

## **A Statement from Walter G. Denton**

For 38 years I have carried a heavy burden. This tragic incident that I experienced totally changed the direction of my life and what I wanted to be. I was raped by Archbishop Anthony Sablan Apuron, who at that time was a priest in Agat, and whom I trusted. I worshiped the ground he walked on. He was my mentor, my teacher. He was like a father to me, so I thought. He was the PRIEST I wanted to become but, he took that all away from me.

My name is Walter G. Denton of Agat, Guam. At the young age of 8 years, I did something I have always wanted to do and that was to be an Altar Boy for my church in Agat, Guam. I always attended church services every Sunday morning with my parents. Watching the Altar Boys perform their duties during church service motivated my desires to serve God and to become a priest. I attended Mount Carmel Catholic School and also attended Confraternity of Christian Doctrine (CCD) Classes on the weekends to learn more about God and his teachings. I may have been young but, I knew that was my calling. Going to Church and attending CCD classes was a priority for me. Fast forward to Friday April 15, 1977 on or about 5:30 pm. Father Anthony Apuron (ARCHBISHOP) was to give the Friday evening service. I was on the schedule to assist Father Anthony Apuron during Mass. After Mass, Father Tony asked me to stay at the Rectory on Saturday evening. I told Father Anthony I had to ask my Dad. My Dad told me I could.

When it came to the Church and my duties as an Altar Boy, my Dad never stood in the way. On or about Saturday evening April 16, 1977, I went to the Rectory where Father Anthony was waiting for me. I asked if anyone else was spending the night and Father Anthony said no. I didn't think anything of it but, in a way I felt kind of weird being there by myself. I have never spent the night there alone in Rectory with Father Anthony let alone any other priest. It's always been with the other Altar Boys.

We ate dinner and talked a little bit. After dinner I helped Father Anthony wash the dishes. After cleaning up the dirty dishes I went into the living room and sat on the lazy boy chair and watched TV for a little bit. I started to feel tired and sleepy. I pulled the handle of the lazy boy and got it to recline. As I was laying on the lazy boy chair Father Anthony came into the living room and asked me if I was ready to go to sleep. I told yes and that I was going to sleep on the lazy boy chair. He said no and he insisted I sleep in the bedroom with him. I said okay Father. At the same time I did not feel comfortable but, I did anyways. We went into the bedroom and I went straight to bed. I remember feeling so tired and the next thing I was fast asleep.

Please forgive me for what I am about to say. It hurts so much just thinking about it. Whenever I talk about it, I start to break down and cry. It's like it just happened yesterday.

Sometime late that evening or early morning, I woke up feeling something or someone on top of me smothering me and I felt something going in my ass-hole and it was hurting me. I was pinned down to the bed on my stomach with my legs spread apart. I could not move. I could not move my arms or my legs. I was pinned down. I felt something going into my ass and it hurt so much. I shouted out to Father Anthony to stop. I kept shouting and I tried to move but, all I could feel was him on top of me thrusting something into my ass.

He told me it will be alright. He said he will take care of me and give me straight A's in Theology. It seemed like forever that Father Anthony stayed on top of me. I was crying out to him asking him to please stop. I kept saying that it hurts and to please stop. I could hear him moaning and him thrusting his penis in me. He finally stopped and he laid down on me like he was resting. He

got off me and immediately got off the bed. I was crying and breathing hard. I can feel my butt was all wet. I asked him why he did that to me. I kept asking why. He said if I said anything to anyone, no will believe me.

I got my clothes and I went out to the living room and I stood by the front door. I opened the door but, I had nowhere to go. It was so dark outside and I was so scared. I remember looking at the clock and it was about 1 or 2 in the morning. It was Sunday morning and I remember I couldn't wait for the sun to come up. I wanted to go home so bad but I couldn't. If I went home I know my DAD would figure that something was wrong. I was afraid to go home. If my DAD knew what had happen to me, he would have come down and Kill Father Tony. Nobody messed around with my DAD. So I stayed at the Rectory. I stayed in the living room. I could not go back to sleep. I was so afraid of Father Tony.

I remember he came out to the living room and he tried to talk to me. I don't remember what he was saying to me. All I know is that I wanted to leave. Finally, the sun came up and it was Sunday morning and it was time to go to mass. I did not serve in the mass with Father Tony. I went walking around the school till church ended and then I went home. I remember being distant from my family. I never went back to church as an Altar Boy. I quit serving as an Altar Boy but, I still went to Church. I attended Mass every Sunday so that my DAD wouldn't know that something was wrong. He knew I wanted to be a Priest. I went to Church during the times Father Anthony wasn't giving Mass. If he gave the 7:00 am Mass, then I would attend the 9:00 am Mass. It was hard to go back to school because Father Tony was my Theology teacher. I sat in the back of the room and I never made eye contact with him again. He never called on me for anything during class. He just left me alone. I felt so sick every time I went to class.

On Oct 20, 1982, I joined the U.S. Army and I spent 23 years 11 months serving my country. Over the course of my career, this whole experience of getting raped by Father Tony Apuron weighed on me. It bothered me all my life. There were many times when I am alone I would just break down and cry.

When I was stationed at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C., I needed to talk to someone about my problem. I went to a Catholic church in Wheaton, MD. It was located on Claridge Road. I remember the name of the Catholic Church but not the Priest I talked to. I sat down and went to confession with Father and told him of what had happen to me. Again I broke down and cried. Father prayed for me and asked me to forgive him and the church for what had happen. It was hard to forgive. I got up and left.

For many years I carried this experience with me. I focused on my military drills and moved on with my life. I promised myself that I will meet Father Anthony one day and I will confront him. Years had passed and so fast forward to the years between 1999-2000. I was stationed at Fort Lewis, Washington. I was assigned to the 47th Combat Support Hospital. I lived in base housing on North Fort Lewis. I had plan to do yard work so I needed a few pieces of equipment so I went to the Self Help Store to pick-up a lawnmower and a rake. I met a Chamorro guy who worked there issuing equipment. I told him I was Guam. We talked for a little bit and he mentioned to me that the Bishop of Guam, Anthony Apuron, was coming to his mother's house. He told me that they are all related. I can't recall the month. I know that is was still a little cold so it was around spring time. I was very surprised when he told that. He invited me to come over to meet the Bishop and I said yes. At that moment I started to feel mad and pissed off. I couldn't wait to meet the Bishop and confront him and tell him how he ruined my life dreams of becoming a priest.

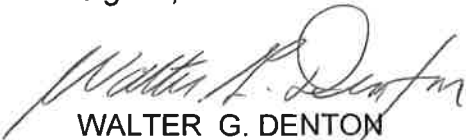
Finally that day came. I know it was an early Saturday morning when I got to the house. I went to the back of the house and there were already a lot of people just standing around waiting. They had a canopy set up with tables of food, drinks and deserts. As I was waiting, I was invited into the house. The living room of the house was all white. It was so beautiful and they had the statue on display and the background was all white with white flowers. It was really nice. The Bishop finally arrives. He comes into the house and he meets everyone. I remember him saying that he needed to wash up and he also mentioned he had a medical condition and needed a clean sterile towel. I went outside with the rest of the people who are there to meet the Bishop. The Bishop came out and said a prayer and started to meet and talk to everyone. I waited and waited till he was free and I went up to him and I asked him "DO YOU REMEMBER ME?" He looked at me and said, MICHAEL? I said NO... It's me Walter Denton. Now do you remember me! His eyes got really big. He was in shock. Right at that moment, I told him that I needed to speak to him now. Bishop Apuron said okay. We can go for a walk. It took only a couple of minutes for the Bishop to make time for me.

Bishop Apuron and I left the house and we started to walk around the block. He started to ask me how I was doing. And what have I been doing all these years? That's when I got mad. I told him that he ruined my life and my dreams. I said to him that you RAPED me and took something from me. I told him that I would never forgive him for what he did to me. I broke down and cried. He started to cry as well but, that didn't matter to me. I was so angry and I asked him how many kids you have done this to. He said that he was sorry for what he did to me. I continued to tell him that I wanted to be a priest like you and that I looked up to him as my Father. He asked me again for forgiveness and I said no. This is something you cannot be forgiven for.

After walking for a while, we started to head back to the house. Once we reached the house we went inside and I told Bishop Apuron I was going to leave and head home to my children. Bishop Apuron told me to hold on because he had something to give me. I saw him reach into his bag and he handed me a picture of himself, a CD of his music, and picture of Mother Mary. I looked him and I said "Are you serious?" I left and that was the last time I have ever saw him again.

In closing, I know that I am not the only one that this has happened to. There are other Agat boys who have experienced the same thing that I have gone through. I only hope and pray that justice will be served to the man who did this to me and other young innocent boys.

Signed,



WALTER G. DENTON