking Holy Orders and her becoming a Nun were all at the instance of Mr. Connelly himself and were consented to by Mrs. Connelly at his repeated request and in furtherance of his own personal views and wishes . His taking Orders in the Roman Catholic Church was his own deliberate and long-sought act from which he did not " hold out " for many years or at all. He was never asked to consent but on the contrary he sought the consent of his wife and she consented only after repeated requests on his part. No condition was then or at any other time imposed that his wife was not to become a Nun until he

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thought proper or that his personal communications with her were at no time to be interrupted but on the contrary it is expressly stated by Mr. Connelly in his Petition to the Pope already referred to and the Separation was founded on the fact that his Wife did intend if such separation was granted immediately to enter the Convent of the Trinita di [ sic] Monti and there to become a Nun. Mr. Connelly did not remain in Rome more than ten months after receiving Holy Orders and did not at any time after the 8<sup>th</sup> April 1844 when he placed his wife in the last mentioned Convent continue the same or any such intercourse with her as theretofore nor did they ever meet out of the Convent except upon two occasions when they met at a Friend's House in the Piazza di Spagna close to the Convent on business of importance and on both occasions in the presence of the Family at whose House they met. These were the only two occasions on which Mrs. Connelly ever quitted the Convent after entering it in April 1844 until she finally left Rome in April 1846. Mr. Connelly generally saw Mrs. Connelly at the Convent once a week and not oftener or elsewhere and upon these occasions their Children and the Nurse were generally present. It was proposed to limit the visits of Mr. Connelly to two hours, but this was the deliberate proposal of Mrs. Connelly herself and was not instigated by her Confessor or by any other person. Mrs. Connelly did not at any time represent to Mr. Connelly or to any other persons nor did she believe that her Confessor

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was an Instrument in the hands of designing persons nor are there any passages in any Letter written by her at that or any other time which imply any such belief or convey any such representation. The Letters written by Mrs. Connelly to Mr. Connelly were written in the strictest and holiest confidence and have reference to the doubts and difficulties which then oppressed her not as to her own vocation or her dedication to a Religious life but as to the particular Institute or Community which she ought to join and the conflict which arose between her own convictions and the Counsel and advice which she received from others These difficulties were at length removed and Mrs. Connelly was confirmed in her design of founding a Religious Institute to be called the “ Congregation of the Holy Child Jesus “ of which the principal objects should be the Education of Females of all classes [ page 7 ] – the reception of pious Ladies and those desiring Christian Instruction and the preparing Children and Sick Females for the Holy Sacraments – and having framed certain Rules for the Government of such a Community in which she was greatly encouraged by Mr. Connelly she procured the same to be sanctioned by proper Ecclesiastical Authority and quitted Rome for England in April 1846 as already stated.

The visit of Mr. Connelly to the Convent in March 1847 was wholly unexpected and undesired by the Community and by their Superior Mrs. Connelly and the Community remonstrated strongly against it and against any repetition of the same

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and in consequence of such remonstrance Mr. Connelly addressed a very violent Letter to the Superior complaining of the injury he had so received. Mrs Connelly replied to his Letter but the expressions which she used in her reply did not relate to or concern herself but to what she knew to be the temper and disposition of Mr. Connelly and to the painful and as the event has shewn well- grounded fears which then agitated her that he had entered on a course of self-willed determination under which he would ultimately fall. [ In margin a large Roman figure '11 ' in pencil is written beside last three lines. ]

In January 1847 Mr. Connelly addressed a Letter which bears the date the 6<sup>th</sup> but which was not posted until the 30<sup>th</sup> of that month to the Reverend Samuel Asperti then of the Collegio di [ sic] Nobili at Rome entreating him in the most earnest manner and by the most sacred considerations to hasten to England and to become Chaplain and Spiritual Director of the Congregation of the Holy Child Jesus which he stated to be established at Derby. Dr. Asperti was then the intimate private friend of Mr. Connelly but was wholly unknown to Mrs. Connelly and to all the Members of her Congregation but at the repeated instances of Mr. Connelly she was induced to write to the immediate Superior of Dr. Asperti in Rome to request that he might be sent to England as Chaplain to the Convent and her Letter to that effect



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is referred to by Mr. Connelly as enclosed in his letter to Dr. Asperti whom he desired to deliver the same.

Mr. Connelly's letter to Dr. Asperti commences thus " Very dear Asperti- yes very very dear and my heart warms in writing a name I so often think of and never without an Act of love to him that bears it. " – and concludes " Ever your true and devoted friend and Brother Pierce Connelly ". On the 20<sup>th</sup> April following Mr. Connelly wrote again to Dr. Asperti and remitted him an Order for £20 Sterling[ Page 8] for the expenses of " his Journey of love and sacrifice ". On the 22<sup>nd</sup> October in the same year 1847 Mr. Connelly wrote a Letter of that date which commences in these words " Dear Don Samuel – Blessed be God – Blessed be his Holy Name for your safe arrival in Derby " – And on the 27<sup>th</sup> of the same month of October a Letter which commences " Ever dear Don Samuel " – and in which occur the following words " I see clearly that pride has had its large share in all that we have done- what I am reaping I myself have sown. " In all his correspondence with Dr. Asperti which continued until late in the year 1848 Mr. Connelly addressed him as theretofore " very dear Don Samuel " – " Ever dearest Don Samuel " – " Ever as Ever your faithful and grateful Pierce Connelly" – and in terms of like affection and intimacy.

After the failure of Mr. Connelly's attempt to interfere in the affairs of the Convent he returned to England where he arrived early in June 1848 and proceeded at once to Derby

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where he suddenly presented himself at the Convent and demanded an interview with Mrs. Connelly who still refused to see him. Shortly after this last visit of Mr. Connelly the Reverend Dr. Winter brought to the Convent a paper in the handwriting of Mr. Connelly which he desired to read and did read to Mrs Connelly and in consequence of the matter contained in this paper Mrs. Connelly wrote to Mr. Connelly a Letter whereby she hoped to convince him of the uselessness of attempting further interference in or about the affairs of the Convent.

This Letter was her own deliberate act and was written freely and voluntarily by her and it is scarcely necessary to add that Mrs. Connelly was not then and has not since been and is not now under duress or constraint of any Spiritual Director or Ecclesiastical Governor or other person whomsoever.

### APPENDIX

#### Translated from the Italian

Most Blessed Father – Since the time when Pierce Connelly a Native of Philadelphia after having been nine years a Minister of the Sect of the Episcopalians was so happy as to abjure his errors here at Rome in 1836 and to unite himself to the true Church of Jesus Christ, together with his Wife Cornelia, both of them had nothing more at heart than to live up to the sanctity of the Faith which they had embraced, and to follow without reserve the suggestions of that Divine Grace

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which had drawn them with such mercy to the only Ark of Salvation.

The constant and powerful motions of this heavenly grace had the effect of producing the steadfast resolution which three years and a half ago they both formed with the fullest mutual consent, to live in a state of perfect chastity, a resolution to which they have ever since adhered, in order thus to prepare themselves for the grace of the religious vocation to which they both felt themselves drawn by the Lord. During these three years they have sought to learn still more fully the Divine will by persevering prayers to the Giver of all light, and by submitting themselves entirely to the guidance and counsels of enlightened and pious Directors who in America as well as here in Rome have always recognised in both of them the most evident signs of the heavenly call. It may suffice here to mention only the Right Reverend Bishop Flaget of Kentucky in whose approbation of the matter there are some extraordinary particulars.

The two married parties therefore being now in Rome and everything tending by the Divine goodness to facilitate the speedy execution of their most steadfast determination, they respectfully submit to your Holiness what has been done to that end. The Wife of the petitioner being now 34 years of age, has already been accepted in the Convent of the Ladies of the Sacred Heart at Trinita di [ sic ] Monti where she will enter as a Postulant and make at once a solemn Vow of perpetual Chastity.

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The Petitioner aged 39 years has also been graciously accepted by the Reverend the Superior General of the Society of Jesus for the purpose of entering as a Member of that Body to which he feels himself specially called by the Almighty. A provision has also been made in the most suitable manner for the education and future welfare of the three children granted to them by Divine providence. The Son of 11 years of age is placed at the College of Stonyhurst in England which is under the management of the Jesuit Fathers; and the Earl of Shrewsbury has expressly engaged to take special care of him. The Daughter age 9 years is being educated in the aforesaid Convent of the Sacred Heart here in Rome, where her Mother is to take the Veil.

[ Page 10 ] There is also a Son 3 years of age who will be placed in due time where he may be taken care of and be brought up with every attention and may also receive while his tender years require it, the assistance of his Mother herself. The Prince Borghese has been pleased to take a general interest in the future welfare of this last mentioned Child; and besides this, the Petitioner will assign a Capital out of his own private estate for the benefit of each of the said Children.

Thus the Divine goodness by graciously and powerfully directing matters to their end now enables the two married parties to complete at once that perfect sacrifice of themselves to which the same Divine goodness strongly impels and leads them, as was recently the case with the two married

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parties, Mr. and Mrs. Chaudet, Natives of Switzerland, who were converted to the Catholic Faith, the one having joined the Lazarists, and the other having become a Novice in the Convent of the Sacred Heart.

In order to accomplish the wishes of your humble Petitioner there still remains one favour which he now implores from your Holiness. With the acquiescence of the very Reverend the Superior General of the Society of Jesus he proposes before entering that Body to be promoted to the Priesthood; and during the present Lent, to take Minor Orders. It is necessary however that your Holiness should be pleased to permit the Petitioner to be promoted to the aforesaid Orders here in Rome by the hands of his Eminence the Cardinal Vicar, without having recourse to the Bishop of Philadelphia for Letters dismissory, which would occasion a very long delay, and might perhaps give rise to some embarrassment in so delicate an affair.

On the cover – To His Holiness our Sovereign Lord Pope Gregory XV1 by the Within written Petitioner.

To the Cardinal Vicar with Faculty.

Translated from the Latin

Upon audience of His Holiness the 16<sup>th</sup> day of March in the year 1844. His Holiness has graciously acceded hereto, and granted to me the Relator the requisite Faculties to this effect, that without Letters dismissory from the Bishop of Philadelphia, the Petitioner may be promoted

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to Holy Orders as far as to that of Presbyter inclusive at Rome, for this special reason, that he is considered no longer having his Domicile in the Diocese from which he came not having resided therein since his conversion to the Catholic Church. But as respects the mode and time to be appointed for his ordination, His Holiness has considered that it will be proper to confer with the very Reverend Father the Superior General of the Society of Jesus. Finally he has ordered that before the Petitioner be promoted to the Holy Order of Sub-Deacon his Wife must take the Vow of perpetual Chastity. – C. Cardinal Vicar.

Translated form the Italian

In the name of God, Amen. His Holiness our Sovereign Lord Pope Gregory the sixteenth having been pleased to assent to and approve of the application made by the married parties Pierce Connelly, son of the late Henry, and of the living Mrs. Elizabeth Pierce, a Native of Philadelphia, who has entered the bosom of the Holy Catholic Church after having abjured the errors of the heretical Episcopalians, in the year 1836, here in Rome, as well as that made by the same writing on behalf of his Wife Cornelia Piee [ written above this crossing out is the word ] ‘ eacock ‘ Daughter of the late Raphael and of the late Maris Suopp [ sic ] also of Philadelphia, the which married parties have determined to live in perfect chastity, after mature deliberation and in pursuance of the Counsels of most

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respectable Ecclesiastics, and are now steadfast in their intention of carrying their resolution into effect – that is to say the former, Mr. Pierce Connelly, to enter into the Institute of the Society of Jesus, having been already accepted by the very Reverend Father the Superior General of that Society, and to devote himself wholly to the Ecclesiastical State, and to be promoted to Holy Orders, and the latter, Mrs. Cornelia, to embrace the Institute of the Ladies of the Sacred Heart, having been already accepted by the Community of the Holy Trinity of Monti [ sic ] in order to live in constant and perpetual chastity, having provided for the future education and subsistence of three children, Mercer, Adelina Maria, and Peter Francis, His Holiness himself, in the audience of the sixteenth of March last committed all the necessary and suitable faculties to His Eminence the most Reverend Cardinal Constantino Patrizi, his Vicar General,[ Page 12 ] to the intent that on observing the required formalities, the wishes of both Petitioners may be complied with. His most Reverend Eminence therefore by virtue of the aforesaid Apostolical faculties, being desirous that the pious wish of the ~~said~~ two said [ sic ] married parties may be accomplished, has, by a special Act, Registered in the Archives of the Secretariate of the Vicariate [ sic ] on the first day of April deputed me, the undersigned Promotor Fiscaaaaal of the said Tribunal for the purpose of receiving from the aforesaid

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married parties, Pierce Connelly and Cornelia Pico [ Written above this crossing out is the word ] 'eacock ' the necessary and proper mutual consent in conformity with the sacred Canons, by which they may freely consent each for his or her part to allow of the fulfilment of the above mentioned determination to live perpetually in a state of perfect chastity. Mr. Pierce Connelly and Mrs. Cornelia Pico [ a line is drawn through the ' c ' of the last typed word, but nothing further is written ] having therefore appeared before me at their present residence situated in the Via di Ripetta, at the civic number 115, on the first floor, I interrogated them as to whether, they are now steadfast and constant in the determination expressed and humbly represented to the Holy Father, and they having replied in the affirmative, I further interrogated them as to whether they were or are induced by any worldly respect to carry out the aforesaid determination to which they repl [ word incomplete because of torn page ] that no worldly consideration had induced or does induce them thereto, but solely the Divine inspiration and the desire of greater perfection. These protestations premised, I called upon Mrs Cornelia Pico [ Written above this crossing out is the word ] ' eacock ' the Wife of Mr. Pierce Connelly, freely to give her consent to her Husband, Mr. Pierce, and to permit him to enter the Institute of the Society to live perpetually in perfect chastity, and to be promoted to Holy Orders as far as to the Priesthood, whereupon



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she gave her full consent thereto. Mr. Pierce Connelly the Husband of Mrs. Cornelia Pico [ Written above this crossing out is the word ] ' eacock ' being thereupon called upon to permit her to enter the Institute of the Ladies of the Sacred Heart, to live perpetually in perfect chastity he likewise gave his full consent thereto. Their mutual consent having been pronounced as above to be ratified within the term of one year, or even sooner, with the requisite Apostolical faculties, both the married parties were called upon to sign the present Act together with two Witnesses who are present, namely, the Reverend Don Guiseppe Boccacani, Priest of the Diocese of Narni, Son of Mr. Constantine and of Mrs. Maria Ventura,[ Page 13] domiciled in the Incumbency of St. Roque at Rome, and of Mr. Robert Berkeley, of Spetchley in Worcestershire, in England, Son of Mr. Robert and Mrs. Henrietta Benfield, domiciled in the same Parish. An Act done as above this 1st day of April 1844., I Pierce Connelly give consent as above, I Cornelia Connelly give consent as above. I Guiseppe Boccacani was witness to the said consent – Francesco Anivitti, Canon Promotor Fiscal, delegated as aforesaid.

[ Endorsed in the middle of the reverse side of the last page] : -

Re Connelly

Statement of Facts

S.H.C.J. ARCHIVES - ROME [ Letter Book 1. Pages 2-4]

[ C.C's hand .]

1853

RE RUPERT HOUSE

Copy\*

1. In 1853 Miss Bowles consulted me in the presence of S.M.[ sic ] Stokes Esq. as to the possibility of our purchasing a property suitable for establishing a Training School in Liverpool. I agreed that we could do so provided we were assisted by the Poor Schools Committee, and by a Grant from Government. [ Note in margin:- We were to be assisted by the Poor Schools Committee and by a Grant from Government. ]

On this occasion a Mr. Higginson's property was proposed, at the supposed value of £4000, or perhaps £4300, I do not remember exactly. I did go to look at this House & saw Mr. Allan Kaye in Miss Bowles's presence, regarding the proposed purchase. Some difficulty in the title & the price of the property prevented further proceedings in the matter.

After this, another House valued at £3000 was proposed. To this I immediately assented, provided the lot was sufficiently large to build upon. I do not know why this last proposal was rejected. As Miss Bowles was desirous of investing her own fortune in this manner, there would have been no difficulty in such a purchase – and no individual liability would have been incurred.

I repeatedly told Miss Bowles that if any money was raised that did not belong to the Community, it must never exceed the value of a Mortgage, so that the possibility of individual responsibility might be perfectly avoided. The purchase of Rupert House was made contrary to all that I had advised, notwithstanding many warnings that I had constantly urged of the danger of exceeding our means.

When I returned from Rome, I did go to Rupert House, but I expressed strongly my total disapprobation of the purchase.

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& refused taking any share in the responsibility. I deemed the speculation dishonest & sinful, although I have ever been ready to palliate the intention which instigated it.

2. I do not think any plans were drawn for the alterations; I

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[ Footnote, page 2.]

\*The consultations, proposals &c that were made regarding the purchase of property which would be suitable for a Training School in 1853, had nothing to do with the transactions in 1854 – in which the Community was not consulted.

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I certainly never saw them. The Estimates were never sent to me.

When the work was nearly finished, and Miss Bowles claimed the dowry she had settled upon us, they were shown to me in Rupert House. So far from having seen or known of these expenditures, I had told her that she had no right to spend her money without being assured of the means to pay the interest money on her Note of Hand, for which her brother was responsible. Moreover I warned her not to make any alterations until she had lived in the House, even if she had the money at hand, an advice which was totally unheeded; and she proved to her cost that she was wrong, as in the second year she replaced the substantial brick walls, by a canvassed partition.

3. Though the Note of Hand signed by Mr. J. Bowles and herself was taken without our knowledge or consent, we considered it but right and honourable to allow Mr. Bowles, or any other person under the same circumstances, the security for money that had purchased the same property. The propriety of this was settled when we met in Liverpool & held our Conference upon the subject. Mr. Bowles' Note of

Hand had completed the purchase – and the Mortgage could not have been given without the signatures which were of course

given with my approbation. Miss Bowles assured me that her brother knew that the Note of Hand was taken without our approbation, and that the purchase of the Property was her own act alone. Moreover she spoke in the Community of her brothers as benefactors. Had her brothers referred to me, I should have taken a more scrupulous care of their interests.

When I spoke to the late Dr. Crook on the individual responsibility of this debt, His Reverence declared it to be a private act of a Brother towards a Sister with which I should not trouble myself.

4<sup>th</sup>. I have no knowledge of consenting to the £1000 being taken, but when I knew that it had been done I approved, on condition that it should be invested in real property as soon as we had decided upon our future Purchase. It was invested in Rupert House. This £1000 was taken not in /54 as Miss Bowles states, but in the summer of /53 before I went to Rome.

5<sup>th</sup>. It is not our custom to allowance Bread, or to deprive the Community of sugar, & if Miss Bowles did so, it was upon her own responsibility, and contrary to the wish of anyone. I heard of the Community of being without sugar, & of their making a joke of it by going to the Confessor to beg. I enquired into this and was assured it was a joke. Miss Bowles might also have added that we supplied them with the means to purchase sugar, as soon as we knew they were in want. I never heard of the Community being without meat.

The Community at Rupert House was soon broken up afterward.

6. Our Community at St. Leonard's has paid the sum of £ to defray Miss Bowles's debts during the last year. I of course paid the rent, or interest money during the remainder of the time (after Miss Bowles' departure) and until the Community left the premises.

S.H.C.J. ARCHIVES ( ROME) [ Copied from Letter Book 11 Letter 51, page 57]

RE SISTER THERESA

Sr. Theresa was stated to be ill, dying and not allowed to see her brothers & Sisters.

Statements regarding Sr Theresa

( Cath Laprimaudaye)

The Sisters of our dr Invalid saw her four or five times or more while she was able to go down stairs to the Sofa in the parlour, and during some visits remained with ~~them~~ [sic] her several hours at a time. They since have visited her in the bedroom upstairs & twice after the last Sacraments had been administered. She also received her brother-in-law in the bedroom at the same time; later she saw her own brother & her Sisters in the bedroom & took leave of them giving each a Souvenir of their farewell visit. After this she expressed a wish not to receive any more visits as she was no longer able to be moved from the Infirmary.

Yesterday the Infirmary was left by the other invalid then occupying it & her three Sisters visited & staid [sic ] with her as long as she wished. Her eldest & own Sister has been with her since the 3<sup>rd</sup> November in daily attendance with two other Nurses & she has slept in the adjoining room to the Infirmary.

C.C.

Convent H.C.Jesus

St Leonards –on-Sea

Novr 24<sup>th</sup>

1864.