

Conclusion



Family recruits pray at their Los Angeles mission in the late seventies.

NEARLY THIRTEEN YEARS after Karen Zerby wrote that letter to Ben Farnsworth's father, telling him how his son's suicide would only strengthen other teens in The Family, Zerby's own son wrote a letter about his own suicide. It was not addressed to Zerby. Ricky sent his suicide note to Mark and Denise Flynn, the Tucson couple who gave him a job and welcomed him into their lives. Ricky's handwritten letter thanked them for all they did for him in the last few months of his life. He apologized for never telling them who he really was and how hard he was struggling with his past. "My one regret," he wrote, "is deserting you or hurting you in any way.

"I come from an extremely abusive cult and have tried in the four years I've been out to figure out what 'normal' life is like, and how I can be a part of it. . . . I guess I haven't done that bad. But that's on the surface. Emotionally, it's gotten harder every day I've been out. I've