

## **Father Francis P. Rogers**

*The Grand Jury will never be able to determine how many boys Father Francis P. Rogers raped and sexually abused in his more than 50 years as a priest. Nor, probably, will we or anyone else be able to calculate the number of boys the Archdiocese could have saved from sexual abuse had it investigated potential victims rather than protecting itself from scandal and shielding this sexually abusive priest. We have learned of at least three victims who we believe would not have been abused had the Archdiocese taken decisive action when it learned of Fr. Rogers' "familiarity" with boys. We find that the Archdiocese received a litany of verifiable reports beginning shortly after Fr. Rogers' 1946 ordination and continuing for decades about his serious misconduct with, and abuse of, boys.*

*One of his victims described waking up intoxicated in the priest's bed, opening his eyes to see Fr. Rogers, three other priests, and a seminarian surrounding him. Two of the priests ejaculated on him while Fr. Rogers masturbated himself. Then Fr. Rogers sucked on the victim's penis, pinched his nipples, kissed him, and rubbed his stubbly beard all over him. The former altar boy, whom Fr. Rogers began abusing when he was about 12 years old, remains haunted by memories of the abuse more than 35 years later.*

*Father Rogers' file demonstrates that the Archdiocese responded to reports of his crimes with a shameful half-century of transfers, excuses, and finger-wagging threats that did nothing to deter the priest from indulging his self-acknowledged "weakness" and that exposed every boy in his path to the very real and horrible possibility of sexual abuse.*

### **Father Rogers sexually abuses "Russell."**

In approximately 1962 or 1963, during his first year as an assistant pastor at Saint Joachim's parish in Philadelphia, Fr. Francis Rogers began molesting Russell, having selected him as an altar boy. The priest was 43 or 44; Russell was around 12. Father Rogers sexually abused Russell every week until sometime after Russell turned 16. In a statement he provided to the Grand Jury, discussions with the Archdiocese, a letter he wrote to a detective, and a follow-up interview with the detective, Russell described an escalating sequence of abuse that began when he was an altar boy working on setting up a manger. On that first occasion, Fr. Rogers put his hand inside Russell's underwear and slid his finger into the cleft between Russell's buttocks. Russell was baffled; he knew that what Fr. Rogers had done was a bad thing, but Fr. Rogers was smiling and, moreover, he was a priest and as Russell had been taught, priests were "chosen by God and could do no wrong."

Quickly thereafter, Fr. Rogers insinuated himself into Russell's home and began to take Russell to dinner and the movies. The boy grew to hate these outings because they ended with kissing that, in Russell's words, "led to something else," namely Fr. Rogers putting Russell's penis in his mouth. Russell's psychological turmoil was intense. He blamed himself for Fr. Rogers' sexual attacks and hated himself as a result. Like other abuse victims, Russell decided "it must have been something I did to make him do these things to me." Father Rogers had chosen his victim well; young Russell wanted to make his father proud of him and saw his family's pride in the attention Fr. Rogers paid him. These factors likely created a very strong pressure on the boy not to report the priest's abuse.

Father Rogers used alcohol to limit Russell's ability to resist his attacks. He regularly took Russell to a New Jersey beach house and got him drunk. Having done so, he took Russell to bed and did whatever he wanted to him. Father Rogers also inflicted pain on the boy. He made a practice of rubbing his beard stubble all over the boy, focusing on his nipples and the head of his penis. Father Rogers simply ignored Russell when he said that it hurt and asked the priest to stop. Russell hid his feelings of fear and disgust in the alcohol Fr. Rogers forced on him. To this day, he recalls Fr. Rogers' sweaty, hairy chest all over him and the priest's gin-soaked breath.

Father Rogers took the boy to New York for Broadway shows and fancy restaurants almost as if they were dating; at the restaurants the priest would place an alcoholic drink before the child. Afterwards, back in the car, he made the boy fondle his penis and then drove him to New Jersey for further abuse.

Russell wrote to the detective that one summer day Fr. Rogers anally raped him despite his best efforts to protect himself. Father Rogers had taken Russell and a group of altar boys to his New Jersey Shore house. The boy figured that if he left the beach ahead of the others and showered and dressed he would be safe from Fr. Rogers' predations: the priest would not touch him in front of the others. Russell went to the garage where the showers and a makeshift chapel were in close proximity. When he emerged from the shower, Fr. Rogers jumped him, ripped his towel off and threw him to the cement floor on which the boy struck his head. They landed in the chapel. Father Rogers forced the boy's

legs up and stuck his erect penis into his anus, causing extreme pain. When he had sated himself, Fr. Rogers left the boy on the ground. Russell dressed and rode Fr. Rogers' bicycle 15 miles to his sister's summerhouse in Ocean City but was too afraid to tell his mother and sister what had happened to him. Unaware what happened to Russell, the boy's sister and mother put the bike into the car and drove him back to his abuser. Father Rogers was frightened at first, thinking the boy had revealed the assault. When he discovered that his sexual abuse of the boy was still secret, Fr. Rogers instructed the boy never to reveal it. Father Rogers told the boy that if others learned of the abuse they would think ill of Russell's mother for allowing him to be with the priest.

It would be unseemly to compare or rank the types of psychological and sexual abuse Fr. Rogers heaped upon Russell. Yet, one event, involving the presence of multiple priests, is particularly notable. As Russell described it in his letter to the detective, one morning at the shore house he awoke intoxicated in bed. Opening his eyes, he saw Fr. Rogers, three priests, and a seminarian looking at him. Two of the priests ejaculated on him while watching Fr. Rogers masturbate himself with one hand and caress Russell's penis with the other. Then Fr. Rogers sucked Russell's penis, pinched his nipples, kissed him on the lips, and rubbed his beard all over him. More than 35 years later Russell still trembles at the memory of this abuse.

Father Rogers was simultaneously abusing a friend of Russell's. One winter day when Russell was visiting Fr. Rogers, he saw the boy sucking Fr. Rogers' penis. Detected, the priest ordered Russell to go shovel the driveway.

### **The Archdiocese fails to respond effectively to three separate reports prior to Father Rogers' rape of Russell.**

Had the Archdiocese paid attention to prior reports of Fr. Rogers' abuse of boys, the priest might never have had the chance to rape Russell and assault other boys. We find that by May 5, 1961, the date on which the Archdiocese Chancellor, John J. Noone, wrote a memorandum to the file about then-current reports of Fr. Rogers' misconduct with boys, Fr. Rogers already had a more than 10-year history of reports of serious misbehavior with boys. On that date, more than a year before he ever met Russell, Fr. Rogers was an assistant pastor at Saint Francis of Assisi in Norristown. According to the Church memo,

Doctor Hoffman, a psychiatrist, conveyed to Fr. Noone reports of Fr. Rogers' "familiarity" with 8th- and 9th-grade boys. The Chancellor met with Fr. (later Monsignor) Charles Devlin, the second assistant at Saint Francis, Msgr. McNally and Fr. Rogers. He recorded that Fr. Rogers "has taken boys out of school for trips to the seashore, occasionally overnight ones; frequently takes boys in his automobile and to drive-ins. He provides opportunities for them to smoke in his car or the parish garage; has [a]llowed them to drink; taken obscene pictures of them, and showed them indecent magazines." Father Noone also noted that some of the boys' mothers had complained; that one boy had told his mother he "never want[ed] to go with Father Rogers again"; that Fr. Rogers was known to wrestle with boys in public and lift them above his head; and that his speech was sometimes "vulgar and startling."

These were not the first complaints concerning Fr. Rogers' improper contact with boys. Father Noone's memo discloses that Fr. Rogers was "[f]amiliar" with boys in at least two other assignments dating back to his first assignment at Saint Patrick in Pottsville in 1946-1949. The precise meaning of this seemingly innocuous word, "familiar," is lost to time: the Secret Archives file contains no documents detailing the pre-1961 allegations. The Grand Jury notes, however, that Fr. Noone used the word "familiarity" to describe the above, serious charges against Fr. Rogers, which provides some clue as to the behavior he had previously been accused of committing. (Appendix D-21)

Father Noone's memo does not explicitly state that Fr. Rogers admitted the truth of the allegations against him. However, we find for two reasons that he must have either explicitly or implicitly done so. First, Fr. Noone concluded, after meeting with Fr. Rogers and others, that Fr. Rogers had committed the misconduct; given Church practice, it is highly unlikely that he would have drawn that conclusion had Fr. Rogers not admitted to the misconduct. Moreover, the memo recites that Fr. Rogers' response to the allegations was to "reveal the history of his weakness." We find that that phrase is a euphemism for Fr. Rogers' preference for sexual activity with boys: Fr. Rogers' explanation of the history of his "weakness" was that he said he was "victimized" by a boarder in his own home as a boy, that he had a weak character and an inferiority complex, and that he was "victimized" in the seminary by an older student.

It apparently never occurred to anyone in the Archdiocese to have a psychiatrist examine Fr. Rogers even though there was clearly one available – the report of Fr. Rogers’ misconduct had come from a psychiatrist who was already treating the pastor of Fr. Rogers’ parish. We find that even in the early 1960’s it would not have required great psychological insight to order such an examination, given Fr. Rogers’ claim that he had been repeatedly abused himself and the fact that this was the *third* parish reporting that he had committed serious improprieties with boys. Instead, in handwritten notes on the memo, Cardinal Krol himself established the ineffective procedure that would be followed repeatedly with Fr. Rogers: warn him that he must change his behavior or face allegedly harsh consequences. Two sets of the Cardinal’s notes appear on the memo. The first prescribes an immediate retreat, a “[s]evere warning that any further complaint will call for summary deactivation!” and “transfer to another post.” The second set states that the Cardinal met with Fr. Rogers on May 8, 1961, and notes: “1) 2 week retreat; 2) change; and 3) Caveat! Must avoid slightest suspicion – any further complaint will provoke effective action to preclude scandal – even civil.”

The Grand Jury finds that Cardinal Krol’s notes do not direct that any attempt be made to determine which boys Fr. Rogers abused or speak to them about what Fr. Rogers did to them. Instead, the Archdiocesan response to the serious allegations against the priest was, at best, lukewarm and apparently motivated by the fear of “scandal.” We also note that even the two week retreat that Cardinal Krol prescribed to alter Fr. Rogers’ more than decade-long practice of abusing boys was not possible: the Trappist Monastery where Fr. Rogers was sent permitted only ten day, not two week, retreats.

**The Archdiocese fails to respond adequately to accumulating evidence of Father Rogers’ deficiencies of character and continuing misconduct with boys.**

The Grand Jury finds that Fr. Rogers’ self-described weak character manifested itself in other than sexual ways that should have raised questions about his fitness to retain any position of trust or authority. A 1965 letter from a parishioner reported that Fr. Rogers had declined a request that he visit a woman before a serious operation despite having had more than six hours to do so; the woman died shortly after her operation. A 1969 letter

from another parishioner reported that Fr. Rogers had announced at the wake of her husband's 89-year-old great-uncle that no priest would be at the grave the following morning. The family decided to conduct the prayers themselves and, before ten p.m., rang the bell of the rectory, seeking to borrow the necessary prayer book from Fr. Rogers. The parishioner reported that Fr. Rogers took offense and ordered them from the rectory saying, "Get out! I don't have to stand here and be insulted... Get out!" A 1970 memo to the file from Chancellor Terrence F. Monihan noted a visit from a parishioner whose son Fr. Rogers had struck with a stick when the boy missed an altar boy assignment; the parishioner had to be persuaded not to report the incident to the police. According to the memo, Fr. Rogers admitted that he struck the child and promised that he "would never strike a child again, and certainly would never use a stick to strike a child again."

The Grand Jury further notes that the Archdiocese either ignored or, at best, failed to act effectively in response to additional reports of Fr. Rogers' misbehavior with boys. Mothers of Saint Barnabas parish students sent an anonymous letter in May 1973 to the Chancery reporting that Fr. Rogers used foul language with women and children; constantly wrestled with boys in public and in private; and took older boys for rides in his car during school hours without informing their teachers. The letter-writers stated that they were withholding their names to safeguard their children but declared that little effort would be required to verify the truth of their report. These allegations are disturbingly reminiscent of the 1961 report of Fr. Rogers' misbehavior already discussed, a report whose allegations of his misbehavior with boys that Fr. Rogers essentially conceded was true.

We find that the Archdiocese's response to the May 1973 reports of serious misconduct, like its response to the 1961 memo, was not calculated to protect the safety of the boys to whom Fr. Rogers had access. Chancellor Statkus explicitly told Fr. Rogers, as he recorded in his June 8, 1973, memo to the file, that he would take no action: "I noted to him that we would not take any action or investigate the letter since it is anonymous; however, I noted that if a signed letter or report comes to our attention, he will then be confronted." Monsignor Statkus' brief memo concludes with the following sentence, that lacks even the strength of Cardinal Krol's 1961 consideration of the possibility of

summary deactivation: “I indicated to him that in view of the past reports, any future unfavorable reports would be treated very seriously.” We find that in light of the fact that it had been at least 24 years since the first reports of Fr. Rogers’ misbehavior with boys that this comment from Msgr. Statkus was extremely unlikely to have any deterrent effect on the priest’s misbehavior.

A signed complaint about Fr. Rogers’ conduct arrived at the Archdiocese in January 1974; the writer, “Elizabeth,” stated that Fr. Rogers was a bad example for Saint Barnabas boys and was vulgar with the women. Chancellor Statkus met with Fr. Rogers concerning the letter. Interestingly, although the letter did not allege improper contact with boys, the memo notes that “[a]s to his rapport with the boys, [Fr. Rogers] alleged no actions and no trips with anyone, but stated that he used vulgar expressions or words.” Chancellor Statkus also repeated the familiar admonitions to Fr. Rogers:

I noted to Father Rogers that in view of previous reports of his using vulgar and offensive language even when he was stationed at Incarnation parish [1968-1971], and in view of other more serious matter in earlier times, any further indications or reports of vulgarity or erratic behavior will be treated with sternness.

I noted that such action would be taken which would not only indicate a change of assignment but would place him for psychiatric consultation and care and possible inpatient rehabilitation.

One indication of the lack of gravity with which Fr. Rogers apparently regarded this now-familiar warning (in fairness, the portion of the censure concerning psychiatric consultation and possible inpatient rehabilitation was somewhat new) was that he asked Msgr. Statkus whether he would be assigned a pastorate. The Chancellor told Fr. Rogers that he would not be considered for such a promotion unless there was positive evidence “that these matters have been eliminated.” An answer was not long in coming, albeit not the one the Archdiocese was apparently hoping to receive. Fewer than two weeks later, the Archdiocese began to receive anonymous letters asserting an improper association between Fr. Rogers and a married woman who lived in Saint Barnabas parish. Chancellor Statkus spoke with Fr. Rogers, who denied the allegations. Statkus also spoke with Fr. Gough, Fr. Rogers’ pastor, who “feels that there is no scandal; and, therefore, no need to transfer him now.” When Fr. Gough was sent a letter in March 1974 repeating the accusation against

Fr. Rogers, Fr. Rogers reported that he destroyed it, allegedly to prevent Fr. Gough from being “distracted” during a hospital stay. Chancellor Statkus advised Fr. Rogers that if the letter writing continued, a transfer might have to be considered.

### **The Archdiocese continues to tolerate Father Rogers’ misconduct with boys.**

The Grand Jury finds that on June 25, 1975 (as well as at several previous and subsequent times), the Archdiocese was deeply suspicious of Fr. Rogers’ conduct with boys (and women) but unwilling to take decisive action or to preclude Fr. Rogers’ potential advancement within the Church, even though Fr. Rogers did not deny the truth of the reports of his misconduct. In a June 26, 1975, memo to the file, Vice Chancellor Francis Clemins recounted a recent meeting with Fr. Rogers. Monsignor Clemins summarized the Archdiocese’s concern about promoting Fr. Rogers: “I told him that the suspicion of patterns involving homosexuality has been in the picture for some time, and I again reminded him that he knows of what I am speaking. He nodded in a positive way.”

In the two sentences that follow the acknowledgment of Fr. Rogers’ long history of suspected sexual contact with young boys, Msgr. Clemins summarizes the Archdiocese’s position on Fr. Rogers’ future advancement and Fr. Rogers’ response: “I told [Fr. Rogers] ... that in spite of these problems he has not been taken out of consideration for a pastorate, but this apprehension still exists. He offered no defense or argument in favor of new evidence that he has put aside any reason for such suspicion.” In other words, despite Fr. Rogers’ lengthy history of suspected sexual contact with boys and his complete failure to demonstrate that he had ceased such behavior, the Archdiocese still regarded him as a candidate for a pastorate.

Cardinal Krol had, nearly 15 years earlier, reacted to the allegations of Fr. Rogers “familiarity” with boys in the 1961 memo by prescribing a retreat, urging “change” and threatening transfer. Now, in March 1976, he met with Fr. Rogers at the priest’s request to discuss a possible pastorate. According to the Cardinal’s handwritten, signed notes, he reviewed Fr. Rogers’ record on the “various types of complaints that have been lodged against him on serious and less serious types of charges.” The Cardinal noted that those



charges gave rise to questions not only about Fr. Rogers' "weakness" but also about his "ability to engage the sympathetic cooperation of the people he serves." As to the complaints, the Cardinal noted that they "can be argued or explained but you cannot deny that some people were sufficiently disturbed by him to complain against him." The Cardinal noted that he told Fr. Rogers that he could make "no promises or predictions, however I will ask for a review of his record and for an evaluation of the risks, if any, entailed in entrusting him with a [last word illegible]." The Grand Jury finds that in 1976, given the accumulation of evidence over the thirty years of Fr. Rogers' priesthood, the Cardinal knew or should have known that Fr. Rogers posed a substantial risk in any situation that brought him into contact with boys.

Fewer than two months later, a Saint Barnabas parishioner named "Mary" wrote an April 19, 1976, letter to "Your Eminence" and an April 20, 1976, letter to "Monsignor" concerning the behavior of the Saint Barnabas priests, especially Fr. Rogers. In the April 20, 1976, letter, Mary stated that Fr. Rogers' "chasing of boys is well known." The Archdiocese had previously declined to investigate earlier, anonymous complaints from the mothers of Saint Barnabas parish stating that Fr. Rogers was wrestling with boys in public and private and taking them for unauthorized rides in his car during school hours, despite the similarity of these reports to the 1961 allegations against him that Fr. Rogers had either implicitly or explicitly admitted were true. Mary's report was not anonymous. Yet, there is no indication in the file that the Archdiocese ever contacted the non-anonymous Mary. Each of her two signed letters bears the handwritten notation, "No address listed F.J.S[tatkus]." There is no other evidence in the file of any attempt to find or speak with Mary. Within one month of the receipt of these letters, Fr. Rogers was transferred from Saint Barnabas.

**The Archdiocese attempts to limit the damage resulting from Father Rogers' admission that he sexually abused Russell.**

In March 1998, Russell informed the Archdiocese that Fr. Rogers had sexually abused him for years in the early 1960s. Father Rogers' file contains undated 1998 notes recording some of those allegations, as well as notes headed with the name "Hank Keene,"

one of the Archdiocese's attorneys. Those notes indicate that even at the point that Russell came forward to identify Fr. Rogers as having sexually abused him – further proving what the Archdiocese had known for decades – the Archdiocese still sought to avoid having to act. Underneath Mr. Keene's name, the notes say "due to time since alleged incident," "no recent complaints," "Fr. R. age – (77?)," "H.K. advice – wait for letter before confront."

On April 6, 1998, Russell met with Msgr. Lynn and Fr. Measure and provided the details of Fr. Rogers' abuse, as well as the name of "Richard," a current parishioner who, as a boy, had been sexually abused by Fr. Rogers. Monsignor Lynn's account of the meeting to Cardinal Bevilacqua hopefully notes that Russell was "not antagonistic and did not make any demands." The memo also delicately records that material in the Secret Archives indicates that "there was a problem" in the 1960's with this behavior." Interviewed that day, Fr. Rogers initially declared Russell's accusations to be "maybe" true. Then, he admitted to sexually fondling Russell when Russell was a boy. Finally, he admitted that, according to Fr. Measure, "[Russell] was being truthful in his accusations."

Father Measure reported that after consulting with legal counsel it was decided that it was sufficient, given Fr. Rogers' age and retired status, for Fr. Rogers to receive outpatient psychological evaluation. The Grand Jury finds that the initial findings and recommendations of Vianney therapist Andrea Delligatti, Ph.D., who performed a psychological evaluation of Fr. Rogers, do not demonstrate even a cursory knowledge of Fr. Rogers' psychological makeup. The Archdiocese therapist did not diagnose Fr. Rogers as having any sexual disorder. We also find it significant that the materials produced to the Grand Jury by the Archdiocese do not include a final Psychodiagnostic report concerning Fr. Rogers.

Despite Fr. Rogers' admission to sexually abusing Russell, the Archdiocese preferred not to provide Russell with additional information. For instance, in October 1998, when Russell asked Fr. Measure to tell him the name of the one priest Fr. Rogers had identified as a participant in masturbating on Russell, Fr. Measure told him that the man was dead and because he could not defend himself against the accusation, "I was not sure that it would be right to be giving out his name." Father Measure's concern for the priest's reputation in light of the "accusation" was arguably misplaced. Seemingly it was more a

fact than an accusation since Fr. Rogers had admitted that the event had occurred and himself provided the priest's name.

In further contravention of their professed dedication to the needs of victims of sexual abuse, Archdiocese officials did not attempt to find additional victims of Fr. Rogers, even when provided with a name. On April 7, 1998, Russell told Fr. Measure that he had spoken the night before to another Rogers victim, Richard, who was willing to speak to the Archdiocese about his abuse if contacted. Father Measure told Russell that since Fr. Rogers was "cooperating," he did not see a need to contact Richard, although Russell was welcome to tell Richard to call if he needed assistance. We find that Archdiocese's behavior in Fr. Rogers' case was not an isolated example of its unwillingness to seek out additional victims of identified abusers. Rather, the Archdiocese adopted a passive approach: it would speak to those victims who came forward but not to speak to or seek additional victims even where provided with the names and/or addresses of those victims.

Church officials were more willing to be aggressive when it came to the possibility that Russell would file a civil suit. In a June 3, 1999, letter to Russell, an attorney for the Archdiocese declared that the Archdiocese had concluded that two other people had had sexual contact with Russell when he was a minor. The basis for the attorney's statement was apparently the fact that during his initial interview with Fr. Measure and Fr. Lynn, Russell revealed that a baby sitter and a relative had molested him by the time he met Fr. Rogers. Ultimately, the Archdiocese paid some of Russell's counseling and other medical bills but declined any other financial settlement.

### **More victims come forward.**

If the Archdiocese hoped that failing actively to seek additional victims would prevent them from coming forward, it was to be disappointed. On February 28, 2002, Msgr. Lynn received a call from a man concerning the period from 1959 to 1961 when Fr. Rogers was assigned to Saint Francis of Assisi in Norristown – the assignment that was the subject of the 1961 memo. Because Lynn kept limited, semi-legible and cryptic notes, it is impossible to say what, if anything, Fr. Rogers did to the caller. However, in a subsequent

letter Msgr. Lynn expressed the hope that their conversation had been able “to ease your mind somewhat, and was an instrument of closure for you.”

On March 11, 2002, fewer than two months later, the Archdiocese received a call from a victim who said he was “abused when he was ten years old by Fr. Francis Rogers at Townsend’s Inlet and elsewhere, trips to Hair and Jesus Christ Superstar.” Although he did not want to give a full account of his abuse, the victim mentioned (presumably as places where the abuse occurred): Saint Joachim’s (where Fr. Rogers was assigned from 1962 to 1968), Incarnation (1968 to 1971), and “61<sup>st</sup> and Dickerson.” A third new case of child sexual abuse by Fr. Rogers was reported in June 2002. In that month, the Deacon of the Archdiocese of Charleston, South Carolina, called to report that “Sean” reported that Fr. Rogers had sexually abused him in approximately 1976-77 when Fr. Rogers was Assistant Pastor at Saint Ambrose. Msgr. Lynn’s handwritten notes on the phone message relate that the abuse involved fondling and sex. They also list the names of two males, one of whom is recorded as having committed suicide. There is no evidence that the Archdiocese attempted to investigate the abuse of either of those males or questioned Fr. Rogers about them.

Father Rogers’ abuse of his young victims was shameful, as was the Archdiocese’s unwillingness or refusal to stop it. Had the Archdiocese interceded, as it should have, instead of allowing Fr. Rogers to remain a priest for more than 50 years, it likely would have saved countless boys from the trauma inflicted on them by Fr. Rogers.

Father Rogers was never punished or held to account for his unchecked sexual predations or the devastation they caused. He was permitted to retire in 1995, his “good name” intact. The message clearly communicated by the Archdiocese’s actions – to victims and abusers alike – was that it would protect the reputation of its priests at all costs. This twisted sense of priorities was not lost on Fr. Rogers. In 2002, according to a Philadelphia Inquirer article, Fr. Rogers admitted to having sexual relations with Russell but minimized its significance and questioned the importance of the disclosure. Father Rogers said that the abuse “may have happened but it was not as prolonged as he says it was. . . . Naturally, he was young and I was older, so I should have known better. I don’t know why it has to come out now. . . . It will just ruin my reputation.”

On October 6, 2004, faced with the possibility of involuntary laicization, Fr. Rogers agreed to live “a supervised life of prayer and penance” at Villa Saint Joseph, a retirement home for priests. Although he was sworn in to testify before the first grand jury, it was determined that Fr. Rogers was too feeble to be questioned and no testimony was taken. He died in February 2005.



## **Father Francis X. Trauger**

*One night in a Poconos motel in the spring of 1981, Fr. Francis X. Trauger repeatedly tried to anally penetrate a 12-year-old altar boy and for hours manually manipulated his penis. After the 5th-grader's parents reported the abuse through their parish pastor, the Archdiocese recorded the event this way: "They shared the same bed and there were touches."*

*The pastor passed on other allegations against the priest, involving another boy. The Archdiocese report stated: "same bed: touches." A few days later, Fr. Trauger himself told an Archdiocese official that "two similar events" occurred that spring with still two other boys. Subsequent years saw Church officials record other reports of "touches" and "camping."*

*The Archdiocese's use of such delicate euphemisms had the effect of concealing the true nature of Fr. Trauger's crimes. Whether the result of intentional obfuscation or a refusal to interview victims directly, the Archdiocese's responses to abuse allegations effectively shielded the priest from legal or criminal action and facilitated decades of sexual predation.*

*Ordained in 1972, Fr. Trauger was transferred eight times during his long career, each time to a parish with a school attached, each time without a warning to parish parents about the priest's predilections. Six of the transfers occurred after 1981, when the Archdiocese began recording abuse allegations.*

### **Father Trauger is transferred following 1981 abuse reports.**

The first recorded accusation against Fr. Francis Trauger reached the Chancellor of the Archdiocese, Monsignor Francis J. Statkus, on August 6, 1981. Two families had reported to Fr. Anthony McGuire, the pastor of Saint Titus Church in Norristown, that Fr. Trauger had molested their young sons. One of the boys, "Evan," was 12 years old; the other, "Carl," was 13. Both had been taken by the assistant pastor, on separate occasions, overnight to the Poconos, where the priest had the boys sleep in his bed.

Monsignor Statkus recorded the barest description of the abuse itself. He wrote only that the boys shared a bed with the priest and there were "touches." He added, regarding the abuse of Evan: "reportedly, according to Msgr. McG, no sodomy." He did not record whether there was sodomy with Carl.

Monsignor Statkus wrote extensively, however, about the character of the two boys' families, apparently with an eye toward whether either would make the assaults

public. Evan's mother and father were "fine parishioners, cooperative workers, and credible." They "kept this matter to themselves." Carl's parents, on the other hand, were "not stable." They reportedly had spoken to others about their son's night with Fr. Trauger. Monsignor McGuire, according to Msgr. Statkus's notes, was "of the mind that there is scandal in the parish and that Father T should be transferred."

On August 10, 1981, Fr. Trauger admitted to Msgr. Statkus's assistant, Fr. Donald Walker, that he had taken the boys to the Poconos, slept in the same bed with them, and "massaged" them. The incident with Evan took place in March 1981, while the one with Carl occurred in June 1981. Father Walker wrote that Fr. Trauger admitted that "two similar events occurred at his mountain home in the spring with two other boys from the parish" in addition to Evan and Carl.

Father Walker did not ask the identity of the two unnamed boys. There is no record that he, or anyone from the Archdiocese, contacted the known victims or their families. Rather, Fr. Walker instructed Fr. Trauger not to contact the boys again, to "desist" from one-on-one interactions with boys in general, and to secure professional help.

Monsignor Statkus's delicate description of the abuse as "touches" was not the gruesome picture the Grand Jury received. On December 11, 2003, Evan told the Grand Jury that he was 11 or 12 years old when Fr. Trauger molested him in the shower at Saint Charles Borromeo Seminary and attempted to anally rape him at a motel in the Poconos.

Evan had been an altar boy in 5th grade, under Fr. Trauger's supervision. He testified that he initially liked the attention Fr. Trauger paid to the boys in the parish, playing basketball and visiting the school's classrooms.

Evan was enthusiastic when Fr. Trauger took him to the seminary to play basketball. When the priest suggested they shower together and then moved from soaping the boy's back to fondling his penis, Evan was confused. Evan resisted efforts by Fr. Trauger to make the boy handle the priest's penis, so the priest rubbed his penis against the boy's backside. Evan said he didn't know whether what the priest had done was normal or abnormal, but he felt nauseous afterwards and could not speak with his family about what happened.



Now a grown man, Evan, a police officer, cried as he testified about what happened when Fr. Trauger took him overnight to the Poconos — supposedly to see a house that the priest was thinking of buying and then to go skiing. Evan said that looking at the house entailed going to a rundown house, peering through windows, but not going inside. Skiing never happened at all. Instead, Fr. Trauger took the boy to a motel. Although there were two beds, the priest insisted they sleep in one to save housekeeping some work. In order to explain why the boy needed to sleep naked, the priest turned the heat up high.

Although Evan assumed a fetal position on the edge of the bed, and pretended to be asleep, the priest's hand was soon on the boy's penis. Evan described an unbearably long night of abuse. He said the priest fondled his penis for hours. He could feel the priest's rubbing against his back. After a while, he said, the priest moved his penis toward the boy's anus. He remembered Fr. Trauger persistently trying to penetrate the boy. Evan was not sure whether the priest succeeded in penetrating him anally. Evan said the next thing he remembered was the sunlight. The priest's hand was still on the boy's penis. He could not remember getting dressed or the drive home.

Although Evan's abuse was reported (the exact nature of the report cannot be determined from Father Statkus's notes of "same bed" and "touches"), along with Carl's in 1981, no one from the Archdiocese asked Evan about it until November 2003, when he was contacted by an investigator who had been hired by the Archdiocese's law firm to assist the Review Board. Evan told the Grand Jury that he said to himself, "twenty-three years and finally somebody wants to ask me what happened." Although Evan had never even told his wife, he agreed to meet the investigator because "he had a lot to say."

Evan said he had always felt guilty about not telling anyone so that Fr. Trauger could be stopped. He did not realize that others had informed the Archdiocese about Fr. Trauger and that it was not Evan's fault that the priest actively ministered to children for 22 more years.

On August 12, 1981, six days after receiving the complaints regarding Evan and Carl, Cardinal Krol transferred Fr. Trauger to Saint Matthew, another Philadelphia parish with a school. Father Trauger had his first appointment with a psychologist who was to evaluate his mental fitness on August 13. After three one-hour appointments with Dr.

Dennis Donnelly, Fr. Trauger himself reported the results to Assistant Chancellor Walker. According to Fr. Walker's notes, Fr. Trauger told him that Dr. Donnelly had "found no evidence of homosexual problems on the part of Father T but there was a gross error in judgment." Father Trauger promised that a written evaluation would follow, but none was found in the priest's file.

### **Following a 1982 abuse report, Father Trauger is transferred again.**

A year later, on August 2, 1982, Fr. Trauger again was accused of making sexual advances toward a student at his parish school. According to Chancellor Statkus's notes, on July 22, 1982, Fr. Trauger took 14-year-old "Marty" to his Pocono mountain house, ostensibly so that the boy could help mow the grass. Marty's father told Msgr. Statkus that Fr. Trauger made the boy sleep with him in a small tent, under one blanket, although there were two bedrooms in the priest's house. Marty told his father that, throughout the night, Fr. Trauger touched and rubbed up against the boy even though he kept telling the priest to stay on his own side. The next morning, the priest drove Marty home, but while they waited for his parents, who were out, Fr. Trauger tried to tickle and "wrestle" with the boy. When his parents arrived home, they found Marty outside their property, upset and crying.

When his father asked what was wrong, Marty related the above account, though his father suspected there was more that Marty did not tell him. Marty also told his father that he did not want to accompany Fr. Trauger on a planned two-week camping trip to South Dakota.

Marty's father was a detective in the Philadelphia police department. He reported Fr. Trauger's actions to the morals division of the police department on the morning of August 2, 1982. After hearing his complaint, an unnamed morals division officer contacted David McKenzie at the Catholic Youth Organization office. McKenzie, in turn, contacted Msgr. Statkus, who arranged to meet with the father on the afternoon of August 2.

Monsignor Statkus wrote after his meeting with Marty's father, the detective: "The [parents] have not discussed this with anyone outside the family and an officer of the Morals Division. The priests of Saint Matthew were not contacted by him or by Chancery. I suggest that no mention be made to the priests. . . ." Monsignor Statkus also noted that he

had successfully diverted Marty's father from pursuing the matter with the police or otherwise: "Convinced of our sincere resolve to take the necessary action regarding Fr. T., Mr. [...] does not plan to press any charges, police or otherwise."

When Msgr. Statkus tried to contact Fr. Trauger on August 2, 1982, the priest was in South Dakota camping with two boys from Saint Matthew's School. The Chancellor immediately asked his assistant, Fr. Walker, to contact Dr. Donnelly for reassurance that Fr. Trauger was "not of a homosexual orientation." And Cardinal Krol, who had routinely reassigned Fr. Trauger to a new parish after four similar incidents the year before, declared the case "very serious."

While Archdiocese officials quickly took steps necessary to keep Marty's father from pursuing charges criminally, their records show no action taken with regard to the two boys camping with Fr. Trauger in South Dakota. Despite the "very serious" nature of this case, there is no evidence that the Archdiocese contacted the parents. According to notes of an August 8, 1982, meeting with Fr. Trauger, Msgr. Statkus questioned the priest about Marty, but asked nothing about the other two boys, including their identity. Monsignor Statkus recorded that Fr. Trauger told him of about eight camping trips he had taken with young boys during the preceding year. Again, there was no mention of an inquiry into who these boys were or what happened on the camping trips.

At Cardinal Krol's direction, Msgr. Statkus informed Fr. Trauger that his assignment at Saint Matthew was terminated, that his faculties were suspended pending evaluation, and that he was to report to Villa Saint John Vianney Hospital, the church-affiliated treatment center in Downingtown. Fr. Trauger underwent an evaluation there on August 11, 1982. His evaluating psychologist, Phillip J. Miraglia, recommended inpatient treatment followed by an "intensive retreat" and outpatient therapy.

Dr. Miraglia found "frustration regarding sexual expression and some confusion regarding sexual object choice." However, the psychologist thought the "quality of the responses . . . benign." The therapist understated the seriousness of the charges against Fr. Trauger in his final report of September 24, 1982, in which he commended Fr. Trauger's acceptance of "the fact that he demonstrated poor judgment in planning a camping trip with a young student." No mention was made that Fr. Trauger had, in fact, inappropriately

touched at least five boys in the previous 18 months and gone “camping” with innumerable others. The weakness of the report may not be the fault of Dr. Miraglia, who may not have been made aware of any behavior other than “physical contact” with one boy while camping.

The Cardinal’s response to this “very serious case” was, once again, to transfer Fr. Trauger to a different parish. On October 1, 1982, Cardinal Krol assigned Fr. Trauger to Saint Francis DeSales in West Philadelphia, a parish with a grammar school. Monsignor Statkus again instructed the priest not to take trips with boys, but he encouraged Fr. Trauger to participate in the parish’s youth activities including, “visiting the school, moderating the altar boys . . . as well as the CYO.”

Monsignor Statkus further told Fr. Trauger “that his most recent indiscretion was viewed as a very serious matter and was filled with extremely dire circumstances which could have led to greater scandal.” Although the obfuscations and vagueness of documents make it difficult to establish exactly how the Archdiocese saw Fr. Trauger’s “recent indiscretion” compared to his previous ones, one important difference, and one that clearly got the attention of the Archdiocese, was that the father of the victim of the most recent indiscretion was a police detective who had made a police report.

**With serious allegations against him, Father Trauger is reassigned to four more parishes.**

Father Trauger was transferred four more times in his career. He went as parochial vicar to Saint Matthew, Conshohocken, in June 1985 and left in September 1988. From there he went to Annunciation B.V.M., in South Philadelphia, staying less than a year. In June 1989 he was transferred to Saint Joseph, in Aston, Delaware County, where he remained until June 1993, when Cardinal Bevilacqua appointed him parochial vicar of Saint Michael the Archangel in Levittown.

Cardinal Bevilacqua, having become Archbishop in February 1988, was responsible for three of the reassignments. With allegations described by Cardinal Krol as “extremely serious” from three named victims on file, along with several other admissions

of suspicious but unexplored “events,” “touches,” and “camping,” Archbishop Bevilacqua named Fr. Trauger Parochial Vicar of three parishes with grade schools.

There is nothing on record to indicate that the priest’s activities with youth were restricted in any way or that anyone in the new parishes, including the pastors, was ever informed of the reasons why Fr. Trauger had left past assignments.

### **The Archdiocese in 1991 receives a report that Father Trauger is stalking a boy.**

Archbishop Bevilacqua’s last transfer of Fr. Trauger – to Saint Michael the Archangel in 1993 – followed a report that in April 1991, while Parochial Vicar at Saint Joseph’s, Fr. Trauger had stalked a student at Saint John Neumann High School after encountering the boy in a center city bookstore. Even the less-than-rigorous “investigation” conducted by Archbishop Bevilacqua’s staff revealed that Fr. Trauger used his standing as a priest to track down personal information about this student. First, he ascertained the boy’s name from Fr. Ronald Rossi, vice principal at his high school. Then he obtained the boy’s phone number, address, and family information from Fr. Dominic Chiaravalle, the boy’s pastor at Epiphany in South Philadelphia. The next day, Fr. Trauger used his priestly status to remove the boy from class, take him to a room, and presume to “counsel” the boy for an hour and a half about the homosexual pornography he had been perusing in the bookstore.

The boy’s mother called the school, concerned when her son did not return home as scheduled. She called school officials again, very upset, when she learned the content of her son’s conversation with the unfamiliar priest. She did not know that the priest had made sexual advances during their “conversation.” Nor, it appears from records, did Archdiocese officials, because they did not question the student about the incident. (According to a February 9, 2004, recommendation by the Archdiocesan Review Board, prepared after the boy was finally interviewed in 2003, he reported that, in addition to talking about sex, Fr. Trauger felt the boy’s knee and upper thigh.)

School officials reported the incident to the Archdiocese on April 12, 1991. Secretary for Clergy John J. Jagodzinski recorded the report – though not the name of the student involved – and forwarded it to Msgr. Molloy. Monsignor Molloy interviewed Fr.

Trauger on April 15. The priest admitted approaching the boy in the bookstore; introducing himself as a priest; telling the boy, who was wearing a Neumann High School jacket, that the priest knew the principal, vice principal, and several teachers at the boy's school; questioning the boy about pornography; and asking the boy's name (which the boy refused to give). The priest admitted to tracking the boy down, removing him from class, meeting alone in a small room with the boy for an hour and a half, and questioning whether the boy thought he was gay.

In a four-page memo recording his interview with Fr. Trauger, Msgr. Molloy still did not mention the boy's name. Finally, after Fr. Rossi, the vice principal, called for a second time about the incident, Msgr. Molloy recorded the boy's last name – "Logue."

Monsignor Molloy testified that even though he knew of Fr. Trauger's history of abuse when he was dealing with the incident in 1991, Archdiocese officials never interviewed the boy. Monsignor Molloy attempted to justify the failure to remove Fr. Trauger from his parish or restrict his access to schools and children, claiming that the Archdiocese lacked "hard evidence" against the priest. Knowing that Fr. Trauger was in a position to stalk, harass and abuse Archdiocese children, Church officials allowed him to continue in his position as Parochial Vicar at Saint Joseph's. Two years later he was transferred to Saint Michael the Archangel in Levittown.

### **Cardinal Bevilacqua assigns Father Trauger to another parish with a school.**

When Archbishop Bevilacqua appointed Fr. Trauger as Parochial Vicar of Saint Michael in 1993, Archdiocese officials knew of accusations against the priest by four named boys (Evan, Carl, Marty, and the Logue boy). They knew of two other boys whom Fr. Trauger had admitted touching inappropriately. And they knew of many more who had gone "camping" with the priest.

Yet in these 10 years of accusations, Archdiocese officials never sought to question a single victim directly to find out what Fr. Trauger had done. Nor did they seek out the families of known victims so they could stop the continuing abuse of their children. Instead, they recorded hearsay accusations and determined that they lacked "hard

evidence.” Then the Archbishop would reassign the priest, or not, apparently depending on whether it was necessary to prevent exposure or scandal.

In his testimony before the Grand Jury, Msgr. Edward Cullen, the Vicar General, admitted that the Archdiocese’s investigation into the 1991 stalking of the Logue boy was not handled correctly and that the boy and his family should have been interviewed. He explained that Fr. Trauger was not endorsed for a high school chaplaincy in 1991 because it would “make sense to not put that person in a high school.” In light of that recognition of the risk Fr. Trauger posed, Msgr. Cullen was at a loss to explain why Cardinal Bevilacqua appointed Fr. Trauger as Parochial Vicar at Saint Michael, which he described as having a large school.

On December 18, 2003, after Fr. Trauger’s files were subpoenaed by this Grand Jury, the Archdiocese announced that it was removing him from the ministry, finding the allegations against him “credible.” Father Trauger had admitted on December 12 to Secretary for Clergy Lynn that he had sexually abused the three boys who had made allegations against him.

Father Trauger appeared before the Grand Jury and was given an opportunity to answer questions concerning the allegations against him. He chose not to do so.





## **Father John P. Schmeer**

*Father John P. Schmeer, ordained in 1964, was pastor at Saint Martin of Tours in New Hope when he was placed on leave on May 23, 2004. Before that he was a science teacher and guidance counselor in the Philadelphia Archdiocese's school system for 25 years. When young male students came to him for counseling, Fr. Schmeer questioned them about masturbation and then fondled their penises.*

*The priest took boys to houses in Gladwyne and at the New Jersey Shore. In the late 1960s, he provided one 14-year-old, "Kevin," with pornography, instructed the boy to masturbate, and watched as an older girl tried to seduce him. On another occasion, Fr. Schmeer stripped and fondled the boy and, anally penetrated him with his finger in the Saint Charles Borromeo Seminary swimming pool. The priest's friend and fellow teacher, Ernest Durante, sometimes watched as Fr. Schmeer abused the student.*

*Older students at Roman Catholic High School harassed and sexually abused Kevin because of his reputation as "Father Schmeer's boy." In March 2002, he told Archdiocese managers that he knew of 15 or 16 other boys whom Fr. Schmeer had abused.*

*In response, the Church officials conducted a thorough investigation — of the victim. The Archdiocese probed Kevin's background, including tax records and court proceedings from his two divorces. An investigator hired by the Archdiocese's law firm obtained the victim's bank records without permission or authorization.*

*In March 2004, additional victims came forward following the publication of news stories reporting that Kevin was suing the Archdiocese and had named Fr. Schmeer as his abuser. Archdiocese managers, knowing that these other allegations corroborated Kevin's complaint, remained silent while unaware parishioners loyally rallied around Fr. Schmeer and questioned Kevin's motives.*

### **Father Schmeer abuses Kevin at Roman Catholic High School; when Kevin complains, the Archdiocese investigates the victim.**

Kevin was a freshman at Roman Catholic High School when his science teacher, Fr. John Schmeer, singled him out – or so he thought – for frequent guidance counseling sessions. Kevin was a small boy, late to mature, with an uninvolved father. According to the handwritten notes of Msgr. Lynn, in an interview with Archdiocese managers on April 2, 2002, Kevin told them he was honored at first. He considered Fr. Schmeer his spiritual leader, mentor, and "man in [his] life." His mother approved.

Kevin also gave an account of his abuse to a detective from the District Attorney's office on June 18, 2002. He told her that in his first counseling session, Fr. Schmeer began to talk about masturbation and asked the boy whether he did it. Kevin described being embarrassed, but said that Fr. Schmeer did not touch him that day. During his second

session, the priest and teacher again talked about masturbation. This time, he pulled his chair close to the student so they were face-to-face with knees touching. The priest then reached over and grabbed Kevin's penis through his pants. Father Schmeer asked whether Kevin was "getting an erection" and proceeded to rub the boy's genitals for about twenty minutes.

Kevin said this pattern continued twice a week for months. Father Schmeer fondled the boy when they met, always talking about masturbation, "impure thoughts about girls," or "whatever perverted questions he could ask about sex."

The abuse soon moved beyond counseling sessions. One incident, at the Saint Charles Seminary pool, greatly upset Kevin. He described how Fr. Schmeer took him to the end of the pool and had the boy sit on his lap. Kevin went on:

In 2 seconds he had my bathing suit off and his hands on my ass. I thought he was gonna drown me. He grabbed my testicles and penis from behind, they were in his hand. I started crying. Then he put his finger up my ass. I couldn't stop crying, I was freaked.

Kevin said the priest had an erection and was rubbing up against the boy. Father Ernest Durante was in the pool, watching.

Kevin was bothered by his inability to break away from the priest. "I just beat myself up, that after this happened to me, I still returned to the guidance office," he said. "I don't know why I kept going back to the counseling sessions." Kevin described feeling "hooked or brainwashed." He explained, "I wanted to tell my mom, but felt I couldn't because I felt I let it go on too long."

Kevin said that after the pool incident, Fr. Schmeer no longer fondled the boy in the guidance sessions. He did, however, take the boy to houses he said he owned with Fr. Durante. In a "big expensive" home off the Gladwyne exit of the Schuylkill Expressway, Kevin said Fr. Schmeer took him to a room filled with "Playboy books." The priest told the teenager it was "OK to masturbate while looking at pictures of girls." Father Schmeer then instructed the boy to "go ahead," and left the room. Kevin said he did not stay in the room, but walked around the house. As he entered one room, he saw Fr. Schmeer and Fr. Durante sitting on a large leather couch, masturbating.

In the spring of his freshman year, Kevin and two other boys were taken by Fr. Schmeer and Fr. Durante to a house on the New Jersey Shore. This time, Fr. Schmeer left the 14-year-old in a room with a “17-year-old very nice looking girl.” Kevin described how the two teens were talking, and then, “all of a sudden this girl gets up and kisses me and rams her tongue down my throat.” He said he was shy and ran from the room. As he pushed the door open, he bumped into Fr. Schmeer, who had been watching the episode.

Kevin described as “horrific” what older students at Roman Catholic High School did to him because of his reputation as Fr. Schmeer’s boy. Kevin told the Archdiocese and the detective that he was assaulted four or five times by older students in the school basement. Groups of students would “beat me up and hold me and grind up against me until they ejaculated.”

Kevin said by the end of his freshman year he wanted to commit suicide. He said it was unbearable when he returned the next year, and he persuaded his mother to allow him to transfer to Roxborough High School. He said he was in therapy for the next 20 years. He was 33 years old before he could talk about what happened. He was 49 before he reported the abuse to the Archdiocese.

When questioned by Msgr. Lynn on April 2, 2002, Fr. Schmeer denied ever abusing Kevin and claimed not even to recall the name. He admitted, though, that his friend “Ernie” Durante was assigned to live in Gladwyne at the time. He said that he did take boys swimming and could have taken some to the shore.

Father Schmeer agreed to go for an evaluation at Saint John Vianney Hospital in Downingtown. There he again denied the allegations against him, but talked extensively about his relationship with Fr. Durante, which had ended abruptly when Fr. Durante left the priesthood in 1987 to get married. Father Schmeer told the therapists he was devastated because Fr. Durante, with whom he co-owned a house at the shore, had kept his affair with his future wife secret for five years.

Saint John Vianney’s therapists concluded that they could not substantiate the allegations against Fr. Schmeer, but they did so expressly “based upon all available data.” This data included Fr. Schmeer’s denials, Msgr. Lynn’s representation that there had “never been any other reports of Father Schmeer being involved with any adolescents or

for that matter with anyone else sexually,” and Msgr. Lynn’s assertion that “an ex-priest friend of Father Schmeer’s” reported that he had never seen the alleged behavior.

Monsignor Lynn apparently failed to inform the therapists that Kevin claimed to know 15 or 16 others who had been abused, that Fr. Schmeer *had* previously been accused of sexual misconduct – in 1976 with a parish cook – or that the “ex-priest friend” who vouched for Fr. Schmeer was, himself, implicated in the abuse of Kevin. Even so, the therapists suggested that the Archdiocese might want to investigate further. Cardinal Bevilacqua permitted Fr. Schmeer to continue on as pastor at Saint Martin of Tours in New Hope.

Handwritten notes from March 3, 2002 in the Secret Archives file recorded that Church officials’ investigation concentrated on questioning and re-questioning Kevin, with direction coming from the Archdiocese’s lawyer. Those notes of a consultation with counsel record instructions that Msgr. Lynn not tell Kevin that Fr. Schmeer had denied the allegation, but instead tell him that the investigation was continuing. Monsignor Lynn recorded numerous questions he was to ask Kevin, as well as counsel’s instructions to “get details – even unimportant.”

The Archdiocese file on Fr. Schmeer reflects an extensive probe of Kevin, with 18 pages of records investigating relatives, tax records, any criminal history (none was found), and his two divorces. It also contains Kevin’s confidential bank records, which were obtained without permission or authorization. The file includes high school records not only for Kevin, but also for three other boys with whom he attended Roman Catholic High School. No effort to interview these boys is recorded.

**The Archdiocese finds the report of Father Schmeer’s abuse “not credible,” but media coverage leads to other victims coming forward.**

On December 5, 2003, following an Archdiocesan Review Board investigation into Kevin’s and others’ accusations, the Archdiocese decreed that “the allegation lodged against Reverend John P. Schmeer is not credible.” This decision was based, in part, on Kevin’s reluctance to be interviewed yet again. All that had come of his previous repeated interviews with Archdiocese managers was an investigation of him.

Kevin, frustrated with the Archdiocese's response, filed a lawsuit on March 24, 2004, against the Archdiocese, naming Fr. Schmeer as his abuser. Following the appearance of stories in the media, Fr. Schmeer denied the allegations from the pulpit and went to several classes of the parish grade school to reassure the children of his innocence.

On March 29, 2004, two more victims of Fr. Schmeer came forward with reports much like Kevin's.

- **“Nathan”**

Nathan reported to the Archdiocese that in 1968 he had been falsely accused of skipping class at Roman Catholic High School and was summoned to Fr. Schmeer's office. Nathan mentioned that to get to Fr. Schmeer's office, he had to pass through Fr. Durante's office. The report written by Msgr. Lynn states:

Once in Schmeer's office [Nathan] said Schmeer talked about sexual relationships, erections, and masturbation, then reached over and grabbed [Nathan's] penis, over his clothes. [Nathan] said that he ran out the door and when he returned to class, he recalls other students asking if he saw 'Schmeer the Queer.'”

- **“Clarke”**

Clarke reported that he was molested by Fr. Schmeer in 1986, the summer between his graduation from Saint Titus grade school and his freshman year at Bishop Kendrick High School. He told the Archdiocese's victim assistance coordinator, Martin Frick, that Fr. Schmeer took him, his 10-year-old brother Marty, and another 10-year-old, “Gary,” to the priest's house on the New Jersey Shore. When the younger boys were not present, Fr. Schmeer questioned the 15-year-old Clarke about masturbation and wet dreams. Father Schmeer then had Clarke sleep in the same bedroom, which had twin beds, with the priest.

Clarke told Frick that he awoke during the night to find Fr. Schmeer at the side of his bed with the priest's hand in the boy's shorts. Clarke reported that Fr. Schmeer made him ejaculate – the first time the boy had ever done so.

## **Archdiocese managers remain silent while parishioners rally behind Father Schmeer.**

Even with these new allegations, echoing those of Kevin, Fr. Schmeer remained pastor at Saint Martin of Tours for nearly two more months, until he was eventually placed on leave on May 23, 2004. His parishioners, apparently unaware of the other allegations, rallied around him and attacked Kevin's motives. Some parishioners raised funds in their priest's defense. Signs posted in the church's front windows read "God Bless a Great Pastor," "Pray for Father Schmeer and his False Accuser," and "It's all About Money - 30 Pieces of Silver." According to a news report, Fr. Schmeer "made a quiet exit" from Saint Martin after celebrating Mass on May 23, 2004. While loyal, uninformed parishioners rallied on behalf of Fr. Schmeer and attacked Kevin, the Archdiocese managers, who knew of the additional reports, said nothing.

On May 25, 2004, Msgr. Lynn met with Fr. Schmeer. The Secretary for Clergy's notes from that meeting allude to three people who provided information concerning the allegations of Clarke and Nathan to the Review Board's investigator. Monsignor Lynn carefully avoided writing down any incriminating information the witnesses might have provided, but did record Fr. Schmeer's defenses and explanations. He wrote, for example:

With regard to allegations of "Gary," Father Schmeer remarked that it would be unusual for a teacher to escort a student to his office. Normally, that happened only if the student were headed to the discipline office. Father Schmeer denied the use of the language alleged and stated that he was always careful and mindful that the Lord said not to give scandal to the children.

With regards to the situation [a male with the same last name as Clarke] described, Father Schmeer pointed out how it would have been almost impossible for such an exchange to take place in a corridor in a high school while class was going on. He found this to be incredulous.

The Secretary for Clergy recorded Fr. Schmeer's "hopes" that "more investigation would be done on [Nathan's and Clarke's] families." In accord with those hopes, Msgr. Lynn asked James Bock, the Associate to the Vicar for Administration to: "gain better information on [Clarke's] Family," to find out "the nature of [Clarke's] learning disability," and to question Nathan's wife about "mental problems" he might have. The

Grand Jury finds that, even in May 2004, Msgr. Lynn's "investigations" of abuse allegations were designed more to discredit the victims and conceal evidence of their abuse than to ascertain whether their alleged abuser was in fact a sexual abuser of children.

**A second review finds allegations against Father Schmeer credible.**

The Archdiocesan Review Board conducted a further investigation and review of Fr. Schmeer based on the additional allegations which were made following the publicity surrounding Kevin's civil lawsuit. On October 28, 2004, following the Review Board's new finding that the allegations made against Fr. Schmeer were, in fact, credible, the Archdiocese prohibited the priest from further public ministry.

On December 29, 2004, faced with the possibility of involuntary laicization, Fr. Schmeer agreed to live "a supervised life of prayer and penance" at Villa Saint Joseph, a retirement home for priests.

Father Schmeer appeared before the Grand Jury and was given an opportunity to answer questions concerning the allegations against him. He chose not to do so.





## **Monsignor Francis A. Giliberti**

*Monsignor Francis A. Giliberti, ordained in 1970, was said by his students at Cardinal O'Hara High School to run a "sort of boot camp to stop masturbation" at his beach house in New Jersey. His methods, he bragged to one student, included walking in on boys while they were masturbating.*

*The priest abused at least two students who went to him for help, fearing damnation because of their "masturbation problem." One victim described how Msgr. Giliberti insisted on "inspecting" the boy's penis to determine whether it was "traumatized," ordered him to make himself erect, and offered to perform oral sex. The priest told the other student he could introduce him to gay men. These activities took place in the mid-1970s, and were reported to the Archdiocese in 2002.*

*Both victims who came forward were traumatized by Msgr. Giliberti's abuse. One doused his penis with lighter fluid and set it on fire, his self-loathing was so intolerable. The other lived through years of suicidal tendencies, alcoholism, and failed relationships. Both were incensed by what they saw as the hypocrisy of their Church.*

*Following these allegations, Cardinal Bevilacqua permitted Msgr. Giliberti to continue as pastor at Nativity B.V.M. in Media without restrictions on his access to children and without informing the parish of the allegations against him. On April 25, 2002, one week after the first victim brought his detailed accusations to the Archdiocese, Cardinal Bevilacqua was quoted at a press conference assuring the public that no priest "credibly accused of misconduct with a minor" has remained in ministry. In December 2003, the allegations against Monsignor Giliberti were determined to be credible and he was forced to retire.*

### **"Jay" informs Archdiocese leaders that Monsignor Giliberti abused him at Cardinal O'Hara High School; a week later Cardinal Bevilacqua gives the public false assurances.**

On April 18, 2002, Jay, a 40-year-old divorced and unemployed man, came to Archdiocese headquarters accompanied by his parents to tell Secretary for Clergy William Lynn of his abuse 25 years earlier. Monsignor Francis Giliberti, ordained in 1970, had been Jay's sophomore-year religion teacher at Cardinal O'Hara High School in Springfield in 1976-1977. Jay was 15 years old in the spring of 1977 when the abuse began.

With his parents out of the room, Jay told Msgr. Lynn and his assistant, Fr. Vincent Welsh, about the events that led to his molestation. According to Fr. Welsh's notes, Msgr. Giliberti in his theology class led "graphic sexual discussions," but instructed the boys that "any sex outside of marriage is a mortal sin." Jay said that he felt "doomed to hell" at the age of 15 because of masturbation. So, when Msgr. Giliberti offered to help students who

“have this problem,” Jay went to see him one day after school. They discussed masturbation, and Msgr. Giliberti instructed the boy to go to confession as often as he needed.

The priest also invited Jay to stop by his rectory at Nativity B.V.M. and to accompany him to his beach house in Brigantine, New Jersey, during the summer. Jay told the Archdiocese managers that Msgr. Giliberti claimed he had taken others to his shore house and “helped [them] with masturbation problems.”

In one such discussion of masturbation in Msgr. Giliberti’s rectory room, the priest asked the boy to drop his pants. Telling Jay that his penis might be “traumatized,” Msgr. Giliberti proceeded to inspect it. According to Fr. Welsh’s notes, the priest “held [the student’s] penis, peeled back [the] opening and stroked him.” Monsignor Giliberti said he needed to see the boy’s penis erect and instructed him to go into the bathroom “to get erect.” The boy tried to obey, but could not.

Jay said he felt confused and ashamed, but he continued to meet with Msgr. Giliberti. He accompanied the priest to his beach house on several occasions. The teacher served his student beer. They discussed girls, and Jay’s masturbation “problem.” One time, Msgr. Giliberti asked the boy to strip and show the priest exactly how he masturbated. Jay said he complied and “showed him quickly.” Other times, the priest offered to sleep with the boy and to perform oral sex on him.

Jay told Msgr. Lynn and Fr. Welsh how he became overwhelmed by shame and fear. He felt he could not trust his own instincts for appropriate boundaries. He made a mold of a penis and brought it to the rectory to show the priest. When Msgr. Giliberti told him that, as a boy, he had exposed himself to his sister, young Jay “followed his lead,” doing the same to his sister. As an adult, Jay said he abused his wife, touching her in unwelcome ways as she slept.

Jay said he told no one about his humiliation as an adolescent. He said he had “wanted to be perfect” for his “very ethical” parents. So he took out his shame and guilt on himself, one day dousing his penis with lighter fluid and setting it on fire. He eventually told his parents about Msgr. Giliberti’s abuses, sparing them the specifics.

At Saint Charles Borromeo Seminary, which he attended for two years, he also told two priests. They advised him to “let go” of it – that it was his word against the Church’s.

After Jay told the Archdiocese managers the details of his abuse, his parents joined the conversation. They expressed their outrage and sense of betrayal. They told how much their family had suffered. Jay’s father described how he had “watched [his son’s] life go down [the] tubes.” Jay’s wife had divorced him, and he had lost a good job. The parents had brought him to the Archdiocese offices in the desperate hope that, by telling his story and confronting Msgr. Giliberti, as he asked to do, their 40-year-old son could finally overcome his shame and move on with his life.

Monsignor Lynn twice told the parents what he had already told Jay: that their son was the only person to ever make allegations against Msgr. Giliberti – a point he often emphasized in conversations with victims (even on occasion when it was not true). Monsignor Lynn had to know from his experience with numerous victims how desperately they wanted to know they were not the only ones.

When the Archdiocese managers interviewed Msgr. Giliberti later that day, he denied ever having abused Jay, though he remembered the boy coming to him for confession. He told Msgr. Lynn and Fr. Welsh that masturbation was only a secondary issue and that there were “2 other things” that were troubling the student. The priest said that “the seal” of confession prevented him from explaining further.

Cardinal Bevilacqua allowed Msgr. Giliberti, whom he had appointed as pastor at Nativity B.V.M. in June 1991, to remain there, even though it had a school attached to it. Msgr. Giliberti was still pastor when Cardinal Bevilacqua announced at a press conference on April 25, 2002: “I can assure all the people here in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia that there is no priest in any parish or any ministry whatsoever that was credibly accused of misconduct with a minor.” The press conference took place one week after Jay had reported his abuse by Msgr. Giliberti.

### **Monsignor Giliberti abuses “Patrick” at Cardinal O’Hara High School.**

Patrick contacted Archdiocese managers on September 11, 2002, when he was 44 years old. Like Jay, he had been a student of Msgr. Giliberti’s at Cardinal O’Hara High

School in the mid-1970s. Because Patrick lived in California, his allegations were recorded from a telephone call and repeated in a letter to Msgr. Lynn dated September 17, 2002.

Patrick told Msgr. Lynn that Msgr. Giliberti had been his freshman-year theology teacher. Patrick was 14 years old. The priest held “informal confession” in his empty classroom, and it was here that Patrick confessed his struggles with masturbation. Like Jay, this extremely devout boy had problems reconciling his sexual urges with what he was learning in school – that masturbation was “a sinful act in the eyes of the church.”

Monsignor Giliberti said he could help the boy stop masturbating. He invited Patrick to come to the rectory to talk on several occasions. Patrick wrote that, during these talks, Msgr. Giliberti mentioned that he had a house at the New Jersey Shore “where he took boys my age during the summer months to help them work through their problems.” The priest, he said, bragged to him that he had cured one boy of masturbating by walking in on him in the shower during the act. Patrick had heard that Msgr. Giliberti conducted “a sort of boot camp to stop masturbation.” Patrick was frightened by the prospect and never went to the shore.

In the summer of 1975, however, when he was 17, Patrick confided in Msgr. Giliberti that he was having sexual problems when he tried to become intimate with girls. He told Msgr. Giliberti he thought he must be homosexual.

The priest’s counsel was to offer to introduce him “to half a dozen gay men in downtown Media if I thought I wanted to try it out.” Patrick wrote that, when he registered shock and revulsion, Msgr. Giliberti scoffed: “See you’re not gay! And you can have an erection any time you want.” The priest then pointed to his bedroom and instructed the boy to strip, lie on the bed and “prove it to yourself . . . give yourself an erection.”

Patrick wrote that he submitted “to this unbelievably peculiar command” only because of the “extremely vulnerable state” in which he found himself. He described lying nude in the priest’s chilly bedroom surrounded by the crucifix and religious items as “the most uncomfortable situation imaginable.” When Msgr. Giliberti then walked in and watched as the boy stroked his penis with no success, the boy was devastated. The priest watched as the boy dressed, then heard his confession.

Patrick wrote that he stopped going to church after that episode and never spoke to Msgr. Giliberti again. In 2002, he told Msgr. Lynn that he had been in and out of therapy since he was 21 years old. For years, he said, he suffered through “suicidal tendencies, alcoholism, and failed relationships.” He said he became angry after the episode at the rectory, but that he became angrier still after “reading about the scandalous behavior of some of the priests, and the protection they received from their superiors (at the expense of children!).” He wrote to Msgr. Lynn, “It makes my own experience all the more disturbing to learn that the Church actually protected these pedophiles that hypocritically lived out their sexual fantasies while preaching a morality that bore a crushing and destructive weight on the innocent and ever-so-vulnerable psyche of children like myself.”

**The Archdiocese responds by seeking a self-serving “diagnosis” and taking no action.**

On October 18, 2002, after Jay informed Msgr. Lynn of his abuse and after Patrick brought a second allegation, Msgr. Giliberti was sent for a psychological evaluation, performed by Kelly Counseling and Consulting.

Monsignor Giliberti’s evaluators found that “test data” could not confirm or deny allegations made against him. Despite separate allegations that the priest’s actions had devastated at least two lives, the evaluators hired by the Archdiocese found, “There is no reason to conclude from the interview [with the priest] or the test data that Monsignor Giliberti is a threat to the physical or emotional health of those to whom he ministers.”

Absent the threat of public scandal – neither victim having threatened to sue or publicly expose Msgr. Giliberti – Cardinal Bevilacqua permitted the priest to continue as pastor at Nativity B.V.M. His parishioners were not informed of the charges against him, and he enjoyed full access to boys like the traumatized ones who, as adults, had met with Msgr. Lynn.

**In 2004, the Archdiocese removes Monsignor Giliberti from ministry based on the same evidence discounted by Cardinal Bevilacqua.**

On January 14, 2004, the Archdiocese removed Msgr. Giliberti from ministry, finding the allegations of Jay and Patrick credible. Monsignor Giliberti had been allowed to retire three weeks earlier.

After Msgr. Giliberti's retirement and removal, in April 2004, a Florida man named "Gerald" informed the Archdiocese that Msgr. Giliberti had abused him and another boy when the priest was still a seminarian, more than 30 years earlier. Gerald wrote that Giliberti had taken him and five other boys to the New Jersey Shore house of a fellow priest, had shared a bed with three of the boys, and had fondled the genitals of Gerald and a boy named "Joey." The victim explained that he had not come forward earlier "out of fear and shame."

On October 16, 2004, faced with the possibility of involuntary laicization, Fr. Giliberti agreed to live "a supervised life of prayer and penance" at Villa Saint Joseph, a retirement home for priests.

Father Giliberti appeared before the Grand Jury and was given an opportunity to answer questions concerning the allegations against him. He chose not to do so.

## Father John H. Mulholland

*In August 1968, a mother brought to the pastor of Saint Joseph's Church in Hatboro two letters written by the parish's recently reassigned associate pastor, Fr. John H. Mulholland, to her son while he was at summer camp. Amid cut-out illustrations of chains, ropes, and people suffering various forms of bondage, the priest wrote to the boy:*

*Plan and prepare to break me on vacation. If you can get me to beg to be punished by you even more and beg to be your slave – I will offer a just homage payment – such as – you can be my financial bookkeeper for the school term, possessing the checkbook with signed blank checks – or an outright fee each month of maybe 10% of the balance. You really have no imagination – this is your chance – take over – become master in fact as well as word – make me know what it means to squirm, sweat and fear and to understand what slave means.*

*In the other letter, the priest discussed plans for proving submission by “kneeling next to toilet when master craps then wiping ass with paper then with tongue. Also being forced to lick master's ass and kiss it frequently.”*

*At the time the mother brought the letters to the rectory, her son was on a two-week trip with Fr. Mulholland. The letters mentioned several other parish boys and suggested that they also participated in sado-masochistic rituals with Fr. Mulholland. After the boy returned from the trip, the Archdiocese's Vicar General, Gerald V. McDevitt, recorded that he “confessed a relationship with Father.”*

*Yet Msgr. McDevitt told Fr. Mulholland that the Archdiocese's response to learning that its priest victimized parish boys with his sick behavior would “depend on the attitude the mother of the boy took and how far she would want to follow up the matter.” Archdiocese officials did nothing.*

*Two years later the Chancery received a report that a boy at Fr. Mulholland's next parish “was being strung up and Father Mulholland [was] piercing him or at least jabbing him with some instrument all over his body.” Again, Archdiocese officials left the priest in place.*

*The Archdiocesan Review Board in 2004 found that “Reverend Mulholland's letter to a young boy in his parish,” though “quite disturbing in its language regarding issues of power, descriptions of human excrement and use of restraint,” did not “fall under the definition of sexual abuse as contained in the Essential Norms.”*

*Ordained in 1965, Fr. Mulholland apparently has never undergone even the Archdiocese's concept of treatment. He remains at last report an active priest with unrestricted faculties in the Philadelphia Archdiocese.*

**Father Mulholland shares stories of sexual masochism with boys from Saint Patrick Church in Kennett Square.**

The Grand Jury was given no records of allegations against Fr. John Mulholland from his first assignment as associate pastor at Saint Patrick Church in Kennett Square (6/65-6/66). However, the priest's own letter of July 1968 to "Stan," a boy in his next parish, indicates he had inappropriate relations with boys at Saint Patrick.

In the middle of a long letter illustrated with chains, nooses, and "adults only" signs, Fr. Mulholland wrote to Stan, two years after he had left Kennett Square:

I met some kids I know from Kennett this week – three brothers 18, 17, and 15 years old . . . so they went on a four day camping trip and little brother was jumped and tied with his arms stretched out on a pole and all equipment tied on his back and the pole. He was led by one with a long rope around his neck with the other prodding behind with a short switch. POOR BOY!! He was stripped by the loving brothers, hung by his ankles with his hands tied up tight with a light rope or heavy cord going from his wrists and under his crotch and ending in a loop around his well-known privates (struggling could be painful). He was pulled up high and a low charcoal fire was shoveled under him, then wet leaves put on the fire – heat and smoke right up his body – an old Apache torture. . . Little brother now obeys.  
(Appendix D-22)

Cardinal Krol transferred Fr. Mulholland after one year in Kennett Square to Saint Joseph Church in Hatboro.

**Father Mulholland takes boys from Saint Joseph Church on a vacation described as "a two week torture treatment."**

By the time Stan's mother found Fr. Mulholland's letters to her son in the footlocker that he had taken to camp, the priest had been transferred to still a third parish. (The Archbishop in June 1968 appointed Fr. Mulholland to Saint Anastasia parish in Newtown Square.) In August 1968, though, he was vacationing with boys he knew from Saint Joseph.

In his letter to Stan at camp, Fr. Mulholland described the anticipated vacation as "a two week torture treatment" to "purge" the priest of all resistance and "break" him into "complete nothingness, thereby rendering [Fr. Mulholland] a perfect slave." He wrote of



other parish boys who would participate, referring to them as “Emperor [“Lewis’]” and “Sadistic Duke[“Smith”].” Stan, he named “Sadistic Prince [Stan], Man of Steel.” The priest called himself “Barney” and played the role of the slave. He wrote about a 15-year-old being tied “spread-eagled” on the ground and “used as a toilet.” He wrote to Stan:

If Barney is bored from lack of torture or is not chained or tied at night Prince may also become prisoner as shown [there is an illustration of two people hanging by their wrists in chains]. Barney promises never to jump or molest Prince as long as daily punishments continue EXCEPT – A PROMISE – NEVER LET BARNEY SLEEP UNFETTERED – UNTIED – OR UNCHAINED OR PRINCE will die at night as above.

The Vicar General of the Archdiocese, Gerald V. McDevitt, met with Fr. Mulholland on September 25, 1968, after he had returned from his two-week vacation with Stan and the other boys. The priest acknowledged that he wrote the letters. He said that his relationship with Stan was one of “testing strength and wrestling and things of that nature.” He denied anything sexual.

McDevitt informed Fr. Mulholland that Stan’s mother had consulted a lawyer and that Stan had “confessed a relationship with Father.” In his memo recording his conversation with Fr. Mulholland, Msgr. McDevitt wrote that the lawyer had persuaded the mother not to have police attempt to interrupt the priest’s trip with her son. In the Archdiocese file is a handwritten note with the name of the lawyer supposedly representing the mother — Stanley Gordon – and a notation that he was “sympathetic to both sides.”

According to his notes, Msgr. McDevitt instructed Fr. Mulholland to have “no further contact or communication with the boy.” The Vicar General advised Fr. Mulholland that he “did not know what he might hear further from us since much of that would depend on the attitude the mother of the boy took and how far she would want to follow up the matter.”

Monsignor McDevitt recorded no effort to contact the other boys involved. He “suggested the possibility of [Fr. Mulholland’s] seeing a psychiatrist,” but wrote that the priest said he “thought he knew himself well enough and that he did not need the help of a psychiatrist.” The record shows no effort even to find out what happened during the two-

week “vacation,” much less to protect the other known victims from Fr. Mulholland’s ongoing depravity or to inform their parents.

Two years later Assistant Chancellor Vincent M. Walsh would matter-of-factly write of Mulholland: “Part of the interview with Bishop McDevitt was a promise that he would stop going back to the parish. We had some reports later on that he was still returning to Hatboro.”

**In 1970, the Archdiocese is again warned in graphic terms of Father Mulholland’s sadomasochistic practices with boys, and again takes no action.**

Father Mulholland was transferred to Saint Anastasia in Newtown Square in June 1968. While he was there, the Archdiocese received several reports of inappropriate sexual contact involving the priest. Once again, the Archdiocese left him in place; ironically, it did so at the request of parents who continued to support the priest because the Archdiocese had not revealed to them his sadomasochistic activity. The Archdiocese abandoned plans to transfer Fr. Mulholland or send him for diagnosis and possible treatment when the perceived level of scandal lessened.

While he continued to visit victims from his previous parish, Saint Joseph Church in Hatboro, Fr. Mulholland also assembled a group of boys at his new assignment. Parents, unaware that the Archdiocese had sent them a priest known to corrupt and abuse parish youth with sadistic and depraved behavior, welcomed Fr. Mulholland’s obvious interest in their sons.

**“Lyle” reports continued deviate behavior.**

In October 1970, Lyle, a sophomore at the University of Pennsylvania and a junior adult advisor to the CYO at Saint Anastasia, alerted the Archdiocese that Fr. Mulholland’s degenerate behavior was continuing and that he had many new victims. Lyle named six boys who had traveled over summer vacations with Fr. Mulholland. “Jack,” “Steve,” and “Louis” (no last names were recorded) had gone camping with the priest in the Southwest over the summer of 1969; “Jared,” “Randy,” and “Gene” had accompanied Fr. Mulholland in 1970. Lyle described how the relationship between the boys and the priest seemed to

change after the trips. He said that Gene and Randy were “pretty tight lipped” about the trip, but that they did mention one incident. According to notes kept by Assistant Chancellor Walsh, Gene and Randy told Lyle that Jared had been “strung up” and that Fr. Mulholland was “piercing him or at least jabbing him with some instrument all over his body.”

Lyle also reported walking into a room and seeing Fr. Mulholland running his hands up and down Jared’s leg. Another time he saw a boy’s head in the priest’s lap. He described “wrestling” that took place frequently with the same boys. Lyle said it was not really wrestling, though, since there were no wrestling moves. The priest, he said, would merely lie on top of the boys. He said this happened regularly before CYO meetings. Lyle told of seeing Fr. Mulholland walking hand-in-hand with a boy in the schoolyard. He reported that the priest seemed to conduct some sort of private Masses in the church basement with only his “special boys.”

**“Barbara” confirms her brother’s report.**

Lyle’s sister, Barbara, was a member of the CYO and confirmed her brother’s account to Fr. Walsh. She provided Louis’s last name and said that Fr. Mulholland regularly drove Louis home after CYO meetings, often taking many hours to do so. She described the wrestling and told how, in a recent meeting, Fr. Mulholland and Jared had spent the entire time behind the stage.

The Grand Jury notes that the behavior reported was consistent with that described in the 1968 letters to Stan, letters Fr. Mulholland admitted to writing. Thus, the Archdiocese’s failure to respond appropriately to the 1970 report is even more inexcusable.

**Saint Anastasia’s pastor corroborates Lyle and Barbara’s observations and reports additional behavior.**

The pastor at Saint Anastasia, Fr. Joseph T. Kane, told Fr. Walsh that Lyle and Barbara were credible and responsible. In addition, Fr. Kane told the Assistant Chancellor that Fr. Mulholland had “boys in his room” at the rectory on either a daily or weekly basis

– Fr. Kane was unsure which. Father Walsh wrote that Fr. Kane verified “that certain strange activity is taking place concerning which he is not totally aware.” There is no indication that Fr. Walsh enlightened the pastor, who lived with Fr. Mulholland and could have been enlisted to monitor him, by letting him know what Archdiocese officials had known for years – that the associate pastor sent to his parish had been known to involve parish youth in sadomasochism.

**To avoid scandal, Archdiocese officials plan to reassign Father Mulholland, but the decision is reversed.**

After hearing from Barbara and another parishioner, “Walter,” that Fr. Mulholland’s reputation for “play[ing] around with boys” or “something” was widespread, Fr. Walsh informed Fr. Mulholland, on October 26, 1970, that he would have to be reassigned because of “scandal.” Father Walsh recorded that he confronted Fr. Mulholland with the whole litany of accusations against him and that the priest “merely stayed silent and accepted them as true.”

Yet Cardinal Krol did not remove Fr. Mulholland. On November 2, 1970, a group of parents from Saint Anastasia visited Fr. Walsh to say that they favored keeping the priest. Ironically, two of the parents were fathers of boys who went on trips with Fr. Mulholland and were “favored.” One, the father of Gene (age 16), praised the priest for taking his son on a summer trip for 21 days and not asking the parents for any money. Another, the father of Jack, was appreciative because “Father . . . was instrumental in getting [Jack] into Priory.” He told Fr. Walsh that Fr. Mulholland spent “a lot of time at [Jack’s family’s] home.” (Appendix D-23)

Although aware of Fr. Mulholland’s history of taking boys on these “trips” to engage in sadomasochism, Fr. Walsh listened to these parents who, obviously, trusted the priest with their children. Yet Fr. Walsh said nothing, even though it was clear from what Lyle, Barbara, and the pastor had told him that Fr. Mulholland was still abusing the boys.

Not only did Fr. Walsh not warn these parents, the Archdiocese decided to allow Fr. Mulholland to remain in the parish where he could continue to abuse their children. On October 27, 1970, after hearing that Fr. Mulholland’s reputation was widespread, Fr.

Walsh wrote: “I also made it clear to Father that there is no possibility of his remaining in the parish.” On November 5, 1970, three days after the uninformed parents’ group came to the priest’s defense, Fr. Walsh informed Fr. Mulholland “that we would have no difficulty allowing him to stay at St. Anastasia.” The explicit reason for the change of heart was because “the amount of scandal given seemed to lie only with a very small minority.” Archdiocese officials knowingly used the ignorance of the parents whose children were being victimized to justify leaving the priest in their parish. (Appendix D-24, D-25)

**The decision to order treatment for Father Mulholland is also reversed when the Archdiocese perceives the threat of scandal to have abated.**

The position of the Archdiocese regarding the necessity of psychological treatment was, likewise, determined not by the priest’s obvious depravity or the danger he posed to children, but by the perceived level of scandal. Archdiocese officials purported to leave the decision regarding inpatient treatment to Dr. Anthony L. Zanni at Saint John Vianney Hospital in Downingtown. But the decisive factor determining that Fr. Mulholland did not require treatment was Fr. Walsh’s conclusion that the threat of scandal was smaller than previously thought. In an October 27, 1970, letter to Dr. Zanni, Fr. Walsh related that he had warned Fr. Mulholland not only that the priest would have to be reassigned, but also that Dr. Zanni would likely “want him to go to Downingtown.” After determining that the “scandal” was limited to “a small minority,” however, Fr. Walsh called Dr. Zanni to inform him of this development. Father Walsh recorded in a memo dated November 5, 1970: “Dr. Zanni, with this new information, decided that he would probably not ask Father Mulholland to go to Downingtown.”

**Continuing reports obliquely refer to Father Mulholland’s depravity.**

Father Mulholland’s fellow priests at Saint Anastasia complained repeatedly about him, but Archdiocese records obscure their concerns. In April 1971, Chancellor Francis J. Statkus wrote that the pastor, Fr. Kane, reported that Fr. Mulholland “has not been effective with the CYO” and asked that he “be changed.” On March 5, 1973, Fr. Walsh, now the Vice Chancellor, recorded the complaint of a fellow priest at Saint Anastasia, Fr.

Joseph Shields: “He mentioned that the problems that were present about a year and a half ago and brought to our attention are still present. He states that Fr. Mulholland *ministers only to a certain few in the parish and that the parish has more or less accepted the strangeness of that ministry*. He felt that we should talk to Father Mulholland since there might be need for professional help.” (emphasis supplied)

There is nothing in the files turned over to the Grand Jury recording complaints made a year and a half earlier – which would have been September 1971. There was a letter from Dr. Zanni to Fr. Walsh, dated September 12, 1972, informing the Vice Chancellor that Fr. Mulholland “never contacted my office for the purpose of making an appointment as you had informed me he would.” Records do not indicate what prompted Archdiocese officials to ask Fr. Mulholland to see the therapist again. Apparently no action was taken either in response to whatever the pastor and Fr. Shield had reported or to Fr. Mulholland’s refusal to get psychiatric help.

Despite the vague and seemingly meaningless way in which Fr. Walsh and Msgr. Statkus recorded complaints about Fr. Mulholland, Archdiocese officials were aware, ever since receiving Fr. Mulholland’s letters in 1968, of the danger he posed to his “special” boys. They knew that the criticism that Fr. Mulholland had “not been effective with the CYO” could well have meant that he was lying on top of his favorite boys or spending meeting time with one behind the stage. They knew that ministering “only to a certain few” meant spending all his time with teenage boys. And they knew that the “strangeness” of his ministry to these boys might have involved, according to the priest’s own letters, binding, hanging, beating, punishing, molesting, and torturing.

Even in the face of continued complaints from the clerics at Saint Anastasia, Fr. Mulholland might have remained in the assignment were it not for Cardinal Krol’s policy of moving associate pastors every five years. On March 20, 1973, Fr. Walsh wrote to Dr. Zanni, informing him that Fr. Mulholland was being transferred. Father Walsh said he hoped Fr. Mulholland would see the doctor and expressed concern, not that boys in the new parish would be subjected to the abuses of a demented priest, but that the new parish might not tolerate Fr. Mulholland’s behavior as well as the parishioners at Saint Anastasia had. Father Walsh wrote to Dr. Zanni:

At your home on Saturday, we discussed the fact that the people in [Fr. Mulholland's] present parish have more or less accepted his way of going about the priesthood; however, the parishioners in the parish to which he might be assigned might find his ministry somewhat different, since he tends to spend his time with a small group of people, especially teenagers.

Without any record of treatment, restrictions, or even warnings to Fr. Mulholland, Cardinal Krol reassigned the priest to be associate pastor at Blessed Virgin Mary Church in Darby, beginning June 5, 1973.

**Father Mulholland remains in active ministry for 30 more years.**

Knowing that this sick and dangerous priest had never been sent for treatment, Cardinal Krol kept reassigning Fr. Mulholland, with no restrictions on his faculties, to one parish after another. Father Mulholland served as associate pastor at Blessed Virgin Mary Church in Darby (6/73-9/77); Holy Child Church in North Philadelphia (9/77-9/82); Stella Maris Church in South Philadelphia (9/82-6/87); and Saint Francis Assisi Church in Norristown (6/87-6/96). Each of these parishes had a school.

When Archbishop Bevilacqua took over the Archdiocese, Fr. Mulholland began to ask to be a pastor. He asked repeatedly, beginning in 1990. He pointed out that most of those in his ordination class had become pastors. Despite his requests, Fr. Mulholland was passed over each year. Finally, in March 1995, Cardinal Bevilacqua's Secretary for Clergy, William J. Lynn, had his assistant tell Fr. Mulholland he would not be made a pastor.

The fact that Cardinal Bevilacqua refused Fr. Mulholland's request strongly suggests that Archdiocese officials were well aware of his past predations, and that those abuses were the reason he would never advance. Presumably, Msgr. Lynn had reviewed the priest's file and consulted Cardinal Bevilacqua, who had sole authority to make decisions about pastorates. Prominent within Fr. Mulholland's file are the handwritten, multi-page letters illustrated with pictures of chains, nooses, and people hanging from chains in prison cells. The words "burning," "torturing," and "killing" are triple-sized on

the front of one letter. Yet Cardinal Bevilacqua for years continued to grant Fr. Mulholland access to parish children.

Despite all the evidence of severe and dangerous mental illness and abuse of adolescents in his file, and after Fr. Mulholland had complained to Msgr. Lynn that his pastor at Saint Francis Assisi had removed him from supervising altar boys, Cardinal Bevilacqua nevertheless in May 1996 assigned Fr. Mulholland to be associate pastor at Immaculate Conception Church in Levittown. As with all his other assignments, this one afforded Fr. Mulholland easy access to the parish school's children. And there is no indication that his new pastor was told of his problems. Without such notice, he could not know what the previous pastor apparently discovered for himself – the need to keep Fr. Mulholland away from altar boys.

Had he been informed about Fr. Mulholland, the pastor, Joseph L. Logrip, surely would not have put the priest in charge of the parish CYO – a post that Fr. Mulholland had held and abused in other parishes. Father Mulholland remained at Immaculate Conception until June 2002, when, in response to the pastor's request, he was removed. Father Logrip by then had discovered for himself that Fr. Mulholland was a problem. In addition to complaining that the associate pastor was rarely present, Fr. Logrip told Msgr. Lynn: "Father Mulholland is supposed to be in charge of the CYO. He does attend meetings, but it might be better if he did not." The pastor, according to Msgr. Lynn's notes, had also noticed what was a pattern in Fr. Mulholland's abusive behavior – he had a "small following in the parish."

On June 17, 2002, Cardinal Bevilacqua named Fr. Mulholland Chaplain at Immaculate Mary Nursing Home in Philadelphia, and assigned him to live at the rectory of Saint Dominic, a North Philadelphia parish with a grade school. Archdiocese documents do not indicate where the priest has resided since December 2, 2002, when the pastor at Saint Dominic, Fr. John D. Gabin, wrote Msgr. Lynn a one-sentence letter: "Father John H. Mulholland does not live at St. Dominic rectory."



## **The Archdiocesan Review Board investigates.**

On March 10, 2004, the Archdiocesan Review Board concluded that Fr. Mulholland's was "not in violation of the *Essential Norms* defining sexual abuse of a minor contained in *The Charter for Protection of Children and Young People* adopted by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops." The board made that determination despite finding that "Reverend Mulholland's letter to a young boy in his parish indicates that he is a disturbed individual in need of mental health intervention."

That letter included explicit language describing sexual abuse, such as the priest's promise "never to jump or molest" the boy so long as he continued his "daily punishments" of the priest. In addition, the boy, according to a memo written by Fr. Walsh in 1970s Archdiocese-style language, "confessed a relationship with Father." The Review Board investigator reported that one suspected victim "declined to discuss the nature of his relationship with Reverend Mulholland . . . stating that the only other person who knew what happened between him and Reverend Mulholland was his wife." And finally, Msgr. Lynn reported to therapists in June 2004 that many of the victims admitted to the investigator that, "in retrospect," Fr. Mulholland's behavior with them would have to be considered "sexual."

Although it did not find sexual abuse, the Review Board did not treat the reports of Fr. Mulholland's dangerous behavior as Cardinal Bevilacqua had. Having labeled the behavior as something other than sexual abuse, the Review Board did not simply ignore it. Board members were troubled by the fact that Fr. Mulholland had never received a mental health evaluation or treatment. The board's recommendations stated: "This raises concern in that the letter gives evidence of serious mental health problems that have gone undiagnosed and untreated for many years. As a result, the vulnerable populations with whom Reverend Mulholland comes in contact may be at risk."

The Review Board called for "prompt mental health intervention." It recommended that Fr. Mulholland's ministry not include youth. Board members also recognized that one does not have to be diagnosed a pedophile to be dangerous to children and other vulnerable

populations. In Fr. Mulholland's case, they recommended that his evaluation "should address risk related factors in Reverend Mulholland's continued ministry with the elderly."

As of the Archdiocese's last report to the Grand Jury, Fr. Mulholland was still a priest with full faculties, still ministering to the elderly at Immaculate Mary Nursing Home. His residence was unrecorded.

Father Mulholland appeared before the Grand Jury and was given an opportunity to answer questions concerning the allegations against him. He chose not to do so.

## **Monsignor John E. Gillespie**

*Church officials in 2000 considered Msgr. John E. Gillespie a risk. He had admitted molesting several boys over his many years as a priest. But what appeared to worry Archdiocese leaders and therapists more than the danger Msgr. Gillespie posed to parishioners was his stated desire to “make amends” to his victims. An apology might have helped the victims heal and the priest find peace. But it might also expose the Church to scandal or liability. Archdiocese officials were determined to prevent such an admission of guilt*

*In 1994, two brothers – now middle-aged men – confronted Msgr. Gillespie and accused him of repeatedly fondling their genitals nearly 40 years earlier at Immaculate Conception parish in Levittown. Monsignor Gillespie, pastor at Our Lady of Calvary in 1994, informed Secretary for Clergy William J. Lynn. He also showed Msgr. Lynn letters he had written to his victims, apologizing, explaining, and trying to persuade them that events had not happened precisely as the victims remembered. The Secretary for Clergy instructed the priest not to write to the victims again.*

*The Archdiocese received more allegations against Msgr. Gillespie in 1997 and January 2000. In February 2000, after the priest admitted inappropriately touching several boys, Archdiocese-affiliated therapists concluded that Msgr. Gillespie “would be a risk to have in parish work,” not only because of the sexual abuse and its impact on the victims, but also because of his “drivenness to make amends.” Again, he was ordered not to apologize to his victims.*

*Monsignor Gillespie was still pastor at Our Lady of Calvary in February 2000 because Cardinal Bevilacqua had ordered no further investigation or action in response to the earlier allegations. The Cardinal asked for Msgr. Gillespie’s resignation as pastor only after learning that the priest had admitted victimizing two current parishioners at Our Lady of Calvary and wanted to “make amends” to them. Archdiocesan therapists warned: “If he pursues making amends with others, he could bring forth difficulty for himself and legal jeopardy.”*

*Upon Msgr. Gillespie’s resignation as pastor, the Cardinal bestowed on the 73-year-old priest the title of Pastor Emeritus of Our Lady of Calvary. Monsignor Gillespie continued to minister, including hearing confessions of schoolchildren. It wasn’t until Msgr. Lynn received a report, in November 2001, of yet another victim that the Secretary for Clergy wrote: “I told Monsignor Gillespie that because of these rumors, and in order to preserve his reputation and the reputation of the Church, I thought it might be best if he retire.”*

### **Cardinal Bevilacqua keeps Monsignor Gillespie as a pastor after receiving allegations in 1994 and 1997.**

- **“Mark” and “Andrew”**

On January 10, 1994, Monsignor John Gillespie, ordained in 1953, and then pastor at Our Lady of Calvary in Northeast Philadelphia, visited Msgr. Lynn, having recently

received two troubling phone calls. The first, on December 15, 1993, was from the mother of two former altar boys, Mark and Andrew. They had been at Immaculate Conception in Levittown during Msgr. Gillespie's tenure as assistant pastor between 1954 and 1962. Monsignor Lynn recorded that the mother accused Msgr. Gillespie of "molesting her boys." She said that one son, Mark, had told her about his abuse after entering therapy. The second call Msgr. Gillespie received was from Mark himself a few weeks later, accusing the priest of repeatedly putting his hands down the boy's trousers and touching his genitals.

Monsignor Gillespie told Msgr. Lynn that he had been close to the boys' family, which he said "was split for a while" because the father was an alcoholic. Before the abuse was alleged, the priest had married the boys and buried their father. In 1985, Msgr. Gillespie had loaned Mark \$2,500.

The priest gave Msgr. Lynn copies of letters he had written to the victims. To Mark, Msgr. Gillespie wrote:

As a young and perhaps immature priest, I was exuberant in reaching out, embracing, and touching people for whom I had affection. This may have caused discomfort for you and [Andrew] and for that I apologize. You mentioned or stated in our brief conversation that I reached down your trousers and touched you sexually. To this I respond in all honesty, I did at times touch your belly and kidded you about gaining a few pounds, but again I say, I was extremely careful to avoid touching your sexual parts.

Monsignor Gillespie begged Mark "[i]n remembrance of the many good times we had together," to give him the "benefit of the doubt" and allow him to finish out his remaining years as pastor without scandal. His letter to Andrew was similar.

Monsignor Lynn took the copies of the letters from Msgr. Gillespie and told him not to write to the victims again. Monsignor Lynn forwarded them to Cardinal Bevilacqua the same day, with a memo explaining the allegations Msgr. Gillespie had reported. Although Msgr. Lynn informed the Cardinal that "Mark did not threaten anything or make any demands for money," the Secretary for Clergy said he would consult legal counsel as to precautions that should be taken.

Cardinal Bevilacqua told the Grand Jury that, even at the time, he found Msgr. Gillespie's denials odd and that the priest's language concerned him. But, despite his misgivings, the Cardinal did not request an investigation.

On January 11, 1994, the day after Msgr. Gillespie first came to Msgr. Lynn, Archdiocese officials made their decision. They had conducted no investigation and had not contacted any of the victims; Msgr. Lynn's sole effort was to consult with counsel. Yet, without the benefit of investigation, Cardinal Bevilacqua wrote on Msgr. Lynn's memo: "I believe Msgr. Gillespie." Describing the priest's alleged experience of "false accusations," the Cardinal added: "What a heavy cross." He left Msgr. Gillespie as pastor at Our Lady of Calvary.

- **"Neil"**

Three years later, in November 1997, the mother of Neil wrote the Cardinal, threatening to go to the police because of a "situation . . . between one of your priests and my 12 year old son." The situation involved questions her son was asked in the confessional at Our Lady of Calvary. Monsignor Gillespie admitted to Msgr. Lynn that he was the priest in the confessional at the time of the incident. According to Neil's mother, the questions the priest asked the 12-year-old were: "Are you married? How old are you? Do you touch yourself? Did you ever sexually hurt yourself? Did you ever sexually hurt someone else?"

The Archdiocese declined to ask Msgr. Gillespie about what he had said to the boy in the confessional. In a meeting with Neil's mother and grandmother, the Secretary for Clergy led them to believe that he could not question Msgr. Gillespie about the incident. Father Francis W. Beach, the Vicar for Northeast Philadelphia, accompanied Msgr. Lynn on the interview and wrote: "Many times during the conversation, Father Lynn and I spoke about the seal of confession. [Neil's mother] and her mother understood . . . that we could not question [Neil] or Monsignor Gillespie on what was said in the confessional."

Cardinal Bevilacqua, likewise, used the seal of confession to excuse his and Msgr. Lynn's failure to take any action against Msgr. Gillespie in 1997. Despite the multiple

allegations against the priest, the Cardinal permitted Msgr. Gillespie to continue as pastor with no restrictions on his faculties and no supervision of his access to parish children.

**Monsignor Gillespie is again accused of sexual abuse and, again, makes a qualified admission.**

After two more years as pastor at Our Lady of Calvary, Msgr. Gillespie was again accused of molesting an adolescent – this time, a former altar boy at the parish where he still presided. On January 21, 2000, the victim, “Gabriel,” now a 29-year-old policeman, told Msgr. Lynn and his assistant, Fr. Vincent Welsh, that Msgr. Gillespie had molested him from his freshman until his senior year of high school. Father Welsh recorded the interview in a memo.

Gabriel told the Church officials that Msgr. Gillespie touched him, over a period of two to three years, every time he assisted with Mass. Gabriel said Msgr. Gillespie summoned him, complimented him on his athletic build, touched his stomach and chest and reached into the boy’s pants, usually fondling the boy’s genitals, and on occasion grabbing and pulling his penis. Gabriel came forward on the advice of a therapist. He told the Church officials “he did not want this type of situation to happen to anyone else....”

Monsignor Lynn and Fr. Welsh interviewed Msgr. Gillespie three days later. According to a memo recording that meeting, Msgr. Gillespie admitted touching Gabriel inappropriately on “a number of occasions.” Specifically, Msgr. Gillespie admitted that he “touched [Gabriel’s] stomach and reached into his pants and touched his pubic area,” but denied touching his penis.

When Msgr. Lynn reminded Msgr. Gillespie of the Mark’s and Andrew’s accusations, which also included genital fondling, the priest again protested that he never touched anyone’s genitals. Father Welsh wrote: “He also stated that he was more sure that he had ‘never gone that far’ with the . . . brothers than [Gabriel], because the . . . brothers were usually together.” This was certainly an unusual form of denial for someone accused of abuse, and one that should have caused concern and inquiry.

Monsignor Gillespie told the Archdiocese officials that he thought Gabriel, 14 years earlier, had been his last victim. He would subsequently tell Msgr. Lynn that he had not molested anyone for 10 years. Another time he said it was seven.

**Monsignor Gillespie is sent for evaluation and treatment; Archdiocese therapists offer opinions on the legal ramifications of returning the priest to his parish.**

Archdiocese managers sent the priest to Saint John Vianney in February 2000 for a four-day evaluation. Monsignor Lynn explained to Msgr. Gillespie that “since the allegation was presented by [Gabriel] to the Archdiocese, it had to be properly addressed.” The contrast here is stark: notwithstanding the seriousness of Mark’s and Andrew’s 1994 allegations, the Archdiocese managers perceived no need to respond in any way because the victims did not complain directly to them (even though the accused priest brought them the allegations). Thus, on the referral form to Vianney, Msgr. Lynn wrote: “Since they [the brothers] did not come to us, there was no previous history or concerns, & Msgr. G. [Gillespie] brought this to our attention himself, no further action was taken.” The referral made no mention of the 1997 incident in the confessional with Neil.

While at Saint John Vianney, Msgr. Gillespie told Msgr. Lynn that he had abused two other boys at Our Lady of Calvary, also several years earlier. He said that these victims, now adults, still attended services at the parish and that he still spoke to them. He expressed a strong desire to apologize to these victims and to try to “make amends.”

The diagnoses that resulted from Msgr. Gillespie’s outpatient evaluation included: “Sexual Abuse of a Child,” “History of Sexual Misconduct,” “Sexual Disorder,” and “Personality Disorder with Obsessive Compulsive Features.” The therapists concluded that his “history of relationships” and “his lack of appreciation of the impact he had on others makes Monsignor dangerous to others.”

But the Church-affiliated therapists did not limit their assessment to the risk Msgr. Gillespie posed to minors. They also proffered their opinion that “return to his parish does carry potential for further scandal and a possible lawsuit.” They concluded that he was a risk, not only because of his abusive behavior, but also because of “his drivenness to make

amends.” “If he pursues making amends,” the report of Saint John Vianney stated, “he could bring forth both difficulty for himself and legal jeopardy.”

After receiving the hospital’s report and a recommendation from Msgr. Lynn on March 3, 2000, Cardinal Bevilacqua decided that Msgr. Gillespie should be asked to resign as pastor of Our Lady of Calvary. In a note to Msgr. Lynn, the Cardinal suggested that the priest be offered “Senior Priest status” or that he resign “for health reasons.” Monsignor Gillespie acceded to Cardinal Bevilacqua’s wishes and was permitted to continue as pastor for three more months until a new pastor was named in June 2000.

When asked by the Grand Jury why he allowed a pastor labeled “dangerous” by his therapists to continue in his parish for three months, the Cardinal blamed his Secretary for Clergy. He told the Grand Jury: “That was a judgment by Monsignor Lynn.”

**Knowing of Monsignor Gillespie’s abuses, Cardinal Bevilacqua nevertheless names him Pastor Emeritus, and asks him to retire only after receiving another complaint.**

When Msgr. Gillespie resigned as the active pastor at Our Lady of Calvary in June 2000, Cardinal Bevilacqua named him as its Pastor Emeritus. By not forcing a quick removal of the priest, and then honoring him with this title, Cardinal Bevilacqua helped the sexual offender preserve his reputation and cover as a respected senior priest. The Cardinal also allowed Msgr. Gillespie to continue ministering, assigning him to live and minister at the Motherhouse of the Grey Nuns of the Sacred Heart in Yardley. There, Msgr. Gillespie served as Chaplain to the sisters. He also regularly heard the confessions of children at Grey Nun Academy, a private school serving Kindergarten through 8th grade that was located on the convent grounds.

The 73-year-old Msgr. Gillespie finally retired after the Office for Clergy, in November 2001, received yet another report that the priest had molested a 15-year-old boy years earlier. The report came from a priest at Saint Ignatius in Yardley, Father Alan Okon. He told Msgr. Lynn’s assistant, Father Welsh, that a woman had come to him because she had seen Msgr. Gillespie at the Motherhouse of the Grey Nuns and was afraid he was interacting with the students at Grey Nun Academy. The woman, he said, had heard from a friend that Msgr. Gillespie had abused the friend’s brother, “Charles,” 25 years earlier at



Mother of the Divine Providence parish in King of Prussia, where Msgr. Gillespie assisted in the 1970s. The described abuse fit Msgr. Gillespie's pattern, with the priest telling the boy how handsome he was, putting his hands down the boy's pants, and touching his genitals.

On December 10, 2001, Msgr. Lynn wrote that he told Msgr. Gillespie "because of these rumors, and in order to preserve his reputation and the reputation of the Church, I thought it might be best if he retire." Monsignor Gillespie was asked to stop his public ministry in February 2002, along with several other priests who had admitted sexually abusing minors.

Meanwhile, Msgr. Gillespie's victims, denied the apology that might have helped them move on, have continued to suffer. In an e-mail forwarded to Msgr. Lynn in March 2002, Gabriel revealed his unredeemed sense of betrayal. After finding out that Msgr. Gillespie continued to give communion to children, even after he had told Msgr. Lynn of the priest's offenses, Gabriel wrote: "Basically I was lied to by Fr. Lynn who said that the pastor would never be around children anymore."

Since April 2002, Msgr. Gillespie has lived at the Archdiocese retirement home, Villa Saint Joseph, in Darby. Cardinal Bevilacqua testified that he did not know what type of supervision, if any, the home provided for known sexual abusers. Given his predecessor's lack of attention to the supervision of molesters in retirement, it is not surprising that the Archdiocese learned in October 2004 that Msgr. Gillespie was still hearing confessions despite the supposed restrictions on his faculties.

Secretary for Clergy, Msgr. Timothy Senior, promptly informed the retired priest that he was not permitted to hear confessions of any lay people in the future. Monsignor Gillespie has agreed to live "a supervised life of prayer and penance" at Villa Saint Joseph, a retirement home for priests. In return, the Archdiocese will not to seek his laicization, but will allow Msgr. Gillespie to remain a priest.

Monsignor Gillespie was subpoenaed to appear before the Grand Jury in order to afford him an opportunity to answer questions concerning the allegations against him. He chose not to do so.



## **Monsignor Leonard A. Furmanski**

*Monsignor Leonard A. Furmanski, ordained in 1959, sexually abused children throughout his 44 years as a teacher, principal, and pastor in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. As pastor during the 1980s at Sacred Heart parish in Swedesburg, Msgr. Furmanski started a sex education class for grade schoolers. He lay on top of a 12-year-old girl and rubbed his erect penis against her under the pretense of “instructing” her in sex education. He also arranged sexual encounters between the girl and an altar boy. Monsignor Furmanski later admitted to “fondling” boys in the 1980s. He was accused by one altar boy of forcing him to perform oral sex.*

*Cardinal Bevilacqua left Msgr. Furmanski in ministry following an allegation in 1999 that the priest had instructed an 11-year-old altar boy to, as the boy described it, “massage Monsignor’s leg.” Despite evidence suggesting that sexual abuse had occurred, Secretary for Clergy William J. Lynn wrote to the Cardinal that “there is no reason for Furmanski not to return to the parish.”*

*In 2002, Cardinal Bevilacqua left Msgr. Furmanski in ministry after learning that, as a teacher at Cardinal O’Hara High School in 1964, Msgr. Furmanski had sexually abused a freshman student after the boy confided to him about being raped by his algebra teacher in a janitor’s closet at school. The victim told Msgr. Lynn that Msgr. Furmanski abused him for months, fondling the boy naked and having him do the same in return.*

*Still ashamed 38 years later, the victim asked if Msgr. Furmanski had been involved with other boys. The Secretary for Clergy, having personally handled the allegations of the 11-year-old altar boy three years earlier, told the victim he knew of no others. In 2003, an investigator hired by the Archdiocese’s law firm accused Msgr. Furmanski’s 1964 victim of lying. The investigator suggested that if the victim did not drop the matter, his wife might lose her job.*

### **Monsignor Furmanski abuses a Cardinal O’Hara High School student in 1964.**

On March 10, 2002, “Alex” wrote to Cardinal Bevilacqua telling the Cardinal that he had been abused as a young teen at Cardinal O’Hara High School 38 years earlier – by his algebra teacher and then his religion teacher, Msgr. Leonard Furmanski. Alex asked to speak to someone about it.

On June 18, 2002, Alex met with the Secretary for Clergy, William J. Lynn, and his assistant, Fr. Vincent Welsh. Alex related that his ordeal began freshman year – 1964 – at O’Hara when his 6’6”, 370-380 pound algebra teacher asked him to stay after school, took him to the cafeteria, bought him a soda, talked with him about his grades and problems at home between his parents, then bent him over a chair in a closet and raped him. The

teacher fondled him in the closet on several other occasions. Alex told the Grand Jury that on one occasion his teacher suspended him by his wrists with a belt and groped his genitals, demanding, while squeezing the boy's genitals, that the boy keep the abuse secret. The teacher also told Alex, "this just stays between us, and you keep your nose clean and you'll graduate and get out of my class."

Alex explained to Msgr. Lynn and Fr. Welsh that he could not bring himself to tell his father or his mother, who had previously suffered a nervous breakdown, so he confided in Msgr. Furmanski, the priest who taught his religion class. To his dismay, Msgr. Furmanski responded by touching and fondling the boy's genitals, asking whether this was what the algebra teacher had done. Monsignor Furmanski told Alex that his, Msgr. Furmanski's, conduct was proper because he loved Alex.

Alex further told Msgr. Lynn and Fr. Welsh that he became a regular helper at a bookstore that Msgr. Furmanski ran at the school. There, once or twice a week, the priest had Alex take his pants down and he fondled the boy's genitals. The priest took down his own pants as well and had the student masturbate him. Monsignor Furmanski continued to abuse Alex throughout the semester until one day when he told him he was no longer needed because he had been replaced by other boys.

Alex confided in the Archdiocese managers that he never told anyone – not even his wife of 30 years – until stories of priest abuse hit the newspapers in 2002. He said he was embarrassed because he felt what Msgr. Furmanski had done was his fault. He related that he had dropped out of college after one year and began drinking heavily.

**Monsignor Furmanski abuses an 11-year-old girl for almost two years, beginning in 1977.**

"Regina" told the Grand Jury that she met Msgr. Furmanski in 1977 when he became pastor at Sacred Heart Church in Swedesburg and she was a 6th grader. The "boisterous," "outgoing," "always laughing" Msgr. Furmanski was well liked in the parish, leading to an increase in collections. Regina was happy when Msgr. Furmanski started a youth group for girls, and she became an enthusiastic member. Monsignor Furmanski

initiated and began teaching a somewhat graphic sex education to her 6th grade class, including his frequent drawing of diagrams of male genitalia on the blackboard.

Monsignor Furmanski began asking Regina to do clerical work around the rectory, where he also employed numerous altar boys. No other priests lived in the rectory. As one of the students chosen to help the popular priest, she felt special. She believed it gave her a certain status among the other students, and she knew her family was pleased as well. Monsignor Furmanski was aware of and attentive to her vulnerability; he knew she came from a broken home, with no father and a sick mother, and talked with her about her family. Subtly, he moved the conversation to asking the girl whether she understood everything he was teaching in his sex education class. He asked whether she had a boyfriend, and whether she had ever been kissed. He pulled out a manual with pictures of male anatomy and explained to her that the penis went into the vagina – and not elsewhere. These private instructions in sex education were even more explicit and graphic than what Msgr. Furmanski taught in class. Regina told the Grand Jury that she felt a little embarrassed, but that she still trusted the priest at that point.

She began to feel less comfortable when, during 7th grade, Msgr. Furmanski asked whether she was a virgin and, upon hearing that she was, told her it was important for her to “feel what a man’s erection is like.” When they were alone he instructed Regina to lie on the floor. He then proceeded to lie, still clothed, on top of the 12- or 13-year-old girl and simulate intercourse, rubbing his erect penis against her. She told the Grand Jury that this so-called sex education continued for two years, three or four times a month.

Regina told no one, fearing they would not believe her and that she would get in trouble. She said the priest told her that, if she did try to report the abuse, he would say that she had seduced him.

After a year and a half of the “sex education,” Msgr. Furmanski added a new dimension – a 7th-grade altar boy, “Gregory.” Regina told how Msgr. Furmanski called her to the rectory – to do clerical work, she thought – and then said, “Someone’s waiting for you in the other room.” There, in the dark, with music playing, she found Gregory. She described how he kissed her, touched her breasts, and put his hands down her pants and his fingers into her vagina. She explained how Msgr. Furmanski prepared her for these actions

ahead of time. He told her what boys like to do and instructed her that she should let them, for example, put their fingers in her pants because “it only makes more frustration if you don’t, if you stop and you say no....”

She told the Grand Jury that because Msgr. Furmanski was orchestrating this behavior, she felt she could not say no. The priest questioned her about what happened with Gregory after their encounters – although she suspected he might have been watching because he seemed already to know.

Only when Msgr. Furmanski began to pressure her to have sexual intercourse with Gregory did Regina finally escape her abuse. She told the Grand Jury that she became scared because the priest would get angry when she refused to have intercourse. One night while Gregory was making his unwelcome sexual advances, Regina broke away and ran from the rectory with her pants undone.

Monsignor Furmanski’s abuse of Regina continued. Finally, one night when she was in 8th grade, she had had all she could take. The priest had waited until the housekeeper was gone for the day and locked the door as he routinely did before molesting the girl. As he was lying on top of her, grinding his penis against her, she told him that if he did not get off she would scream until someone heard her. The priest got up and allowed her to leave.

Monsignor Furmanski continued to pursue Regina. He called her house and told her mother that Regina should have been at the rectory working. For the most part, Regina said, she was able to avoid the priest, seeing him only at family functions such as funerals. Once she entered high school, she had very little contact with Msgr. Furmanski.

Regina testified that she told no one about her abuse at the time except a boy she dated in high school, “Martin,” and his mother. She told them, she explained, because she had an extreme reaction when Martin, “just goofing around,” lay on top of her. She said she “flipped out,” “threw him off,” and told him not to come near her. She said she “crumbled so bad there that he went and got his mother.” Regina testified that she told Martin’s mother the story but extracted her promise not to tell anyone.

Twenty-four years later, Regina testified that she still considered herself a Catholic but could not go into a church. The smells, the atmosphere, brought back all her horrifying

memories of Msgr. Furmanski. She said that her marriage fell apart and ended in divorce because she “couldn’t . . . make love with my husband because, you know, I didn’t – I felt dirty, and he just said he couldn’t – ‘I can’t fight that ghost forever.’”

Regina said she testified to the Grand Jury mainly because she wanted to tell what Msgr. Furmanski had done and to show him she was no longer afraid. She said he had ruined her life yet felt no remorse. She hoped by telling her story, she could do her part to “just help all this go away” so that she could trust the church with her 8-year-old daughter.

### **Monsignor Furmanski abuses boys at Sacred Heart in the 1980s.**

In 2003, Archdiocese managers learned that Msgr. Furmanski had abused boys during the 1980s while pastor of Sacred Heart in Swedesburg. On September 9, 2003, victim coordinator Martin Frick received a phone call from a therapist named Sherry Rex. She reported that a client of hers – a male in his 30s – had revealed being abused by Msgr. Furmanski while an altar boy at Sacred Heart about 20 years earlier. The client told his therapist that Msgr. Furmanski had taken him into the rectory, shown him pornography, and forced him to perform oral sex on the priest.

Monsignor Furmanski admitted to abusing minors. In an October 27, 2003, memo, Msgr. Lynn wrote that Msgr. Furmanski, when confronted, had admitted to fondling “boys” in the 1980s (while he was serving as pastor at Sacred Heart). In her testimony before the Grand Jury, Regina named several altar boys from her years at Sacred Heart – the late 1970s – who were also particularly close to Msgr. Furmanski and spent a lot of time in the rectory.

### **In 1999, Monsignor Furmanski has inappropriate contact with an 11-year-old boy.**

Between 1989 and 1999, Msgr. Furmanski was assigned to four pastorates, the last, in 1998, being Saint Elizabeth Seton, Bensalem. On June 21, 1999, “Louisa,” the mother of an 11-year-old altar boy at Saint Elizabeth Seton, met with Secretary for Clergy Lynn and his assistant, Fr. Welsh. She accused Msgr. Furmanski of what was recorded as

“inappropriate behavior” with her son “Ernie.” She had been referred to Msgr. Lynn by Catholic Social Services.

Louisa had taken Ernie to see a counselor at the suggestion of his teacher at Saint Charles Borromeo grade school. The teacher had told his mother that she had observed problems with Ernie for a few months. She showed Louisa a book Ernie had destroyed by scribbling sexual-type doodles in it. In addition, his grades were failing. The teacher recommended he see a counselor.

Louisa told the Archdiocese managers that, about a month earlier, when she picked Ernie up from his job doing yard work at the rectory for Msgr. Furmanski, her son seemed strange. She told them she could tell from his eyes that something had happened. When she asked Ernie what was wrong, he told her that Msgr. Furmanski had had him massage the priest’s leg. She thought it suspicious that the priest had changed his pants – from sweatpants to shorts – since she had dropped Ernie off earlier.

On June 17, 1999, Ernie’s parents took him to Catholic Social Services where they met with a counselor, Anne Karmilowicz. They described Ernie’s recent moodiness and failing grades. The counselor then met privately with Ernie. The counselor asked, as a routine question, whether he had ever been sexually abused. In response, Ernie mentioned several incidents of massaging with Msgr. Furmanski, the pastor of his family’s parish. He told the counselor that he had told his mother about these episodes.

On June 18, 1999, Msgr. Lynn received a phone call from Maryann Adams, a clinical supervisor at Catholic Social Services. Monsignor Lynn’s notes from that conversation record that Adams referred to 11-year-old Ernie’s allegation regarding Msgr. Furmanski as “abu[se] w/one of priests.”

On June 21, 1999, Louisa explained to Msgr. Lynn and Fr. Welsh why she felt sure that more than an innocent massage had taken place. She said that Msgr. Furmanski had instructed Ernie not to tell anyone about the massage – a fact later confirmed by Msgr. Furmanski – and that the boy had felt extremely guilty for breaking his silence. Ernie had told her that the massaging had begun in the rectory kitchen but that Msgr. Furmanski had said: “This doesn’t look too good; let’s go upstairs.” Ernie reported that, once upstairs, Msgr. Furmanski lay on the floor while the boy massaged him. Louisa asked her son



whether the priest had said anything during the massage. Ernie replied: “He mumbled something like, ‘one of these days I’m going to get you down.’ But I didn’t understand what he was saying.” Over the next several weeks, between this incident and her meeting with Msgr. Lynn, Louisa learned there had been other “massage” sessions – one in a shed on church property, another in a garage attached to the kitchen.

Monsignor Lynn reported all this information to Cardinal Bevilacqua on June 24, 1999, along with Msgr. Furmanski’s admission that what was reported was true. Monsignor Lynn told the Cardinal that, “[I]t was obvious [Ernie’s mother] believes more happened” and that she mentioned the possibility of going to the police.

**The Archdiocese decides not to return Monsignor Furmanski to his position as pastor only after a parent threatens to cause scandal.**

The Archdiocese responded to the reports by Ernie and his mother in its usual way: Msgr. Furmanski was sent for a 10-day inpatient evaluation at Saint John Vianney Hospital. Also “usual” was that the information contained in the referral was incomplete, omitting crucial facts and thus making it likely that Msgr. Furmanski’s diagnosis would not be accurate. In his referral, Msgr. Lynn wrote that the priest was being sent for evaluation because he had asked an 11-year-old boy to massage his leg twice. Monsignor Lynn *failed* to mention that Msgr. Furmanski had reportedly said, “one of these days I’m going to get you down;” that the priest had ordered the boy to keep the massages a secret; and that the boy related the incidents to a counselor asking about sexual abuse.

On July 7, 1999, Msgr. Lynn announced to Louisa that “after a rigorous two week evaluation by a panel of psychologists, psychiatrists, and other experts, it was determined that Msgr. Furmanski shows no signs of any sexual disorder.” As revealed in his memo of that day’s meeting with the victim’s mother, Msgr. Lynn intended, with Cardinal Bevilacqua’s approval, to return Msgr. Furmanski to the parish.

Within the span of a few weeks, Louisa learned more from her son that caused her to change her mind about the suitability of Msgr. Furmanski’s return to the parish and to threaten to raise a public scandal; her threat changed the Archdiocese’s plans. Monsignor

Lynn wrote on July 28, 1999, that Ernie had told Louisa about “another incident that happened in a hall” and that he was “afraid to have any contact with Msgr. Furmanski.” That day, Msgr. Lynn reported to Cardinal Bevilacqua that Louisa was “very anxious and upset and said she could not understand how we could leave him there at the parish.” Monsignor Lynn warned the Cardinal that the mother “clearly stated that, if Msgr. Furmanski did not leave the parish, she would do whatever was necessary, including informing parishioners and teachers about the incidents or going to other ‘authorities’ to see that he was removed.”

On August 17, 1999, Cardinal Bevilacqua accepted Msgr. Furmanski’s resignation as pastor of Saint Elizabeth Seton. Monsignor Lynn assured the priest that this “does not rule out the possibility of a pastorate in the future.” The parish newsletter contained a short message from Msgr. Furmanski:

Dear Parishioners,

Due to illness, I have resigned as Pastor of the Parish. Your new Pastor will be assigned around the middle of September. I thank you for your many kindnesses to me.

God Bless You All,

Monsignor Leonard

In the fall of 1999, Msgr. Furmanski was assigned as Chaplain to Nazareth Hospital. He was left in that position even after Alex told the Archdiocese in the spring of 2002 about Msgr. Furmanski’s abuse of him when he was a student at Cardinal O’Hara High School.

**Saint John Vianney Hospital issues a favorable diagnosis by claiming to disbelieve one allegation and discounting another as a mere “boundary violation.”**

By keeping Msgr. Furmanski as an active priest, the Archdiocese managers ignored the obvious implication of Alex’s allegations – that Msgr. Furmanski had sexually abused boys in the past, and that he was still preying on them in 1999 when Ernie’s mother alerted Msgr. Lynn and Cardinal Bevilacqua about the priest’s behavior. Instead, Msgr. Lynn told

Alex in 2002 that he knew of no other boys with whom Msgr. Furmanski had been involved.

The Archdiocese, once again, sent the priest for an evaluation at Saint John Vianney Hospital. Despite a detailed allegation of abuse, made by a man who was not threatening to sue the Archdiocese and was clearly still ashamed about what he was reporting, Saint John Vianney's staff concluded: "[T]here was no data to suggest that Father Furmanski had sexually abused [Alex]." The October 17, 2002, report from the hospital also stated: "To our knowledge, there have been no other allegations of sexual misconduct against Father Furmanski in his ministry career." It discounted the 1999 allegation as "an instance of poor boundaries and judgment...."

Thus, by inexplicably dismissing one report of abuse and discounting another, the Archdiocese hospital gave the offender a clean bill of health. Monsignor Furmanski remained in his assignment, with the full status, faculties, and authority of a priest. Alex, having reported his story, made no further contact with the Archdiocese.

### **The priest's victim is bullied and threatened.**

In the summer of 2003, however, Alex was contacted by John Rossiter, an investigator hired by the Archdiocese's law firm, Stradley Ronon. The victim was asked to repeat his story.

At their first meeting, Alex testified, "Rossiter seemed to be extremely sympathetic and told me that I was not the only one to have complained about Msgr. Furmanski." When the investigator called him back later, however, he accused the victim of being motivated by money. Rossiter said he did not believe Alex and was going to "finalize the report and have the matter against Furmanski dropped."

Alex told the Grand Jury that he had never contacted a lawyer and never contemplated suing the Archdiocese. He said he believed that any claim he might once have had was barred by the statute of limitations. After his initial report to Archdiocese

managers, informing them that one of their still active priests had sexually assaulted him as an adolescent, he never contacted the Archdiocese again.

Whether Rossiter really disbelieved Alex or not (Rossiter testified: “I don’t think there’s been but one or two [victims] where I didn’t believe their allegation, at least their perception of it”), he had obtained information that could be used to intimidate and pressure the victim. Alex, who had years before worked as an insurance adjuster, had been prosecuted for using funds he was holding in escrow to pay some hospital bills. He had received a work-release sentence and repaid the escrow fund.

Nevertheless, on behalf of the Archdiocese’s lawyers, Rossiter called Alex’s wife and asked her whether her employer – the juvenile court system in Delaware County – knew of her husband’s conviction. Alex testified that Rossiter suggested to his wife that if the victim continued with his allegation, the wife’s employer would find out about his conviction. Rossiter told her it could affect her employment.

Alex reiterated to Rossiter and the Grand Jury that he didn’t understand why he was being treated this way. He had never threatened to sue the Archdiocese – he had merely told its managers that one of its current priests had abused him.

On September 9, 2003, before Rossiter was able to “finalize his report” *exonerating* Msgr. Furmanski, the Archdiocese received therapist Sherry Rex’s report that a client of hers had been abused by Msgr. Furmanski in the 1980s. Rossiter was sent to question Msgr. Furmanski about this new allegation, as well as Alex’s.

**Monsignor Furmanski is sent for treatment a third time and is eventually recommended for removal by the Archdiocesan Review Board.**

On October 27, 2003, Msgr. Lynn wrote in a memo that Msgr. Furmanski, in his interview with Rossiter, had denied Alex’s allegation, “but admitted to fondling boys in the 1980s.” Monsignor Lynn noted that Rossiter “did not push for more information at that time but immediately called James Bock, Associate to the Vicar for Administration....”

The interview with Msgr. Furmanski was continued by Msgr. Lynn’s assistant, Fr. Vincent Welsh. As reported by Msgr. Lynn, Msgr. Furmanski’s admission to Fr. Welsh

was “that he fondled a minor in the 1980s.” There is no further mention in Msgr. Lynn’s memo of the additional victims indicated by Msgr. Furmanski’s use of the plural – boys – in his admission to Rossiter. Nor is there any recording of the number or names of the abused minors or precisely what type of abuse they suffered.

Msgr. Furmanski was sent on October 23, 2003, to Saint John Vianney for the third time. On December 17, 2003, the Archdiocesan Review Board found Msgr. Furmanski in violation of the Church’s “Essential Norms” defining sexual abuse of a minor and recommended that he be removed from ministry. His name was made public, along with those of three other priests removed that day.

In the course of its investigation of known allegations against the priest, the Review Board stated that Msgr. Furmanski confessed to two “incidents of sexual abuse of minors regarding children about whom we had not previously received allegations.” The Review Board did not identify these two victims or describe their abuse, but the board did suggest that the Archdiocese’s “victim’s services staff should consider what, if any, outreach would be appropriate to the victims identified in Msgr. Furmanski’s admissions since they have not come forward themselves.” There is no indication in records turned over by the Archdiocese that these known victims were ever contacted or that Msgr. Furmanski’s crimes against them were reported to the appropriate civil authorities.

Monsignor Furmanski was released from Saint John Vianney on January 31, 2004. He was permitted to retire – still a priest – to his home on the New Jersey Shore.

On October 15, 2004, faced with the possibility of involuntary laicization, Msgr. Furmanski agreed to live “a supervised life of prayer and penance” at Villa Saint Joseph, a retirement home for priests.

Monsignor Furmanski appeared before the Grand Jury and was given an opportunity to answer questions concerning the allegations against him. He chose not to do so.



## **Father John J. Delli Carpini**

*In 1998, Fr. John J. Delli Carpini began writing homilies and speeches for Cardinal Bevilacqua. He also became a writer in the Cardinal's Communications Office, working for its director, Catherine Rossi, and helping to represent Archdiocese views during a time that sexually abusive priests were becoming a national scandal. He did so even though, as Cardinal Bevilacqua well knew, Fr. Delli Carpini had just a few months before admitted to molesting a 13-year-old boy from his first assignment at Saint Luke the Evangelist in Glenside. Cardinal Bevilacqua tried to conceal his association with Fr. Delli Carpini and also made sure that the priest kept quiet his authorship of the Cardinal's homilies and pronouncements. This arrangement continued until March 2002.*

*Before writing for Cardinal Bevilacqua, Fr. Delli Carpini taught at Roman Catholic High School and was a dean at Saint Charles Borromeo Seminary for 12 years. The molestation he admitted began in 1977 when the boy was an 8th-grader in Saint Luke's parish; it continued for seven years. When the victim informed the Archdiocese of his abuse in 1998, he also reported that he had seen Fr. Delli Carpini in the act of molesting a 15-year-old, and had walked in on the priest as he appeared to be preparing to abuse an 8-year-old boy.*

*Cardinal Bevilacqua permitted Fr. Delli Carpini to continue in ministry anyway, and to live in a parish rectory. He did so after receiving a psychological evaluation reporting "a sexual disorder and a severe personality disorder." Attempting to justify these decisions to the Grand Jury, the Cardinal testified that he generally relied on the advice of therapists to decide whether a priest guilty of abuse should be given an assignment. The documents in Fr. Delli Carpini's file, however, show that it was Cardinal Bevilacqua who made the initial determination to keep him in ministry. The therapists, who worked for the Archdiocese, then tailored the priest's treatment to fit the Cardinal's decision.*

### **Father Delli Carpini sexually abuses a 13-year-old boy at Saint Luke the Evangelist Church in Glenside.**

Thirteen-year-old "Cliff" met Fr. John Delli Carpini shortly after the priest had been ordained in 1976, and when he began his career as an associate pastor at Saint Luke parish. Within six months, the priest had befriended the boy's family and hired him to work in the rectory. Around the same time, the priest began to invite Cliff on trips. He also began to molest the boy.

In March 1998, Cliff described the molestation to Secretary for Clergy William J. Lynn and his assistant, Fr. Gerald C. Mesure. Father Delli Carpini, Cliff recalled, fondled the boy's genitals. This happened sometimes when he was dressed, but also in underwear.

Father Delli Carpini also tried to get the boy to touch the priest's genitals. The abuse continued for seven years.

When Cliff came to the Archdiocese headquarters to report his abuse to officials, he was 34 years old. He was suffering severe emotional problems, which he attributed to Fr. Delli Carpini's abuse. He told Msgr. Lynn and Fr. Measure that "for many years he felt a great deal of guilt." He explained that he felt trapped and unable to escape the relationship because of the priest's friendship with his whole family. Even after the abuse ended, he often encountered Fr. Delli Carpini when the priest performed weddings and baptisms for members of Cliff's extended family.

Cliff said that his condition became worse in October 1997 as a result of seeing Fr. Delli Carpini. In that month, after living for years in Seattle, he visited Philadelphia for his brother's wedding at which Fr. Delli Carpini officiated. Monsignor Lynn and Fr. Measure recorded that, following this event, he used drugs for several months "to escape his emotional pain." He said he considered suicide. After the wedding he told his parents of his abuse at the hands of their priest friend. They went into counseling. He confronted Fr. Delli Carpini, and the priest admitted his wrongdoing and promised to seek help.

On March 13, 1998, Msgr. Lynn informed Cardinal Bevilacqua of Cliff's allegations. He told the Cardinal that Fr. Delli Carpini in an interview had admitted the crime to Archdiocese managers.

**Father Delli Carpini's evaluation and treatment are hampered because he minimizes the number of his abuse victims.**

Because Fr. Delli Carpini readily admitted his long-term abuse of Cliff, he was sent to the Archdiocese's hospital, Saint John Vianney, for evaluation. On April 4, 1998, Msgr. Lynn reported to Cardinal Bevilacqua that therapists at Saint John Vianney had diagnosed Fr. Delli Carpini with "a sexual disorder and a severe personality disorder." Monsignor Lynn wrote that "[n]o exact label was able to be placed on the sexual disorder at this time." Cardinal Bevilacqua approved the therapists' recommendation that the priest receive inpatient treatment for his disorders.



On May 27, 1998, Cliff returned to Msgr. Lynn's office to find out what action the Archdiocese had taken in response to his complaint. Monsignor Lynn told him that Fr. Delli Carpini was undergoing treatment, that the priest had not been diagnosed as a pedophile, and that he was denying that he had ever abused anyone other than Cliff. Cliff informed the Secretary for Clergy that he had witnessed two incidents that contradicted the priest's claim. Both involved Cliff's relatives.

Cliff told Msgr. Lynn that on one occasion, while on a trip with the priest, he had walked into a room "to find Father Delli Carpini with his pants unbuckled and his hands touching a fifteen (or sixteen)-year-old's lap." Another time he walked in on the priest alone in a room with an 8-year-old, also a relative of Cliff's. Knowing Fr. Delli Carpini's methods first-hand, he said that it looked as if the priest were preparing to molest the boy. Cliff recalled that, when he entered the room, Fr. Delli Carpini "appeared shocked and the boy ran out of the room." Monsignor Lynn did not ask the identity of the teenager or the 8-year-old.

At his meeting with Cliff, Msgr. Lynn promised that he would "make sure that Father Delli Carpini is confronted with [the allegation concerning the other two boys]." However, Msgr. Lynn's notes from his next meeting, on June 26, 1998, with Fr. Delli Carpini and his Saint John Vianney treatment team made no mention of any such confrontation. There is no indication that the therapists were ever informed of the other allegations, even though their initial reluctance to diagnose Fr. Delli Carpini with a specific disorder – for example, pedophilia or ephebophilia – may have been predicated on their belief that there was only one alleged victim. Monsignor Lynn appears not to have corrected this critical misperception.

### **The Archdiocese tells Vianney that it plans to return Father Delli Carpini to ministry.**

On June 23, 1998, nearly three months before Saint John Vianney found Fr. Delli Carpini ready for discharge, Cardinal Bevilacqua approved a recommendation by Msgr. Lynn that the admitted molester be permitted to continue in a "limited" ministry. Although the recommendation purported to depend upon the outcome of the priest's treatment, Msgr. Lynn's memo to the Cardinal indicated that Cardinal Bevilacqua's decision came first. The

course of treatment was then tailored to the Cardinal's determination to permit Fr. Delli Carpini's return to ministry. Monsignor Lynn wrote:

One of the issues which must be dealt with in therapy is whether or not he will be permitted active ministry again. If a priest is not going to be permitted to return to ministry, they deal with the loss of ministry in the course of therapy and all the psychological ramifications that brings. If he is going to return to some form of ministry, the treatment is geared in that direction. At this stage in the treatment program, it is important to address this issue.

To assist the Cardinal in making a decision, Msgr. Lynn attached a March 30, 1998, psychological report from Saint John Vianney's original two-week evaluation. This was the evaluation that, as summarized by Msgr. Lynn in an April 1998 memo to the Cardinal, "showed a sexual disorder and a severe personality disorder." It did not endorse or recommend a return to ministry. The evaluation was also conducted before Cliff informed Msgr. Lynn of the incidents he witnessed involving his 8- and 15-year-old relatives. Nevertheless, based on this evaluation, Cardinal Bevilacqua decided to allow Fr. Delli Carpini to continue in ministry.

After Msgr. Lynn communicated Cardinal Bevilacqua's decision to the doctors at Saint John Vianney, the Secretary for Clergy wrote: "the treatment team was happy to have this information so they know how to direct their treatment with Father Delli Carpini." The order of events in this case belies Cardinal Bevilacqua's claim that he relied on the advice of professionals to determine whether a priest should return to ministry.

### **The Archdiocese gives Father Delli Carpini a position of honor writing speeches and sermons for the Cardinal.**

On September 28, 1998, following Fr. Delli Carpini's discharge from Saint John Vianney, Cardinal Bevilacqua appointed the priest to the part-time job of Chaplain at Saint Cabrini Home, a retirement residence for the Cabrini Sisters. In addition, he was assigned to work part-time in the Archdiocese headquarters.

From 1998 until 2000, although ostensibly supervised by Chancellor Alexander J. Palmieri, Fr. Delli Carpini did a great deal of writing for Catherine Rossi, the director of

the Office of Communications, and wrote many homilies and talks for the Cardinal himself. On March 21, 2000, Vicar for Administration Joseph R. Cistone proposed in a memo to the Cardinal that Fr. Delli Carpini be assigned on a more full-time basis as a writer for the Office of Communications and for the Cardinal, but that this assignment be concealed from the public by keeping him under Chancellor Palmieri's supervision "for purposes of his 'personal' issues." Monsignor Cistone then added parenthetically: "(Regarding your previous concern about his mentioning that he writes for you, we were able to address this matter with Father Delli Carpini discreetly, without any reference to your having raised the issue.)" (Appendix D-26)

Father Delli Carpini remained in these assignments until February 2002, when Cardinal Bevilacqua removed him from ministry along with several other priests. All had been known for many years to have sexually abused minors. He is currently on administrative leave, prohibited from exercising his faculties except to celebrate Mass alone.

Father Delli Carpini appeared before the Grand Jury and was given an opportunity to answer questions concerning the allegations against him. He chose not to do so.



## **Father Thomas J. Wisniewski**

*In July 1992, Cardinal Bevilacqua's newly appointed Secretary for Clergy, William J. Lynn, documented allegations that Fr. Thomas J. Wisniewski had abused a 15-year-old boy in Nativity B.V.M. parish for three years, beginning in 1984, engaging in "everything sexually two men can do."*

*The documents in Fr. Wisniewski's file shed light on Cardinal Bevilacqua's policies and practices in dealing with priests accused of sexual crimes. According to these procedures, the Cardinal was made knowledgeable of the case from the start. The procedures emphasized consideration of legal liability and scandal over public safety. They sought to conceal information and avoid law enforcement. They failed to heed recommendations for supervising and monitoring the priest. The procedures enabled Fr. Wisniewski, ordained in 1974, to continue acting as a priest for six years after he admitted sexually abusing a minor.*

*Monsignor Lynn's memos about Fr. Wisniewski describe a process whereby sexual abuse allegations were to be immediately reported, verbally, to Cardinal Bevilacqua and his Vicar for Administration. The Cardinal wanted his Secretary for Clergy to "act quickly" to remove any admitted molester from his assignment and to have the priest evaluated at the Archdiocese's hospital, Saint John Vianney. But the purpose of acting quickly, Msgr. Lynn noted, was to minimize "legal ramifications." Known victims who did not themselves come forward were not to be sought out or interviewed. The Archdiocesan Personnel Board charged with recommending priests' assignments was not to be informed of "such matters" as sexual abuse allegations and admissions.*

*Also in Fr. Wisniewski's file was a description by Saint John Vianney therapists of the aftercare and supervision that the Archdiocese would need to put in place if it was to consider permitting abusers to continue in what Cardinal Bevilacqua termed "limited ministry." These recommendations called for, among other things, a resident supervisor who kept a daily log of the priest's comings and goings. In Fr. Wisniewski's case, as in others, the ministry was permitted, but the supervision and aftercare were lacking.*

### **In 1992, Father Wisniewski admits to abusing "Kenneth."**

On July 7, 1992, "Susan" reported to Archdiocese managers that her ex-boyfriend, Kenneth, had been abused for three years by Fr. Thomas Wisniewski, beginning in 1984 when the priest was an assistant pastor at Nativity B.V.M. in Media. Father Paul Dougherty, who also knew from Kenneth of his abuse, accompanied Susan to the Archdiocese headquarters, where they met with Cardinal Bevilacqua's Assistant Vicar for Administration, James E. Molloy, and his newly assigned Secretary for Clergy, William J. Lynn.

Monsignor Lynn's notes show that the Archdiocese was informed by Susan that Kenneth had been a 15-year-old student at Cardinal O'Hara High School in 1984 when Fr. Wisniewski began his three-year course of sexually abusing the boy. In October 1991, Kenneth confided in Susan and Fr. Dougherty, whom the couple had consulted to discuss marriage plans. Kenneth described to Susan a relationship he thought was "special." Father Wisniewski had given Kenneth expensive gifts, including a VCR and a car. During the course of this sexually abusive relationship, from Kenneth's sophomore year in high school through the beginning of college, Fr. Wisniewski had oral sex with him and attempted to penetrate him anally. The abuse sometimes took place at the Nativity rectory, where Kenneth worked. The priest also took trips alone with the teen to the New Jersey Shore and to Canada.

Father Dougherty told Msgrs. Lynn and Molloy that Kenneth "felt angry and guilty about the relationship." Kenneth was not sure, however, whether he wanted to tell authorities about it. Perhaps most significantly for the Archdiocese, there was reason to believe that Fr. Wisniewski might be abusing another boy. The priest told the Archdiocese managers that, in December 1991, Kenneth "was convinced there were other victims." Monsignor Lynn recorded that Susan also warned that Fr. Wisniewski had been seen recently dining out with a 14- or 15-year-old from Saint Pius X parish in Broomall, to which the priest had been transferred in June 1991.

Susan told Msgrs. Molloy and Lynn that she thought Kenneth might tell the officials what happened if they approached him and told him what they already knew. Father Dougherty noted that Kenneth had been "glad to share his story." Despite these indications that the victim might be willing to speak with them, the Archdiocese managers declined to contact him. In response to an explicit request by Susan that the managers question Kenneth, Msgr. Molloy was evasive, saying that "he would explore that possibility, but that it might violate civil law," a dubious proposition he did not explain.

Later that same day, Fr. Wisniewski admitted the truth of the allegations when confronted by Msgrs. Molloy and Lynn.

**The Archdiocese's memos outline procedures for handling abuse cases and reveal Church leaders' misplaced priorities.**

Monsignor Lynn kept detailed memos recording the handling of Fr. Wisniewski's case, one of his first as Secretary for Clergy. His memos from this case are informative because, as he learned the job, he explained the Cardinal's policies, and the rationales behind them, in a way that he did not as the process became more familiar.

The first step after receiving the allegation was to interview the accused priest. The next step was to immediately inform Cardinal Bevilacqua – orally. A written report to the Cardinal – for the record – would follow later. After procuring Fr. Wisniewski's admission, Msgr. Lynn noted, he “immediately informed [Vicar for Administration Edward P.] Cullen who verbally informed Cardinal Bevilacqua.”

The Cardinal's protocols apparently did not entail informing the police about a sexually abusive priest. Monsignor Lynn wrote that the usual process – that is, when the priest admitted to abusing a minor –called for “immediate removal from the rectory, a full evaluation and a follow-up recommendation.” This speed was less attributable to a concern for victims than to the Archdiocese's legal exposure: “there is less legal ramifications,” Msgr. Lynn noted, “if they [Archdiocese managers] act quickly.” Similarly, inpatient evaluation at a Church-affiliated institution was designed to serve the Archdiocese. Monsignor Lynn recorded that Fr. Wisniewski was told: “legally, they [the Archdiocese managers] have to cover all possibilities.” Accordingly, Fr. Wisniewski was sent to Saint John Vianney for evaluation on July 14, 1992.

It was not procedure to try to interview victims if their abuse had been reported by a third party and they had not come forward themselves. Despite Susan's request, supported by Fr. Dougherty's belief that Kenneth needed counseling, Archdiocese managers made no apparent attempt to talk to Kenneth. Questioned by the Grand Jury, Msgr. Lynn abandoned the untenable excuse, given by Msgr. Molloy to Susan, that the Archdiocese feared civil consequences and, instead, asserted the dubious claim that they avoided contacting victims in order not to traumatize them.

The Cardinal's procedures also prevented the Priest Personnel Board, responsible for recommending priest assignments, from learning about abuse allegations; the Church officials informed Fr. Wisniewski “that such matters are not brought to the personnel

board....” Nor was Fr. Wisniewski’s parish to be informed of the reason for his absence when he went to Saint John Vianney for evaluation. Monsignor Lynn wrote: “Father Wisniewski was told that the pastor should tell the parishioners that he is on vacation.”

Father Wisniewski’s Secret Archives file also sheds light on Cardinal Bevilacqua’s procedure for deciding whether to return an abusive priest to ministry. Monsignor Lynn initially proposed, in a September 1, 1992, memo, that “consideration to future ministry assignment in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia be based on the results of the recommended treatment at Saint John Vianney Hospital,” the treatment facility where Fr. Wisniewski was sent for evaluation. Monsignors Molloy and Cullen amended the proposal, suggesting that the Cardinal base his decision only “in part” on the therapists’ advice. Cardinal Bevilacqua approved the memo’s recommendation, expressly noting the amendment.

On May 14, 1993, Msgr. Lynn recommended Fr. Wisniewski’s return to ministry despite his admissions to sexual abuse of a boy. The reasons he gave enumerated the other factors Cardinal Bevilacqua thought were important to consider beyond Saint John Vianney’s recommendation. Monsignor Lynn noted that the victim “has never come forward” and “[t]here has never been any threat of legal action.” Absent any warnings of possible scandal or lawsuits, Cardinal Bevilacqua approved Fr. Wisniewski’s return to ministry.

**The inadequacy of procedures is exemplified in the limited supervision of Father Wisniewski.**

Cardinal Bevilacqua told the Grand Jury that the return of abusive priests to ministry was justified because their ministry was “limited” and “supervised.” The documents in Fr. Wisniewski’s file demonstrate that that was simply untrue. Father Wisniewski and other sexually abusive priests were returned to ministry without sufficient supervision or enforced limitations.

On March 11, 1993, several weeks before Fr. Wisniewski’s discharge from Saint John Vianney, Fr. Wisniewski’s therapist wrote to Msgr. Lynn that Fr. Wisniewski was not a pedophile, but referred to his “ephebophilic behavior.” The therapist also outlined



in great detail the type of supervision and treatment necessary to make Fr. Wisniewski a viable candidate for “ministry-supervision.”

The therapist’s conditions were extensive and designed to prevent Fr. Wisniewski from having the opportunity to abuse other children. He recommended an assignment that would prohibit “face to face or other unsupervised ministerial involvement with male adolescents....” He also called for the priest to have a resident “ministry supervisor,” and stated that Fr. Wisniewski should be required to sign in and out on a “daily log indicating where he is going and when he is expected to return and with whom he will be visiting.” The supervisor would be expected to countersign the log. As for continued therapy, the therapist recommended that Fr. Wisniewski attend sexual addiction support group meetings daily for the first three months following discharge, that he continue in individual psychotherapy for at least four years, and that he have a “comprehensive psychological assessment annually.”

An integral part of the necessary aftercare program outlined by the therapist was the “Ministry Supervision Team,” to include the resident ministry supervisor, the Secretary for Clergy, Fr. Wisniewski’s therapist, and a peer of Fr. Wisniewski. The therapist advised that this group meet weekly for the first few months, then monthly. He emphasized that the supervision and therapy would need to be sustained for a long time. “The team should be mindful,” he warned, “that current developmental resources indicate a full developmental era may be required to effect the behavioral changes needed to develop a healthy, adult style of interpersonal relating.”

Monsignor Lynn forwarded the therapist’s outline for ministry supervision to Cardinal Bevilacqua on May 14, 1993, and again on July 13, 1993. In his July memo, Msgr. Lynn recommended that Fr. Wisniewski, who was still at Saint John Vianney, be assigned to work as an advocate to the Metropolitan Tribunal, the ecclesiastical court of the Archdiocese, and to live in a parish rectory.

On July 20, 1993, Cardinal Bevilacqua approved continued ministry for Fr. Wisniewski, including his work and residence assignments. The Cardinal’s acknowledgement of the importance of supervision was well documented in notes from that date’s issues meeting. But the acknowledgement recorded for the file was not reflected in practice. A month later, a priest came to the Secretary for Clergy’s office to

warn that the pastor at the rectory where Fr. Wisniewski was to be assigned, Fr. John DeMayo, was often absent, and would not make a good supervisor. The warning was ignored.

On September 16, 1993, Fr. Wisniewski began work at the Metropolitan Tribunal and took up residence at Saint Justin Martyr Rectory, in Penn Valley, where Fr. DeMayo was pastor. There the lack of supervision of the admitted child molester became glaringly obvious. Over the next three years, the Archdiocese recorded only two meetings of Fr. Wisniewski's so-called ministry supervision team. No "annual" psychological evaluations were conducted. There is no record of Fr. Wisniewski's participation in any sexual addiction support groups. There is no indication that he ever signed in or out of his rectory or explained his whereabouts and associations.

In May 1995, Cardinal Bevilacqua appointed Fr. Wisniewski Chaplain at Immaculate Mary Home in Philadelphia, to begin in June. His residence remained the same. Seeking to discontinue therapy altogether, Fr. Wisniewski underwent a "follow-up" psychological assessment in November 1996 – three and a half years after his discharge from Saint John Vianney.

Although the therapist wrote that Fr. Wisniewski had made progress and "done good work," he concluded that continued therapy was desirable. He noted, among other things, that "[c]ontinued confusions are apparent with regard to sexual identity," and that "[h]e tends to deny sexual feelings and impulses to a point where they are physically occurring." He attributed Fr. Wisniewski's feeling that therapy had become redundant to the priest's difficulty in probing his problems deeply.

Despite this conclusion that Fr. Wisniewski still had significant issues and should not discontinue therapy, the priest was released from even the semblance of ministry supervision, according to his canon lawyer. On March 11, 2002, Joseph C. Dieckhaus, J.C.L., wrote to Cardinal Bevilacqua:

It must ... be noted that the "end of supervised ministry" was celebrated with a dinner provided by Rev. John DeMayo, then Pastor of Saint Justin Martyr Parish, Narberth, PA soon after the above noted [psychological evaluation].

Dieckhaus noted that Msgr. Lynn was present at the 1996 dinner, but that the event was "not noted in Father Wisniewski's file."

Dieckhaus went on to say: “none of the last three pastors [after Fr. DeMayo] connected with Fr. Wisniewski’s residences at Saint Justin and Saint Callistus [where he moved in June 2001] were informed of any supervised ministry. Neither was this noted to any personnel at Mary Immaculate Home. Furthermore, Fr. Wisniewski was permitted to live totally alone in Saint Justin Rectory for an entire year, with the full knowledge of the Office of Clergy....”

Father Wisniewski’s lawyer correctly noted that the lifting of supervision was never recorded in Archdiocese files. Yet, when Cardinal Bevilacqua in June 2001 assigned Fr. Wisniewski to a new parish rectory, the Cardinal encouraged the priest to “offer assistance at Saint Callistus Parish to the extent that time and circumstances of your primary assignment allow.”

**Father Wisniewski is removed from ministry as a result of the national clergy abuse scandal, but the removal is inadequate to protect parishioners.**

In February 2002, six years after Msgr. Lynn helped celebrate an end to Fr. Wisniewski’s purported “supervision” – and shortly after the story of abusive priests had become a national scandal – Cardinal Bevilacqua had the Secretary for Clergy explain to Fr. Wisniewski that the Archdiocese could no longer “provide and sustain an adequate level of supervision for Wisniewski and other priests in limited ministry who have abused minors in the past.” The priest was asked to refrain from any public ministry and to move out of his residence at Saint Callistus. No event, such as an increase in new accusations, occurred to explain the sudden shift in the way the Archdiocese dealt with abusive priests, leading us to conclude that the change was motivated solely by Archdiocese managers’ increased sensitivity to the political consequences of continuing to employ known child abusers.

Even after claiming to remove Fr. Wisniewski from ministry, however, the Cardinal followed practices that facilitated continued endangerment of the public. Cardinal Bevilacqua chose not to name the priest or to inform parishioners of the reason for his departure, even though disclosure of this information would have allowed parishioners and future victims to protect themselves and might have encouraged other

past victims to come forward. Archdiocese managers put the avoidance of scandal and lawsuits ahead of their duty to protect the public and to end a sexual offender's misuse of his priestly status.

At least twice after "removing" him, Cardinal Bevilacqua was informed that Fr. Wisniewski was continuing to celebrate Mass and to present himself as a practicing priest. In November 2002, Msgr. Lynn was even warned ahead of time that Fr. Wisniewski planned on saying Mass for a Knights of Columbus group. Monsignor Lynn was told by another priest, Fr. Jim Whalen, that a member of the group had referred to Fr. Wisniewski as their Chaplain. As recorded in a memo, Msgr. Lynn chose to let the known abuser continue to minister rather than risk alerting anyone to his status. The Secretary for Clergy instructed Fr. Whalen "not to create a scene and to let Tom have the Mass if he insisted...."

Father Wisniewski, as of October 2004, was 56 years old. He was living with his mother and had requested permission to continue to do so as part of his "supervised life of prayer and penance."

Father Wisniewski appeared before the Grand Jury and was given an opportunity to answer questions concerning the allegations against him. He chose not to do so.

## **Father Thomas J. Smith**

*Father Thomas J. Smith, who engaged in depraved and sadistic behavior with many boys in previous parishes, lived until December 2004 at the rectory of Saint Francis of Assisi, a parish with a grade school in Springfield. He was permitted to celebrate daily and Sunday Masses and hear confessions.*

*On March 12, 2004, the Archdiocesan Review Board unanimously found credible allegations that “Smith took at least three boys playing the role of Jesus in the parish Passion play into a private room, required them to disrobe completely,” pinned loincloths around them, and then, during the play, encouraged “other boys in the play to whip the Jesus character to the point where some of the boys had cuts, bruises and welts.” These actions, the Review Board found, “occurred in multiple parish assignments with a number of different boys over a number of years.” The board also credited reports that Fr. Smith had told boys that the rules of a club where he took them required that the boys and priest be nude to enter the club’s hot tub.*

*Also contained in the priest’s Secret Archives file were reports that Fr. Smith regularly took boys camping and that he had fondled the genitals of at least one of those boys with whom he shared a tent. There were details from one of the victims who played Jesus in the Passion play, describing Fr. Smith, with pins in his mouth, kneeling in front of, and very close to, the boy’s genitals. The victim said that Fr. Smith would sometimes prick him with the pins until he bled.*

*When Cardinal Bevilacqua learned of these accusations in May 2002, he chose to leave Fr. Smith in residence, and ministering, at Saint Francis of Assisi parish. Two and a half years later, after receiving additional reports that Fr. Smith had abused other boys, the Archdiocese removed the priest from active ministry.*

### **The Archdiocese minimizes the allegations of “Ian” and “Peter.”**

The Grand Jury heard that on May 10, 2002, 29-year-old Ian reported to the Delaware County District Attorney’s Office and to the Archdiocese the abuse he suffered as a 13-year-old at the hands of his parish priest, Fr. Thomas J. Smith, who had been ordained in 1973. In 1986, when the abuse occurred, Fr. Smith was assistant pastor at Annunciation B.V.M. Church in Havertown. (Cardinal Bevilacqua promoted him in 1996 to become pastor at Good Shepherd Church in Philadelphia, and in 1998 named him Regional Vicar for Delaware County with a residence at Saint Francis of Assisi’s rectory in Springfield.)

Ian described to Archdiocese and law enforcement officials how, in 1986, he had felt honored when his classmates at the parish grade school elected him to play the part of Jesus in the parish's Passion play. He told how the experience became such a nightmare that he, unsuccessfully, begged his parents' permission to quit.

Father Smith, who was director of the church play, subjected Ian to humiliating and sadistic torments for two months during the boy's 8th-grade year. Before every practice and every performance, while the other children dressed in the church basement with their teachers, Fr. Smith took Ian by himself to the sacristy, locked the door, and ordered the boy to undress. The priest then took what Ian estimated to be 20 minutes to pin a costume – a loincloth and a cloak – on the boy. The ritual, according to Ian, was for the priest to kneel in front of the naked boy, uncomfortably close to his genitals. In his mouth, the priest had the pins he would use to fasten the costume. Ian said that Fr. Smith sometimes touched his penis through the cloth and would “very often . . . poke me with these pins until I would bleed.”

During the play itself, Fr. Smith directed boys playing the parts of guards to whip “Jesus” with real leather straps. Ian said that these whippings gave him bruises, welts, and cuts. Father Smith directed his plays in this fashion for years in several different parishes. He later explained that he wanted the boys to “live the part” of Jesus.

Ian told a Delaware County detective that he felt degraded by what Fr. Smith did to him and by what the priest directed others to do. He said that he began to drink alcohol after the practices and performances. When he came forward in 2002, he had been recovering from alcoholism for 10 years.

Ian also reported that Fr. Smith took boys to a hot tub at the Springton Racquet Club where the priest was a member. Father Smith told the boys that it was a club rule that they had to be nude to use the tub, and the boys complied. Ian described how the priest paraded to the hot tub in front of the boys, without even a towel around his waist. In the tub, Ian said, the priest constantly shifted around to try to get closer to the boys who were trying to move further away. An investigator for the Archdiocese Review Board found that there was no club rule – at least not in 2003 – requiring nudity to enter their hot tub. Ian named four boys who shared this hot tub experience – “Vincent,” “Charley,” “Matt,” and, Ian thought, “Dylan.”

Ian's mother, who accompanied him to the interviews, told the county detective, Roger Rozsas, and Office for Clergy officials, Msgr. Lynn and Fr. Vincent Welsh, of another victim. She said that the mother of "Peter," a boy who, a few years earlier, had played Jesus in the Passion play, told her that Fr. Smith had done exactly the same things to her son. She said that Peter had told his parents at the time, but that he was hysterical and did not want his parents to confront Fr. Smith. Peter's mother told Ian's that she regretted not doing anything then – three years before Ian played the Jesus character.

Peter's father called Msgr. Lynn on June 18, 2002, confirming Ian's and his mother's allegations. According to Msgr. Lynn's notes, Peter's father and some other parents had finally confronted Fr. Smith in 1991, and the priest had acknowledged that he had used bad judgment in how he conducted the Passion play. Monsignor Lynn's notes record Peter's father complaining that "there are potential victims and the Church is not owning up to this." Archdiocese records indicate that still no effort was made to contact the other potential victims named by Ian and his mother.

Ian's mother told Msgr. Lynn and Fr. Welsh that she knew of two families who had questioned Fr. Smith about camping trips he took with their sons.

Ian also told the detective and Msgr. Lynn and Fr. Welsh that his older brother Arthur had confided in him that Fr. Smith had molested him during a rafting and camping trip in 1984, when Arthur was 13 years old. Ian said that Arthur had become very close to Fr. Smith at that time, and that in 2002 he still did not want to come forward because he feared embarrassment. Arthur had told Ian, though, that while sleeping in the same tent with Fr. Smith, the priest had "touched" and "grabbed" the boy's genitals.

### **The Archdiocese interviews Father Smith but does not act.**

When the Archdiocese managers interviewed Fr. Smith later in the day on May 10, 2002, Fr. Welsh recorded that they explained the difference between "inappropriate" behavior and "sexual abuse." Apparently understanding this to mean that only genital contact was considered abuse by the Archdiocese, Fr. Smith readily admitted the numerous incidents in which he humiliated boys by forcing them to undress in front of him, but he denied any touching of genitals. According to Fr. Welsh's notes, the

managers did not even question Fr. Smith about his sadistic behavior in poking the boys with pins or directing other boys to whip “Jesus” with leather straps during play rehearsals and performances.

Having heard admissions from the priest that he had, for years, made boys strip in front of him behind locked doors and in hot tubs, as well as unaddressed allegations that he poked naked boys with pins and directed others to whip them with leather straps, Msgr. Lynn asked Fr. Smith whether there were “inappropriate things [we] need to worry about.” Father Welsh’s notes record Msgr. Lynn telling Fr. Smith that they had names of other boys and that they needed to assure the Cardinal that there was nothing to worry about.

Cardinal Bevilacqua apparently was assured enough to leave Fr. Smith as Vicar of Delaware County and resident priest at Saint Francis of Assisi. On the recommendation of Msgr. Lynn and the Cardinal’s Vicar for Administration, Joseph Cistone, Cardinal Bevilacqua expressly permitted Fr. Smith to continue performing parish duties, including saying Mass and hearing confession. Father Smith resigned his position as Vicar seven months later, according to Archdiocese records, at his own request, in order to care for his sick parents.

**Church officials send Father Smith for a psychological evaluation that employs inadequate and outdated methods.**

On June 1, 2002, a private counseling and consulting company performed a one-day evaluation of Fr. Smith at the request of the Archdiocese. The report found a possible “failure to attend to necessary limits and boundaries that offer safety and predictability in the social environment” and a “tendency towards compulsivity,” but it offered no concrete diagnosis. It “strongly” recommended against any assignments that involved working with children. Father Smith himself provided the only facts alluded to in the report.

Thus, although the evaluators knew that Fr. Smith asked the students who played Jesus to fully undress, there is no indication that they knew that he took the boys to a private room, locked the door, knelt in front of their genitals with pins in his mouth, and pricked at least one of them until he bled. There is no mention of his directing other boys



to beat the Jesus character until cuts, welts, and bruises resulted. Nor are the allegations that he handled any boy's genitals on camping trips mentioned. Father Smith also failed to explain that he manipulated boys into being naked in the hot tub by telling them that club rules demanded it.

The Grand Jury heard that the absence of relevant facts was not the only problem with Fr. Smith's evaluation. A critique of the private counseling and consulting evaluation by Leslie M. Lothstein, Ph.D. ABPP, the Director of Psychology at The Institute for Living in Hartford, Connecticut, found that the report "was flawed and failed to meet standards of care in evaluating sex offenders. Of particular concern," he wrote, "was the failure to use specialized sex offender tests and actuarial risk assessment tools that are part of a national standard of practice to evaluate sex offenders." He criticized the the counseling and consulting group's use of outdated tests and a failure to choose tests tailored to the reasons for Fr. Smith's referral. He commented that the report "seemed almost written in code," thus obscuring its meaning.

In his analysis prepared for the Grand Jury in 2003, Dr. Lothstein said that one day was not sufficient to perform a thorough evaluation. He noted that "it is not within the area of expertise for a psychologist or psychiatrist to perform a police inquiry," but said it was important nonetheless for an evaluation to incorporate witness and victim statements and not to rely solely on the priest's self-reports.

Dr. Lothstein testified that the evidence he read suggested that Fr. Smith "is thought disordered, impulsive and engages in bizarre ritualized sexually sadistic behavior and he has probably acted out inappropriately with many minors while using religious justification for his bizarre behavior."

Dr. Lothstein found it unusual that the counseling and consulting group failed to assert that Fr. Smith was at risk of harming children, even though that was the clear implication of its recommendation that he not be placed in an assignment where he would work directly with children or teenagers. To then allow Fr. Smith to be assigned to a parish, Dr. Lothstein said, would constitute "a serious error in judgment."

### **Father Smith continues at Saint Francis of Assisi parish.**

In January 2003, seven months after Fr. Smith's one-day psychological test, Msgr. Lynn recommended to Cardinal Bevilacqua that the priest be permitted to continue residing, saying Mass, and hearing confession at Saint Francis of Assisi parish. Without explanation, Msgr. Lynn asserted that the therapists had recommended against Fr. Smith's working with children "not for fear of his acting out but more as a matter of prudence." Monsignor Lynn informed the Cardinal that the Archdiocese's legal counsel had met with the Delaware County District Attorney and that that office's investigation was closed. Monsignor Cistone concurred with Msgr. Lynn's recommendation to leave Fr. Smith in his parish assignment and Cardinal Bevilacqua approved it.

The Archdiocese leaders left Fr. Smith in his parish assignment despite reports, found to be credible, of sadistic behavior and manipulative efforts to see boys' genitals, as well as reports of genital fondling of a victim still too embarrassed to come forward publicly. Instead of ordering meaningful psychological testing that could well indicate otherwise, Cardinal Bevilacqua and his managers apparently chose to accept Fr. Smith's assertions that the whippings he directed, the pricking of naked boys with pins, and his manipulations to bathe nude with the grade school children in his parishes, served some purpose other than sexual gratification.

### **The Archdiocese receives two more reports that Father Smith sexually abused boys.**

Father Smith remained at Saint Francis of Assisi until December 2004, when another victim came forward. The Archdiocese did not provide the Grand Jury with the report made by the victim, "Dale," but a letter from Fr. Smith denying the allegations suggests the general nature of the incident. In a December 15 letter to the Archdiocesan Review Board, Fr. Smith discussed a trip he took to Europe in the 1970s with the victim, "another student," "Aaron," and Fr. Francis Beach (now the Regional Vicar for North Philadelphia). Father Smith told the Review Board that the four travelers shared one bedroom at a German bed and breakfast for most of the trip, but that on at least one night he shared a bedroom with only Dale. He insisted that he did not share the same bed with any of his traveling companions and that he did not "ever commit an offensive touching

of any kind let alone one of a sexual nature.” Three days after Fr. Smith wrote to the Review Board, he was placed on administrative leave.

In February 2005, yet another victim reported to the Archdiocese that Fr. Smith had abused him when he was 12 or 13 years old. According to a summary of the allegation prepared by Archdiocese officials for its lawyers, “Brent” reported that, in 1975 or 1976, he and his younger brother accompanied Fr. Smith on what they thought was to be a trip to Hershey Park. Instead, the priest took them to a motel near the King of Prussia Mall, plied them with Southern Comfort, chased them around the motel room, and put ice cubes in their underwear. Father Smith then instructed the boys to remove their underwear in order to allow it to dry overnight. The victim told the Archdiocese’s victim assistance coordinator, Martin Frick, that when he awoke in the middle of the night, he was lying naked on top of Fr. Smith. Both the priest and the boy had erections. Brent told a Review Board investigator that Fr. Smith was rubbing his body against the boy’s. He said that Fr. Smith did the same thing another time.

The Archdiocesan Review Board found Brent’s allegations credible. The board further acknowledged that, in light of the subsequent allegations, it now found “the earlier incidents regarding the passion play were more likely than not to have been motivated by a desire for sexual gratification on the part of Reverend Smith.”

On March 15, 2005, the Archdiocese restricted Fr. Smith’s faculties. His current residence was undisclosed.

Father Smith appeared before the Grand Jury and was given an opportunity to answer questions concerning the allegations against him. He chose not to do so.



## **Father Francis J. Gallagher**

*Father Francis J. Gallagher was arrested in Sea Isle City, New Jersey, on December 28, 1989, for soliciting sex with two young men – ages 18 and 20 years old. He later admitted to sexually abusing two adolescent brothers.*

*With information about the priest's abuse of minors in Archdiocese files, Archbishop Bevilacqua appointed Fr. Gallagher, in May 1991, as parochial vicar at Immaculate Conception, a parish with a school in Jenkintown. In 2000, Fr. Gallagher was transferred to another parish with a school – Mary, Mother of the Redeemer in North Wales. In choosing this parish for Fr. Gallagher, Secretary for Clergy William Lynn noted that "because of past difficulties, he needs to be in Montgomery or Bucks County."*

*Cardinal Bevilacqua never limited Fr. Gallagher's ministry or restricted the priest's access to minors. Not only were parishioners not warned about Fr. Gallagher's past, but deliberate efforts were made to place him among unsuspecting families.*

*As with other priests, the Archdiocese did not act in the absence of pressure from parents or fear of scandal. Church officials did not act even when the priest's abuse of minors was admitted and possibly ongoing. There is no indication in Archdiocese records that efforts were ever made to identify Fr. Gallagher's known victims, to ascertain if their abuse was continuing, or to notify their parents.*

*Father Gallagher, ordained in 1973, remained an active parish priest until March 2002 when publicity from the scandal in Boston prompted the Cardinal to remove several priests still ministering despite histories of abusing minors.*

### **Father Gallagher is arrested and sent for treatment.**

In 1989, Fr. Francis Gallagher was a teacher at Cardinal Dougherty High School in Philadelphia, where he had been transferred after teaching for 13 years at Cardinal O'Hara High School in Springfield. Two weeks after resigning his job at Cardinal Dougherty, Fr. Gallagher was arrested on December 28, 1989, in Sea Isle City, New Jersey, for offering money in exchange for sex to two young men, ages 18 and 20. On January 5, 1990, then-Secretary for Clergy John J. Jagodzinski learned that a news reporter was calling the Archdiocese to inquire about the arrest.

The Secretary for Clergy arranged for Fr. Gallagher to go to Saint John Vianney Hospital that same day. After an evaluation there, he was transferred on February 5 for treatment to Saint Luke Institute in Suitland, Maryland. He remained at Saint Luke for nine months.

On February 22, 1990, while Fr. Gallagher was at Saint Luke, his attorney succeeded in having the criminal charges against him dismissed. The attorney informed the New Jersey court that his client was already engaged in an extensive rehabilitation program. It was agreed that if Fr. Gallagher completed the program, he could file for expungement of his record.

Upon his release from Saint Luke on October 23, 1990, Fr. Gallagher resided at Immaculate Conception, a Philadelphia rectory used by the Archdiocese to house recovering priests. He reported that he attended AA meetings, meetings for sex addicts, and individual and group therapy sessions as mandated by Saint Luke's continuing care program. He assisted part-time at Saint Cecilia in North Philadelphia.

### **Father Gallagher returns to parish ministry without any restrictions.**

On May 24, 1991, Archbishop Bevilacqua welcomed Fr. Gallagher back to active ministry and appointed him as parochial vicar at Immaculate Conception Church in Jenkintown. Four days later, Archbishop Bevilacqua wrote, on a note attached to a report from Saint Luke, that he was "deeply concerned about [Fr. Gallagher's] move." The Archbishop was concerned, apparently, because he was aware that in addition to being arrested for solicitation, Fr. Gallagher had admitted to abusing two adolescent brothers (an admission he repeated years later to Msgr. Lynn). Despite Archbishop Bevilacqua's expressed concern, however, there is no indication that Archdiocese managers made any effort to determine if that abuse was ongoing, or to warn the boys' parents. Nor did the Archbishop restrict Fr. Gallagher's faculties even though his new parish had a grade school.

Father Gallagher remained at Immaculate Conception for nine years with free access to parish children. The only thought given to removing him was to place him in a bigger parish with *more* families. A note dated November 30, 1993, from Msgr. Lynn to his assistant Fr. James Beisel suggested: "I think we should interview [Fr. Gallagher and] see if he is ready for assignment elsewhere – Less families in Jenkintown."

On January 18, 1996, the Office for Clergy again took up the subject of moving Fr. Gallagher. Another assistant of Msgr. Lynn, Msgr. Michael T. McCulken, interviewed Fr. Gallagher and wrote that the priest "reminded me that he had been arrested one time

in Sea Isle City and that an assignment in Delaware County probably would not be prudent.” Father Gallagher was left in place.

Three years later, on June 2, 1999, Msgr. Lynn met with Fr. Gallagher to discuss the priest’s future. Archdiocese officials had determined that Immaculate Conception no longer needed a parochial vicar, and Msgr. Lynn was considering what would be a suitable assignment for the priest. Father Gallagher expressed an interest in becoming a pastor. Monsignor Lynn recorded in a memo of their meeting that as they were discussing Fr. Gallagher’s career, “I remembered in my own mind that Father Gallagher had some kind of difficulty with sexually acting out.” Monsignor Lynn wrote that Fr. Gallagher brought the subject up himself, stating that he “lived in fear every day” that something from his past would “come back to haunt him or the Archdiocese.” According to Msgr. Lynn’s notes, Fr. Gallagher “said it would be best for him to stay away from Cardinal O’Hara territory,” meaning the high school where the priest had taught from 1976 to 1989.

Father Gallagher told again of his sexual abuse of two young brothers. Monsignor Lynn did not record, if he even asked, the names of these boys or when or where the abuse occurred. Even though Msgr. Lynn had been Secretary for Clergy for six years, and his office had considered reassigning Fr. Gallagher several times during that period, Msgr. Lynn wrote in his memo for the file that he had not been aware of Fr. Gallagher’s abuse of the two minor brothers. Father Gallagher’s prior admission that he abused those boys had been in his Secret Archives file since February 23, 1990. Monsignor Lynn was claiming in effect that, for six years, while stories about priests’ abuses of minors were erupting around the country, he knew that Fr. Gallagher had “some kind of difficulty with sexually acting out,” but had failed to look at the priest’s Secret Archives file, even when considering assignments, to find out whether his “difficulty” involved children.

Even when Msgr. Lynn undeniably had the information that Fr. Gallagher had a history of abusing minors, the Secretary for Clergy did not act immediately to remove the priest from his parish assignment or to restrict his access to the children at Immaculate Conception or its grade school. It was not until March 6, 2000 – nine months later – that Msgr. Lynn met with Fr. Gallagher “as a follow up to our June 2, 1999, meeting.” Monsignor Lynn did inform the admitted child molester that he “would not be considered

a viable candidate for a pastorate,” but he entertained the priest’s request for a parochial vicar position “commensurate with his skills and education.” This is when Msgr. Lynn noted that “[b]ecause of past difficulties, he needs to be in Montgomery or Bucks County.”

On May 26, 2000, Cardinal Bevilacqua appointed Fr. Gallagher parochial vicar at Mary, Mother of the Redeemer, in North Wales, Montgomery County – another parish with a school. There is no indication on record that the Cardinal placed any limitations on Fr. Gallagher’s faculties or even notified the parish pastor or school principal about his past.

**Cardinal Bevilacqua asks Father Gallagher to resign only under pressure from the Boston abuse scandal.**

Finally, on February 13, 2002, in response to the scandal in Boston, Cardinal Bevilacqua removed Fr. Gallagher from ministry. Monsignor Lynn met with Fr. Gallagher on that day and followed up with a letter explaining that the Archdiocese had changed its “policy” of allowing limited and supervised ministry by priests who had abused minors. According to notes recorded for the file, Msgr. Lynn told the priest that the Archdiocese was prompted by events in Boston now to remove such priests from ministry altogether.

Father Gallagher must have been baffled by Msgr. Lynn’s description of the supposed “old” policy, since his ministry had been neither limited nor supervised following his admission that he sexually molested two boys. Nevertheless, Fr. Gallagher informed the Archdiocese that he would comply with the Cardinal’s request that he petition for laicization.

In discussing the priest’s future, Msgr. Lynn suggested that Fr. Gallagher’s skills and degree in education would be useful in finding another job. Assuming that Fr. Gallagher were to have followed this suggestion, because of the Archdiocese managers’ failure to report the priest’s criminal behavior, a background check by potential employers in the field of education would not have alerted them to the risk he posed to children.



According to the most recent documents presented to the Grand Jury, Fr. Gallagher has been teaching undergraduates and graduate students at two local “institutions of higher learning.” As of September 2004, he was still considering requesting voluntary laicization.

Father Gallagher appeared before the Grand Jury and was given an opportunity to answer questions concerning the allegations against him. He chose not to do so.



## **Father Thomas F. Shea**

*It was a victim's lawyer who, on October 26, 1994, brought the first recorded sexual abuse allegation against Fr. Thomas Shea to the attention of the Archdiocese. By November 2, 1994, the accused priest was at Saint John Vianney Hospital for evaluation, never to return to his Philadelphia parish, Saint Clement, or to active ministry. The Grand Jury would commend this prompt handling of a sexually abusive priest, except that it merely illustrates what Cardinal Bevilacqua did when a victim's lawyer was involved – and what he did not do in other cases.*

*Documents in the Secret Archives file of Fr. Shea, who was ordained in 1964, reveal why Archdiocese officials acted promptly in this case. They clearly did so not to protect the children of the Church, but only because legal action was threatened. A contemporaneous case – that of Fr. Stanley Gana, who was sent for evaluation as a sexual offender at the same time as Fr. Shea – demonstrates how differently cases that did not immediately threaten the Archdiocese with public scandal or legal liability were handled. Cardinal Bevilacqua had received reports four years earlier that Fr. Gana had molested and anally sodomized an altar boy for years, beginning when the victim was 13 years old. Yet the Cardinal did not remove Fr. Gana from ministry until 2002, seven years after Fr. Shea's forced retirement.*

### **A lawyer reports to Archdiocesan legal counsel in 1994 that his client was sexually abused by Father Shea for several years in the mid-1970s.**

On October 26, 1994, Secretary for Clergy William J. Lynn learned from John O'Dea, the Archdiocese's lawyer, that Fr. Thomas Shea had been accused of sexually abusing one, and maybe two, boys when he was assigned as assistant pastor at Saint Helena parish in Philadelphia from 1969 until 1975. It was a lawyer representing a man named "Scott" who informed O'Dea of the abuse. The lawyer told O'Dea that Fr. Shea had abused Scott when he was an altar boy, that the abuse lasted several years, and that it took place in the rectory and at a motel in Cape May, New Jersey. The lawyer said that he had been in contact with another man who said that Fr. Shea had also abused him.

Monsignor Lynn, accompanied by his assistant, Msgr. Michael T. McCulken, interviewed Fr. Shea the next day. According to a memo recording the meeting, Fr. Shea admitted having "genital contact" with Scott and another boy – "Alfred." He said that he did not know if Alfred was the other victim that Scott's lawyer referred to. Father Shea told Msgr. Lynn that he did not know how many times he had genital contact with Scott and did not remember abusing any others.

Father McCulken's October 27, 1994, memo describes the Secretary for Clergy assessing for Fr. Shea the likelihood of a lawsuit or adverse publicity. It records Msgr. Lynn explaining that the reason for psychological treatment "right away" is to "show responsibility by Father Shea and by the Church in this situation." Finally, after Fr. Shea claimed he was not Scott's first sexual experience, Msgr. Lynn suggested to the accused priest that perhaps he "was seduced into it" by the altar boy. (Appendix D-27)

The same day that he met with Fr. Shea, Msgr. Lynn sent Cardinal Bevilacqua a memo describing the allegations against Fr. Shea, as well as the priest's admission that he had sexually abused at least two minors at Saint Helena parish. The Secretary for Clergy recommended that Fr. Shea be sent to Saint John Vianney Hospital for inpatient treatment. The Cardinal approved sending the priest to the hospital, but questioned whether the usual procedure wasn't to have the hospital evaluate the priest before deciding whether inpatient treatment was called for.

On November 2, 1994, Fr. Shea was sent to Saint John Vianney.

**Monsignor Lynn reports to the Cardinal that Father Shea has admitted many more acts of pedophilia to therapists.**

On December 27, 1994, Msgr. Lynn forwarded to Cardinal Bevilacqua a letter from a therapist outlining his diagnosis. In Msgr. Lynn's accompanying memo, the Secretary for Clergy informed the Cardinal that the therapist had told Msgr. Lynn that he thought pedophilia would be the diagnosis, based on many more acts of sexual contact with children. The letter was in response to Msgr. Lynn's request that the therapist put his diagnosis in writing as soon as it was determined.

Cardinal Bevilacqua discussed Fr. Shea's situation with his top aides at an issues meeting on January 3, 1995. According to a January 13 memo to Msgr. Lynn from Msgr. Joseph R. Cistone, then Assistant to the Vicar for Administration, the Cardinal had several questions he wanted answered before deciding what to do with Fr. Shea. His first question, as recorded by Msgr. Cistone, was: "When was the last act of pedophilia? Are we within the statute of limitation on any one of these acts?" The Cardinal also wanted to know if the victims were now older than 28, a factor relevant to the statute of limitations. He wondered if Fr. Shea would willingly seek laicization.

On January 20, 1995, Msgr. Lynn met with Fr. Shea and a therapist. Monsignor McCulken recorded the meeting in a memo dated January 24, 1995. According to that memo, the Secretary for Clergy tried to get the answers Cardinal Bevilacqua sought. Father Shea, however, was not forthcoming and refused to admit even relationships that he had previously acknowledged. He would not repeat the admission made to the therapist that there had been many more acts of pedophilia. He denied any victims other than Scott, even though he had told Msgrs. Lynn and McCulken in October that he had sexually abused a boy named Alfred as well.

Uncharacteristically, the Secretary for Clergy pushed Fr. Shea to reveal the existence, if not necessarily the names, of other victims. Monsignor Lynn told the priest that based on “the evidence of the medical profession,” it was “very unusual for such instances to be with only one youngster.” Monsignor Lynn asked Fr. Shea to “seriously reflect on this question.” According to Msgr. McCulken’s handwritten notes (but not transcribed into the typed version), the Secretary for Clergy even told the priest that if there were “other times,” that “probably won’t change status.” The therapist counseled his patient “that if there are other occurrences, not brought out into the open, then the pain of shame is a very heavy cross.” According to Msgr. McCulken’s memo, Fr. Shea said “that he will really have to think about this.”

Had Fr. Shea confessed to recent acts of pedophilia, the Archdiocese could have proceeded to laicize the priest without his consent. As was detailed in documents in the file of Fr. Peter Dunne, another diagnosed pedophile that the Cardinal was dealing with at this time, the Archdiocese could only laicize a priest against his will for an offense committed within five years. (Handwritten notes kept by Msgr. McCulken record Msgr. Lynn telling Fr. Shea, incorrectly, that the Cardinal “can’t impose laicization” unless there were incidents “last week;” Msgr. McCulken changed this to “unless misconduct was recent” in his typed memo.) The documents in Fr. Dunne’s file also reveal that the Cardinal’s aides and lawyers were advising him at this time that laicization could protect the Archdiocese from liability for future acts of sexual abuse by an accused priest. Accordingly, Msgr. Lynn told Fr. Shea that it would be problematic for him to remain a priest and live at home with his mother, even with no ministry, because “[t]he Archdiocese continues to be legally responsible.”

Monsignor McCulken recorded that after Fr. Shea left the room, the therapist and Msgr. Lynn continued to discuss the case. Monsignor Lynn's assistant wrote: "It is believed that there are more incidents than what has so far been reported by TFS. The diagnosis is pedophilia with the strength of the diagnosis being very strong because TFS was in a relationship with the boy, rather than just anonymously acting out."

**Father Shea refuses to seek laicization and is permitted to retire in 1995.**

On May 20, 1995, Msgr. Lynn sent a memo to the Cardinal about the January meeting at which Fr. Shea refused to admit to more than one victim – Scott. The Secretary for Clergy reported that on May 5, 1995, the priest, still at Saint John Vianney, had admitted to having one more victim, who had since died in a motorcycle accident. According to Msgr. Lynn's memo, Fr. Shea had been paying the victim to remain silent. Monsignor Lynn answered the Cardinal's questions concerning the statute of limitations, writing: "The known acts of pedophilia in this case are beyond the statute of limitations. The first known act occurred over ten years ago. The one known living victim is in his thirties." Monsignor Lynn also informed Cardinal Bevilacqua that Fr. Shea "will not seek laicization." Having failed to elicit evidence of a more recent incident that could support involuntary laicization of the priest, the Secretary for Clergy recommended that Fr. Shea be permitted to retire and live at Villa Saint Joseph, a home for retired priests.

Although Fr. Shea was only 59 years old, Cardinal Bevilacqua in June 1995 permitted him to retire, and expressly allowed him to participate in "celebrations with permission of Secretary of Clergy." Father Shea has lived at Villa Saint Joseph ever since. For nearly 10 years, he was without apparent supervision. The Archdiocese has never made public that he retired early because he sexually abused minors.

**In July 2002 Cardinal Bevilacqua receives allegations against Father Shea from his assignment at Saint Joseph in Collingdale in the late 1970s.**

On July 25, 2002, Cardinal Bevilacqua received a letter alleging that Fr. Shea had sexually abused minors at Saint Joseph parish, in Collingdale, where he was assistant pastor from June 1975 until February 1979. The letter was anonymous, but came from someone who said he or she was "privy" to abuse perpetrated by Fr. Shea on a "male

family member.” The author, who explained that he/she could not break the victim’s trust by revealing names, said that the victim “can not to this day stop running away from his life.”

The writer told Cardinal Bevilacqua that the victim’s mother had relied heavily on Fr. Shea to guide her son because the boy’s father was absent. The priest betrayed this trust, according to the letter, by providing alcohol to the boy and sexually abusing him “from an early age, well through adulthood.” The writer said that Fr. Shea had paid the victim money “at first to continue with this misconduct and later to ensure its secrecy.” These payments were said to continue until just a few years before the letter was written. The writer encouraged the Archdiocese to investigate the payments, saying that they were made with checks. The writer also claimed to know that Fr. Shea had been “affiliated with” at least three altar boys from Saint Joseph parish.

Father Shea was living at the Villa Saint Joseph retirement home when this letter was received. The only response documented in Archdiocese files is that the letter was forwarded to legal counsel.

### **Church officials’ strategy for handling Father Shea’s case reflects their priorities.**

Father Shea’s case demonstrates how the Archdiocese molded its strategy for handling abuse allegations to fit its exposure to legal liability. This case was different because it was a client’s lawyer who brought forward the allegation. For this reason, it could not be ignored for four years, like the allegation against Fr. Gana, which was brought by a seminarian who could be intimidated and silenced. And because Fr. Shea admitted the sexual abuse, there was no benefit in attacking or questioning the victim’s credibility. The Archdiocese’s therapist had expressly diagnosed the priest as a pedophile, so that made him ineligible for the usual response in such cases: reassignment.

The only option left was to try to distance the Archdiocese from its priest in order to avoid liability for his crimes. This could explain why the Secretary for Clergy would so uncharacteristically seek evidence of more recent misconduct, and why he would note that, according to medical evidence, it would be “very unusual” for an abuser of minors to have just one victim. An admission to the existence of recent victims, particularly if unnamed, could serve the Archdiocese’s legal purposes by providing grounds for

involuntary laicization. The case of Fr. Shea was not about actually looking for victims, much less helping or protecting them. It was about cynical legal maneuvers intended to shield the Archdiocese from responsibility.

On October 8, 2004, Fr. Shea agreed to live “a supervised life of prayer and penance.”

Father Shea appeared before the Grand Jury and was given an opportunity to answer questions concerning the allegations against him. He chose not to do so.



## **Father John A. Cannon**

*Father John A. Cannon, ordained in 1948, molested teenage boys at a Church summer camp from 1959 through 1964. Eight boys reported the sexual abuse in 1964. Father Cannon admitted to some, but not all, of the sexual abuse. The Archdiocese responded by ordering the priest to “desist” and by transferring him to a different parish, with no restrictions on his conduct. In 1992, one of the priest’s victims contacted Archdiocese officials to report the continuing effect of Fr. Cannon’s abuse. The victim was assured that in cases such as Fr. Cannon’s, sexually abusive priests are removed from their present situation, evaluated and treated, and not allowed again to work with children.*

*That was not true in the case of Fr. Cannon. He failed to undergo treatment, yet Cardinal Bevilacqua allowed him to continue teaching at a girls’ school in Holland, Pa., until he retired in February 2004. In March 2004, following an Archdiocesan Review Board inquiry that found the reports of Fr. Cannon’s victims credible, the priest’s faculties were restricted.*

### **The Archdiocese responds to Father Cannon’s abuse of teenage boys at a summer camp by transferring his residence.**

On July 5, 1964, five boys – “Harry,” “Mario,” “Frank,” “Ralph,” and “Ted” – reported to priests at Saint Monica’s Church in Philadelphia that Fr. John Cannon had, a week earlier, sexually abused them in their cabin at a summer camp run by the church. The boys were 16 and 17 years old. They said that Fr. Cannon had come into the cabin in the middle of the night and “touched them sexually.” He molested one of them a second time on a different night. According to a report by Fr. Joseph Curran to the Chancery office, the boys told the priests that “such things have been happening for the past two to three years.” Father Curran wrote that he felt “many questions are left unanswered,” but that he did not want to “probe too deeply until seeking further counsel.” He stated that he and another priest who received the complaints, both of whom lived at Saint Monica’s rectory with Fr. Cannon, “believe entirely the statements of these boys.”

Also in July 1964, another priest living at Saint Monica, Fr. John Murphy, provided Chancery officials with a list of other boys who had reported being molested by Fr. Cannon at the church-run camp near Harrisburg. It was recorded that one boy, “Herbert,” had “sinned once and been solicited 15 times” in the summer of 1962. Another, “Arthur,” had been “solicited and sinned” during the summers of 1959, 1960,

1961, and 1962. A third, “Emmanuel,” was said to have stopped the priest’s “advances.” The boys reported that Fr. Cannon sometimes brought another priest, an order priest who taught at Reading Central High School, to the camp and that that priest “also has the same problem.” (Appendix D-28)

Father Cannon was questioned by then-Chancellor John Noone and, according to notes from the meeting, admitted “two incidents but only of masturbation.” An August 19, 1964, note in Archdiocese files records Fr. Cannon’s pastor, Msgr. Aloysius X. Farrell, reporting that “Fr. Cannon is still going to the camp,” and the Vice Chancellor, Thomas Welsh, ordering Fr. Cannon to “desist.” Monsignor Farrell asked that Fr. Cannon be moved to a different residence. In September 1964, Cardinal Krol assigned the priest to the rectory of Saint Gertrude in West Conshohocken.

Nine months later, Fr. Cannon was named assistant pastor at Saint Eugene parish in Primos. In 1966, he began teaching at Cardinal O’Hara High School in Springfield. Father Cannon was reassigned to become Chaplain at Villa Joseph Marie High School for Girls in Holland, and at Saint Joseph Home for the Aged in November 1985.

**In 1992 a victim who first reported his abuse in 1964 again complains to the Archdiocese and receives false assurances.**

On October 28, 1992, Herbert, one of the victims whose name had been in Fr. Cannon’s Secret Archives file since 1964, wrote to Cardinal Bevilacqua telling the Cardinal of his abuse and his years of suffering as a result. According to notes from a subsequent meeting with Secretary for Clergy William J. Lynn, Herbert said that Fr. Cannon had molested him and asked for “sexual favors” during the boy’s 7th- through his 9th-grade years. Monsignor Lynn told Herbert “that such priests are immediately removed from the situation and sent for evaluation and treatment.” He further promised Herbert that “they are never assigned where children are involved.”

Despite these assurances, Fr. Cannon never underwent treatment, even though, as Msgr. Lynn informed Cardinal Bevilacqua, an evaluation performed at Saint John Vianney Hospital in February 1993 called for “inpatient hospitalization.” Cardinal Bevilacqua, nevertheless, permitted Fr. Cannon to remain the chaplain at a girls’ high school for 10 more years. The report from Saint John Vianney stated: “He has a small

house on the property and enjoys the privacy it affords him. Although teaching was not a part of his assignment there, he has become involved with teaching three classes and doing some tutoring at the Girls' Academy on the grounds.”

Feeling that Msgr. Lynn had not believed his allegations in 1992, Herbert, in July 2002, sought help from the Bishop of Harrisburg, Nicholas Dattilo. Herbert now lived within that diocese, and Saint Monica's summer camp was located in the Harrisburg diocese as well. Bishop Dattilo called Msgr. Lynn on Herbert's behalf and the Secretary for Clergy promised to review the file again. Monsignor Lynn informed Cardinal Bevilacqua of Bishop Dattilo's call. He reported that legal counsel advised that there was “no legal liability in this situation,” and offered his own opinion that there was not “enough evidence to restrict [Fr. Cannon's] priestly service....” (Appendix D-29) Monsignor Lynn reached this conclusion despite Fr. Cannon's 1964 admission to two incidents of “masturbation” with boys and despite the fact that Herbert's 1992 allegation was corroborated by the 1964 report naming him as a victim. Cardinal Bevilacqua allowed Fr. Cannon to continue to minister at the school as well as the home for the aged.

**In 2004, based on adverse findings by the Review Board, the Archdiocese finally restricts the faculties of Father Cannon, who has by then retired.**

In November 2003, an investigator with the Archdiocese Review Board interviewed Herbert and found him “extremely credible.” Father Cannon repeated to the investigator the admission he originally made in 1964 – that he had molested boys at the camp. Elaborating on his 1964 admission, he told the investigator and Msgr. Lynn that he had abused three boys on two occasions, fondling their genitals when he thought they were sleeping. The Review Board also unanimously concluded that after fondling the boys Fr. Cannon guided their hands to his own genitals to have them masturbate him. Father Cannon retired in February 2004. On March 5, 2004, the Archdiocese restricted his faculties. The priest agreed in October 2004 to live “a supervised life of prayer and penance” at Villa Saint Joseph, a retirement home for priests.

Father Cannon appeared before the Grand Jury and was given an opportunity to answer questions concerning the allegations against him. He chose not to do so.



## Father Michael C. Bolesta

*The case of Fr. Michael C. Bolesta, who was ordained in 1989, might at first seem distinctive: the Archdiocese hierarchy appeared unusually responsive to the allegations against him. The Grand Jury finds, however, that its intent – as usual – was to shield a sexually abusive priest from criminal prosecution. And the effect – once again – was to facilitate the priest’s continued predations.*

*When a group of parents in July 1991 accused Fr. Bolesta of improper sexual behavior with as many as 10 teenage boys, Cardinal Bevilacqua’s delegates, Msgrs. James E. Molloy and William J. Lynn, were immediately dispatched to interview the complaining parishioners at Saint Philip-Saint James Church in Exton. In response to a separate request by the parents of grade school children in the parish, the Archdiocese sent a counselor to talk with the 7th- and 8th-graders, some of whom had been involved with Fr. Bolesta as altar boys.*

*The reason for this unusual show of concern? The parents had taken their complaints to the Chester County District Attorney, and county detectives had arrived unannounced at the church rectory. The detectives informed Pastor John Caulfield that the accusations against Fr. Bolesta were numerous, including “a lot of touching” and grabbing at least one boy’s genitals. They asked pointedly what the Archdiocese was going to do about it. The pastor immediately notified the Secretary for Clergy, John J. Jagodzinski, and offered his opinion that the parents would drop the criminal charges if the Archdiocese acted.*

*In contrast with their normal practice, Church officials this time sought out the names of victims. But the victims whom Msgrs. Lynn and Molloy sought out were those whose parents had gone to the District Attorney. In conducting their interviews, they did not press reluctant victims for the details of their encounters, but did ask what the parents wanted the Archdiocese to do. Their purpose, clearly, was not to discover or prevent criminality. It was to stop a criminal investigation from going forward.*

*The parents told Msgr. Molloy they wanted to be sure that Fr. Bolesta would never again be assigned where he would have access to children. The Cardinal’s delegate repeatedly assured that “the practice is when there is doubt, we err on the side of caution.” Apparently reassured, the parents did not pursue their criminal charges. Meanwhile, Msgrs. Molloy and Lynn kept Fr. Bolesta apprised of the families’ intentions and the Archdiocese’s efforts to avert legal action, informing him at one point: “we are not completely out of the woods yet as far as a lawsuit is concerned.”*

*The true extent of Church officials’ concern for Fr. Bolesta’s victims – past and potential – became clear when assignments were made the next spring (in 1992). After his delegates had reassured victims’ parents that “every caution will be exercised” in future assignments, Cardinal Bevilacqua appointed Fr. Bolesta parochial vicar at Saint Agatha-Saint James, a parish in West Philadelphia. Among his pastoral duties was to minister at Children’s Hospital of Pennsylvania.*

**The Archdiocese investigates complaints, previously ignored, because parents report Father Bolesta's behavior to law enforcement.**

On July 17, 1991, just hours before Cardinal Bevilacqua was to celebrate 7:00 p.m. Mass at Saints Philip and James Church in Exton, two county detectives came to the rectory to investigate allegations of sexual abuse brought against the parish's associate pastor, Fr. Michael Bolesta. The detectives, Steven Mills and Donna Carroll, interviewed the pastor, Fr. John Caulfield. The detectives told Fr. Caulfield that parents of parish children had reported "a lot of touching going on." One boy had said Fr. Bolesta had "grabbed him by the balls." The detectives wanted to know what the Archdiocese was going to do about it.

Father Caulfield had, in fact, received similar complaints from parents 10 months earlier. He had done nothing in response. Now, with the police at his door, he immediately reported the detectives' visit to Cardinal Bevilacqua's Secretary for Clergy at the time, Msgr. John J. Jagodzinski, who, in turn, forwarded the information to Msgr. James E. Molloy, an assistant to the Vicar for Administration "for [his] urgent attention." In a memo, Msgr. Jagodzinski emphasized and seconded Fr. Caulfield's opinion that "if the Church acts on this, the matter is likely to be dropped by the parents."

Monsignor Molloy, assisted by Msgr. William J. Lynn, conducted a prompt investigation. They initially interviewed the families of five boys who had told their parents about Fr. Bolesta's unwelcome touching and his persistent efforts to see the boys undressed. Four of these boys – "Nicholas" (age not recorded), "Chuck" (16 years old), "Jamie" (age not recorded), and "Jason" (16 years old) – worked at the parish grade school, painting, cleaning, and performing other maintenance jobs. One – "Dave" (13 years old) – was a younger brother. In interviews with these boys' families, Msgrs. Molloy and Lynn learned of at least five other boys who were said to have had similar experiences with Fr. Bolesta in the previous two years: "Gerry," "Luis," "Noah," "Nate," and "Eric."

The interviews, recorded in memos by Msgrs. Lynn and Molloy, seemed designed to let the parents have their say and to find out what they knew and what they wanted the Archdiocese to do, not to get at the entire truth. The interviews with boys were all conducted in the presence of their parents. Sometimes only the parents were interviewed.

One parent, whose child had been mentioned by the other boys, said she was grateful for the opportunities Fr. Bolesta had offered her son – baseball games and swimming – and had no complaints. The Archdiocesan managers did not ask to interview her son. When another parent told them that her son did not want to ruin Fr. Bolesta’s reputation – and worried what other boys would think because he had spent more time with the priest than had other boys – Msgr. Molloy suggested to the mother that “if others ask questions, it is important to tell the truth but not necessarily all the details.”

What came out was that the boys had discovered they were all experiencing the same things, but always one-on-one with Fr. Bolesta – constant invitations to go swimming, suggestions by the priest that they swim in the nude and shower with him, games of one-on-one basketball in the pool in which Fr. Bolesta touched them all over, the priest’s pulling towels off them after they showered and throwing them back in the pool nude, and inappropriate conversations about masturbation. When the boys began to hear each other’s stories as they worked at the parish school, they realized that Fr. Bolesta’s actions were purposeful and not innocent.

Two boys discovered that they both had been asked to try on shorts and shirts in front of the priest in his bedroom. One was told that the clothes were for Fr. Bolesta’s cousin; the other that they were for the poor. As the boys compared notes, they discovered they had been trying on the same clothes.

Father Bolesta manipulated the boys into swimming with him even when they did not want to do so. He told one boy that he needed him to work, but when the boy arrived at the church, the priest told him there was no work to do, that they were going swimming. Father Bolesta offered one boy a ride home after work, then insisted on taking him swimming at the indoor pool of a parishioner who was away. Both boys protested that they did not want to swim because they did not have their bathing suits. The priest then tried to get them to swim nude. He lured one reluctant boy to swim by telling him that a whole group was going. It ended up being just Fr. Bolesta.

One boy reported that, while standing in the church, Fr. Bolesta reached between the boy’s legs and grabbed his genitals. Archdiocese memos record that another boy was touched “on his butt” as he fixed an air conditioner. To an adolescent whose mother was in the hospital, Fr. Bolesta recommended masturbation as a good way to relieve stress.

Yet another boy he invited to go overnight with him to Canada to pick up vestments. When the boy declined, Fr. Bolesta had the vestments mailed.

Eventually, the boys shared their concerns about Fr. Bolesta with Richard Mitch, a man who supervised their work at the grade school. Alarmed, Mitch advised them to tell their parents what the priest was doing. Several of the parents, knowing that Pastor Caulfield had failed to act on earlier allegations, reported Fr. Bolesta's behavior directly to the Chester County District Attorney.

### **Archdiocese officials work to keep outraged parents from pressing charges.**

With Fr. Caulfield, Msgr. Jagodzinski, and the Vicar for Chester County, Msgr. James McDonough, all advising that the Exton parents would likely drop their criminal complaint if the Archdiocese acted, Msgrs. Molloy and Lynn conducted unusually extensive interviews. They also showed particular interest in finding out which parents were talking to the District Attorney. Monsignor Molloy told one of the families, the parents of Nicholas, that "the Archdiocese is attempting to make contact with all the parties affected by this situation and that it would help to know if anyone who may have contacted the District Attorney's office was from a family whose name had not yet been brought to us."

Monsignors Lynn and Molloy asked the families what they wanted the Archdiocese to do. Several sought guarantees that Fr. Bolesta would never work with children again. Monsignor Molloy assured them that Cardinal Bevilacqua would be fully informed of their concerns. When pushed by one parent what would happen if an evaluation showed even a minimal "ten percent chance of Father Bolesta acting out," Msgr. Molloy wrote: "I stated that when there is so much at stake, if there is any doubt, it is best to err on the side of caution. I assured her that every caution will be exercised."

Father Bolesta left the parish shortly after the detectives showed up at the church in July 1991, but the possibility of criminal charges remained. Throughout the summer and fall of that year, Archdiocese managers made considerable efforts to mollify the families at the Exton parish. When informed in September that boys in the grade school who had had encounters with Fr. Bolesta were still upset, the Archdiocese sent a counselor to the school to meet with them. When the mother of one of Fr. Bolesta's



victims was hospitalized with emotional problems which she attributed to the priest's abuse of her child, the Archdiocese offered to pay her medical bills.

**Denying or excusing his own actions, Father Bolesta is sent to Saint Luke Institute for evaluation.**

Meanwhile, in an August 1, 1991, interview with Msgrs. Molloy and Lynn, Fr. Bolesta made excuses for, or denied, his predatory activities. Monsignor Molloy, apparently more concerned with avoiding legal action than with the danger the priest posed to parishioners, cautioned Fr. Bolesta "that we are not completely out of the woods yet as far as a lawsuit is concerned." Monsignor Molloy informed Fr. Bolesta that the families interviewed had demanded that Fr. Bolesta "should not be assigned to a place where he would be working with children." The Archdiocese managers asked the priest to go for a one-week evaluation at Saint Luke Institute in Suitland, Maryland. Father Bolesta agreed.

The Archdiocese sought to mislead parishioners about the reason for Fr. Bolesta's absence. According to a memo written by Msgr. Molloy, the priest "agreed that if he were questioned, he could say he was taking time off for health considerations because he has been under stress and needs an assignment that would be less demanding." On the same day that Fr. Caulfield announced Fr. Bolesta's departure from the parish, he informed the parishioners that he – Fr. Caulfield – had been made a Monsignor. On this pastor who had silently ignored allegations of improper behavior by Fr. Bolesta for 10 months – while the priest continued to abuse numerous boys – Cardinal Bevilacqua chose to bestow an honor rather than a reprimand.

When Fr. Bolesta returned from his one week at Saint Luke, he was assigned to live in the rectory of Immaculate Conception in Philadelphia. A Philadelphia therapist, Phillip J. Miraglia, Ph.D., told Archdiocese managers that he agreed with Saint Luke's recommendation that Fr. Bolesta should "be enjoined from any one-on-one contact with youths under the age of eighteen." On April 21, 1992, Msgr. Molloy forwarded this recommendation to the Vicar for Administration, Edward P. Cullen.

**Cardinal Bevilacqua ignores recommendations regarding Father Bolesta and the danger he presents to young people.**

Despite Dr. Miraglia's explicit warning, and Msgr. Molloy's assurances to the Exton parish families that "the practice is when there is doubt, we err on the side of caution . . . we cannot take chances," Cardinal Bevilacqua appointed Fr. Bolesta as an associate pastor at Saint Agatha-Saint James Church in West Philadelphia on May 22, 1992. In his appointment letter, Cardinal Bevilacqua instructed Fr. Bolesta "*to teach the youth*" (emphasis supplied). One of the priest's primary duties in his new assignment was to minister to sick children at Children's Hospital of Pennsylvania.

Even grade school children knew it was wrong to appoint Fr. Bolesta to another parish less than a year after he had left Exton. Father Thomas F. O'Brien, the counselor who had been asked to meet with 7th and 8th graders in Exton in November 1991, was called back to the school on October 8, 1992. He wrote to Msgr. Molloy that there was "much anger among eighth grade boys" when they learned that "Father Mike" had been reassigned to a parish. Father O'Brien said that the boys "related in detail what he had tried to do with some of them." He told Msgr. Molloy that "the reassignment was perceived as a disregard for what he had done as a priest and a blatant insensitivity or concern for the welfare of other children in other parishes." The 8th graders thought that the children at Fr. Bolesta's new parish should be told "to be more cautious and careful around him."

Father O'Brien said that he assured the students "that the Archdiocese of Philadelphia . . . and indeed every decent moral person is concerned for their welfare and those who would be victimized." As a word of caution to the Archdiocese hierarchy, Fr. O'Brien wrote: "The published reassignment of Father Michael Bolesta in the Catholic Standard and Times was the cause of this issue resurfacing . . . ."

Monsignor Lynn, now Secretary for Clergy, responded to O'Brien. Focusing on the mistake of *publishing*, rather than that of reassigning, Msgr. Lynn thanked O'Brien "for your note of caution regarding the publishing of reassignments of priests accused of such actions . . . ." Father Bolesta was left in his new assignment.

It was not until July 1994 that some Exton parents discovered that Fr. Bolesta's new assignment included ministering at Children's Hospital, and it was not until they

complained that action was taken. A father, whose 7th-grade son had been taken swimming by Fr. Bolesta, called Msgr. Molloy on July 1. He said he was calling on behalf of “parents whose children were in Children’s Hospital (CHOP) and were outraged that Fr. Bolesta was assigned to a parish responsible for a children’s hospital.” He said he wanted to be able to tell the parents that Fr. Bolesta would not return to CHOP.

On September 15, 1994, Cardinal Bevilacqua reassigned Fr. Bolesta to be Chaplain at Holy Redeemer Health System in Huntingdon Valley. Father Bolesta remained in that assignment until January 2, 2004, when he died at the age of 42.



## **Father Robert L. Brennan**

*Father Robert L. Brennan, ordained in 1964, was made a pastor by Archbishop Bevilacqua in 1988. Since that time, the Archdiocese has learned of inappropriate or suspicious behavior by Fr. Brennan with more than 20 boys from four different parishes. He was psychologically evaluated or “treated” four times. Depending on the level of scandal threatened by various incidents, Cardinal Bevilacqua either transferred Fr. Brennan to another parish with unsuspecting families or ignored the reports and left the priest in the parish with his current victims. The Cardinal’s managers advised Fr. Brennan to “keep a low profile,” but never restricted or supervised his access to the youth of his various parishes.*

*When Cardinal Bevilacqua retired, Fr. Brennan was still a parochial vicar at Resurrection parish in Philadelphia, despite reports from parish staff that he had inappropriate contact with several students from Resurrection’s grade school. In June 2004, Fr. Brennan was appointed Chaplain at Camilla Hall, a retirement home for nuns.*

### **Cardinal Bevilacqua responds to parental pressure while ignoring children whose parents remain unaware.**

Archbishop Bevilacqua made Fr. Robert L. Brennan a pastor, appointing him in June 1988 to Saint Ignatius Parish in Yardley. In November of that year, the assistant pastor, Fr. John C. Marine, reported his concerns about Fr. Brennan to then-Chancellor Samuel E. Shoemaker. According to Msgr. Shoemaker’s notes, “from the first day Father Brennan appeared as pastor, his actions with young boys and teenagers caused Father Marine to feel very ill at ease.” The Archdiocese’s response to these reports, and far more explicit ones, was to measure whether the reports would lead to scandal, not to take action against Fr. Brennan.

Testifying before the Grand Jury, Msgr. Marine, now Regional Vicar for Montgomery County, claimed that the behavior he reported to Chancery in 1988 was that Fr. Brennan was occasionally “very warm and welcoming of [the altar servers] and basically giving them a hug” when they came into the sacristy. He added that Fr. Brennan was just “always warm and affectionate with all the parishioners,” and that his behavior with children was no different.

Monsignor Marine’s Grand Jury testimony is undermined by documentary evidence in the Archdiocese’s files. In 1988, according to Msgr. Shoemaker, Fr. Marine described Fr. Brennan’s interest in boys as “extreme.” Father Marine told the Chancellor

how “Father Brennan touched, rubbed the boys front and back, hugged them and kissed them in an inappropriate manner.” Father Marine told the Assistant Chancellor, John W. Graf, that Fr. Brennan forced the grade-school boys who worked in the rectory to sit on his lap. He was seen kissing one boy “on the face.” Father Marine said boys from Fr. Brennan’s prior assignment at Saint Helena’s were frequent visitors at the rectory, and he confirmed reports from the rectory cook and secretary that a college-age youth and a 13-year-old boy spent nights at the rectory.

Father Marine told Msgr. Shoemaker that he had observed this behavior since the beginning of Fr. Brennan’s assignment, that he was concerned something more might be happening, and that he had expressed his concerns to his friends, Msgrs. William J. Lynn and Alexander J. Palmieri, yet “he kept denying the obvious until Mrs. [M] confronted [him] on the issue concerning her son and insisted on some action.”

Mrs. M’s son, “Luke,” was a 13-year-old 8th grader at the parish school. Described by Fr. Marine as quiet and “handsome,” Luke was an altar boy and worked at the rectory answering phones in the evenings. Father Marine told the Chancery officials that Fr. Brennan had been observed engaging in “extreme hugging and forcing [Luke] to sit on his lap.” The cook, Ruth Wilson, had seen the boy “very embarrassed” with his head held down while Fr. Brennan held him tightly on his lap. Father Marine said that Luke was frightened of Fr. Brennan and asked not to work in the rectory when the priest was present.

Notes made by Chancellor Shoemaker of a November 13, 1988, meeting with Luke and his parents record that Luke told Msgr. Shoemaker that Fr. Brennan regularly held him tightly on his lap, so that the boy could not escape, and rubbed his “belly” and touched his “butt.” Luke said that this happened every time he worked at the rectory, and that it happened to other boys who worked there as well.

In response to the parents’ complaint, the Archdiocese sent Fr. Brennan for psychological evaluation. From their interviews with Luke’s parents, Fr. Marine, the rectory secretary, and the cook, the Archdiocese managers learned the names of six boys from Saint Ignatius with whom Fr. Brennan had been acting, at the very least, “inappropriately” (to use Fr. Marine’s term) — Luke, “Will,” “Jonathan,” “Colin,” “Archie,” and “Micky.” In addition, there were the two unnamed boys — the college

(Ursinus) student and the 13-year-old – who spent nights at the rectory. Father Marine mentioned a Cardinal Dougherty High School student who went out to dinner alone with Fr. Brennan when the priest was supposed to be at an important parish meeting. Father Marine also noted there were many families with boys that Fr. Brennan visited often – including a family named “Quinn,” with two teen-aged boys, who invited Fr. Brennan to stay at the shore. Three or four boys from Saint Helena’s parish were also known to be frequent visitors at the rectory.

Father Marine made a point of telling Msgr. Shoemaker that, aside from Luke’s, “the parents of the boys are unaware of Father’s behavior and no contact has been made by the parish to inform them.” The concern, then, was in keeping the information away from parishioners, not with protecting them.

On December 13, 1988, six months into his new job, Archbishop Bevilacqua met with Luke’s parents. According to notes kept by Msgr. Shoemaker, the Archbishop gave Luke’s parents an autographed photograph of himself and told them “several times that the welfare of their son was paramount in his mind.” The Chancellor also noted that the parents “intend no publicity or financial remuneration for damages.”

Archbishop Bevilacqua offered to pay for counseling for their son. There is no evidence in the Secret Archives file or elsewhere that he did anything about the boys whose parents were unaware of the harm Fr. Brennan was doing to their children.

**Father Brennan resigns from Saint Ignatius; the Archdiocese sends him for treatment, but fails to provide his therapist with information necessary to assess the danger he presents to children.**

On November 12, 1988, the day after Luke’s mother came forward and demanded action of Fr. Marine, Fr. Brennan was sent to Saint John Vianney Hospital in Downingtown. He remained there for 30 days. The Archdiocese instructed Fr. Marine to tell the parishioners of Saint Ignatius that Fr. Brennan was “on retreat.” Monsignor Edward P. Cullen, the Archdiocese’s Vicar for Administration, testified that Cardinal Bevilacqua was firm that, in all cases involving sexual abuse, parishioners were not to be told the true reason for removal.

On December 24, 1988, Fr. Brennan tendered his resignation as pastor of Saint Ignatius. He was living at that time at Saint Eleanor Church in Collegeville, where he remained as resident priest, with full faculties, until September 1989.

During the nine months Fr. Brennan was without formal assignment, Msgr. Shoemaker arranged for a second psychological evaluation by a therapist. The results of that outpatient evaluation were sent to Archbishop Bevilacqua on May 5, 1989. In stating that his “evaluation of Fr. Brennan does not indicate any history of sexual acting out or homosexuality,” The therapist relied on Fr. Brennan’s denials of any improper behavior, even having a child sit on his lap. Archdiocese managers, however, knew from Fr. Marine that such denials were suspect. Several people from the Saint Ignatius rectory told of Fr. Brennan’s habit of forcing young boys to sit on his lap. The therapist did not know any of this, however, because Fr. Marine refused to talk to the therapist. The therapist, therefore, qualified his opinion, stating: “However, I have not had an opportunity to talk to those who have made the allegations. . . .”

After getting the therapist’s report on the record, Archbishop Bevilacqua met on July 17, 1989, with Fr. Brennan to discuss his future. In a memo to the Secretary for Clergy, John J. Jagodzinski, Archbishop Bevilacqua wrote: “I assured him that he would be given a pastorate. I told him, however, that it might take several months before a parish adequate for his abilities would be available.”

### **Cardinal Bevilacqua appoints Father Brennan pastor of Saint Mary’s Parish – and begins receiving new complaints.**

In September 1989, Archbishop Bevilacqua appointed Fr. Brennan the parochial administrator of Saint Mary’s parish in Schwenksville. In June 1990, he became the parish pastor.

From the start at Saint Mary’s, Fr. Brennan continued his inappropriate behavior with boys, often at Saint Pius X, a high school associated with the parish. On December 13, 1990, Fr. Gerald J. Hoffman, the principal at Saint Pius X, contacted Msgr. James E. Molloy, an assistant to the Vicar for Administration, to report that Fr. Brennan was, against rules, taking students out of classes. Although Fr. Hoffman had been told nothing of Fr. Brennan’s history, he was suspicious because all of the students were boys and



because the priest was arranging meetings with them furtively rather than following established procedure. The principal also reported that faculty members were concerned because a “cult” of students would “flock around” Fr. Brennan when he came to the school.

On March 18, 1991, five 7th-grade boys from Saint Mary’s grade school went to their principal, Karen Coldwell, to tell her they were having problems with Fr. Brennan touching them in inappropriate ways. The youths were altar boys or worked in the rectory answering the phone. Coldwell told the Grand Jury that she was unsure how to handle a sexual-abuse complaint against a priest and whether she was required by law to report it to civil authorities. The principal called the Archdiocese Office for Clergy for guidance. Monsignor Molloy assured her that she had done the right thing in bringing the information to the Archdiocese and proceeded to listen to her account of the meeting with the boys.

Monsignor Molloy recorded, third-hand, that the boys complained of Fr. Brennan’s “wrestling them in some fashion.” One boy, “Geoff,” reportedly was visibly upset and told of an occasion when Fr. Brennan had grabbed the boy’s hands and forced them toward his genitals (in a report sent to Archbishop Bevilacqua, Msgr. Molloy said that it was unclear whose genitals). Another boy reported fainting and waking to find Fr. Brennan rubbing his leg “up high” on the thigh.

Had Archdiocese managers questioned Geoff or any of the other students, they could have learned more alarming information. Geoff testified before the Grand Jury that, in addition to what he reported to the principal, Fr. Brennan touched his genitals sometimes when the priest “wrestled” with him. Fr. Brennan also once summoned the boy into the rectory sitting room where the priest was watching a pornographic movie on television.

Geoff also testified that high school boys from Saint Pius X were all over the rectory, including upstairs where Fr. Brennan’s bedroom was. The high school students were at the rectory when the boy arrived to work at 5:00 p.m. and were still there when he left at 9:00 p.m. He knew the names of two of the high school boys — “Ray” and “Graham.”

Geoff told the Grand Jury that another boy, “Conner,” had been so “freaked out” by what Fr. Brennan had done to him (Geoff could not remember specifically what the priest was said to have done), that he left the rectory and never came back. Geoff also provided to the Grand Jury the names of other 7th graders who he knew had complained among friends about Fr. Brennan’s behavior — “Bob,” “Arnold,” “Gus,” “Dimitri,” and “Josh.”

Immediately after hearing the principal’s report, Msgr. Molloy informed Msgr. Cullen as the Vicar General headed to a meeting with Archbishop Bevilacqua on March 18, 1991. Monsignor Molloy also called Fr. Joseph F. Rymdeika, a teacher at Saint Pius X High School who, months before, had complained to the principal about Fr. Brennan’s suspect behavior with students. Father Rymdeika testified before the Grand Jury that in their phone conversation he told Msgr. Molloy about behavior he found “very alarming.” Monsignor Molloy’s reaction, according to Fr. Rymdeika, was disgust.

### **Church officials fail to probe new allegations or monitor Father Brennan.**

Yet, after hearing from both the high school and the grade school, the Archdiocese took no action either to investigate the new allegations or to remove Fr. Brennan. Church officials did track the progress of a report that Geoff’s parents made to the Montgomery County Office of Children and Youth, but the Grand Jury finds no evidence of Archdiocese concern for the welfare of the five 7th-grade boys or curiosity about what one of its priests had done to them. Monsignor Molloy’s reports do not record the boys’ names, other than Geoff’s. Monsignor Molloy notified both Msgr. Cullen and Archbishop Bevilacqua about the grade-school boys on March 18, 1991, when the principal came forward. He sent another memo to them on April 3, 1991, including a report about the complaints from the principal at Saint Pius X. Still the Archbishop ordered no action.

There is nothing in the files to suggest that Archdiocesan managers shared what they knew about Fr. Brennan’s behavior at Saint Ignatius, which he had been forced to leave in 1989, with either the grade school and high school principals or the civil authorities investigating Geoff’s family’s complaint. Working without benefit of what the Archdiocese knew – that Fr. Brennan had reportedly inappropriately touched numerous

boys, some of whom he invited to stay overnight with him at the rectory – the Montgomery County officials found the behavior toward Geoff alone insufficient to pursue charges.

Once the threat of legal action subsided, nothing more appears in the Archdiocese file. According to the Saint Mary’s principal, Karen Coldwell, Fr. Brennan continued with full access to the altar boys and those who worked in the rectory. She could not understand why the Archdiocese did nothing to supervise Fr. Brennan and said she took it upon herself to go over to the rectory occasionally to check on him. She was surprised that no one ever came to interview the boys.

Principal Coldwell explained that, rather than report to the civil authorities herself, she accepted Msgr. Molloy’s assurance that she had brought the allegations to the right place. She assumed the Archdiocese would report to the authorities.

Principal Coldwell testified that she was exasperated with the Church hierarchy in 1992 when she learned that, because of its inaction, another boy from her school, “Hal,” was subjected to Fr. Brennan’s unwelcome and inappropriate touches. Hal was a 7th-grade student and altar boy at Saint Mary’s when his mother complained to Archdiocese managers. On June 10, 1992, the boy told Msgrs. Molloy and Lynn that Fr. Brennan, while offering “private lessons” on serving First Communion, hugged Hal, “put his hand on [the boy’s] butt,” and forced Hal onto his lap. The boy also described how Fr. Brennan caressed his fingers as he held the sacramentary book during Mass. Hal said he knew Fr. Brennan did these things to other boys as well. His mother, who accompanied him to the interview, reported that Fr. Brennan took high school boys out to dinner and movies.

Hal told Church managers that Geoff had been victimized by Fr. Brennan and said that, even after Geoff’s molestation had been reported to civil authorities the year before, Fr. Brennan had tried to “touch” the boy again. Hal described what Fr. Brennan had done to Geoff as “weird things . . . touching him and stuff.”

After talking with Hal and his mother, Msgr. Molloy spoke to a nun who worked at Saint Mary’s rectory. She confirmed that Fr. Brennan grabbed at and wrestled with altar boys and high school students. She said he had “special ones,” including one whom she described as a “disturbed” boy named “Ricky” in the youth education program,

“CCD” (Confraternity of Christian Doctrine). She told Msgr. Molloy she had seen Fr. Brennan with his hand up Ricky’s back, underneath his shirt.

On June 10, 1992, Msgrs. Lynn and Molloy questioned Fr. Brennan about Hal’s and his mother’s allegations. He denied the allegations and suggested that Hal’s mother was angry that she had not been chosen as a soloist for Saturday Masses. The Archdiocese managers advised Fr. Brennan to “keep a low profile in the parish” where he was pastor until they “receive[d] further direction on the matter.”

**Pressured by complaints and gossip, the Archdiocese again sends Father Brennan for treatment and, despite therapists’ warnings, Cardinal Bevilacqua reassigns him to a parish with a grade school.**

On July 22, 1992, a month and a half after Hal’s mother brought allegations to the Archdiocese, Cardinal Bevilacqua removed Fr. Brennan from his parish and sent him for a third psychological evaluation. Father Brennan began a four-day outpatient evaluation at Saint John Vianney on July 27, 1992. One of the questions Msgr. Lynn asked the treatment center to answer was: “Should Father remain in his present assignment since there seems to be much gossip throughout the parish about his behavior?” This question is remarkable: its focus is on the alleged gossip rather than on the serious allegations that Fr. Brennan was having inappropriate physical contact with pubescent boys. Monsignor Lynn’s focus suggests that the protection of children was subservient to other interests, notwithstanding the Archdiocese’s claims to the contrary.

The therapists at Saint John Vianney recommended inpatient treatment. On August 6, 1992, Fr. Brennan resigned as pastor of Saint Mary’s, citing “reasons of health.” (One parishioner remembers being told to pray for Fr. Brennan, who was “being treated for Lyme Disease.”) On August 25, 1992, he returned to Saint John Vianney for treatment for the second time. This time, he stayed in treatment for nearly 10 months. The therapists at Saint John Vianney, while praising his hard work and personal growth, warned that Fr. Brennan, like “anyone with a recurring problematic behavior pattern presents future risk.” The therapists did not opine as to whether he could be safely returned to ministry, but said that if he was reassigned, it was important to have a strong

accountability system in place. They recommended that a ministry supervision team include the pastor of the rectory where Fr. Brennan would reside.

In the months following Fr. Brennan's June 14, 1993, release from Saint John Vianney, but before he received a permanent assignment, the Archdiocese managers placed no restrictions on Fr. Brennan's faculties to minister throughout the diocese. They received a letter from a parishioner reporting that he was engaged in ministry. In November 1993, five months after Fr. Brennan was released, one of the therapists from Saint John Vianney wrote to Msgr. Lynn that "it is a grave concern to the treatment team that Fr. Brennan does not have a functional ministry supervision team."

On November 23, 1993, Msgr. Lynn sent a memo to Cardinal Bevilacqua recommending that Fr. Brennan be assigned as assistant pastor at Resurrection of Our Lord Parish in Philadelphia. In recommending Fr. Brennan for an assignment to a parish with a grade school attached, Msgr. Lynn stated carefully that "Father Brennan is not clinically diagnosed as a pedophile or a homosexual." Monsignor Lynn never talked to 10 of the 11 boys whose names were registered in the Archdiocese's files as victims of Fr. Brennan. (He could have had the names of nine more had he asked rectory staff or the principal at Saint Mary's.) Yet Msgr. Lynn stated: "It should be noted there was never any genital contact between Fr. Brennan and the adolescents." The Secretary for Clergy named members of a "ministry supervision team," some of whom would never know they were on such a team.

Monsignor Molloy told the Grand Jury that he disagreed with Msgr. Lynn's recommendation. In an effort to fully inform the Cardinal of the risk that he believed Fr. Brennan's reassignment would present to teenaged boys, Msgr. Molloy forwarded four reports on the priest's mental health to the Cardinal. He also sent copies to Msgr. Cullen. Included in the packet was the Assessment Report from Saint John Vianney (July 27-30, 1992) from which Msgr. Lynn had reported that Fr. Brennan was "not diagnosed" a pedophile. The oddly worded diagnosis in the report was "rule out pedophilia"; what this diagnosis actually meant, as the Assessment indicated and as Msgr. Molloy explained, was that there were *in fact* indications of pedophilia, but that the therapists could not come to a *conclusive* determination on the diagnosis. Nowhere did they conclude that he was not a pedophile. Monsignor Molloy included a May 26, 1993, letter from another of

Fr. Brennan's therapists at Saint John Vianney, which noted that "anyone with a recurring problematic behavior pattern presents future risk."

Monsignor Molloy also included a letter, dated August 20, 1992, to Msgr. Cullen from the therapist who had evaluated Fr. Brennan in 1989 for the Archdiocese. The therapist wrote that at the time he had only "scanty historical information." The allegations, he said, "as far as [he] knew, were limited solely to having children sit on his [Fr. Brennan's] lap." The therapist said that after he submitted his evaluation, he "called Msgr. Father Jagodzinski and told him that I had strong suspicions that Fr. Brennan might have significant problems but that I had no clinical proof." His letter said that he had spoken recently with Msgr. Lynn "and informed him also of the limitations of my evaluation, my views, and conversations with Msgr. Father Jagodzinski."

The therapist in his letter warned Msgr. Cullen that in view of the recent allegations, his clinical opinion was that Fr. Brennan has very serious problems which might predispose this Archdiocese to major scandal and, possibly, litigation in the future. He also asserted that he believed that had he had the opportunity to speak to the parents of the children from Yardley [St. Ignatius parishioners] or with the associate pastor that the conclusions he reached in 1991 would have been very different.

This letter, too, was given to Cardinal Bevilacqua. Yet, despite one therapist's assessment that Fr. Brennan "presents future risk" and another's dire predictions, Cardinal Bevilacqua appointed Fr. Brennan assistant pastor at Resurrection parish, effective December 15, 1993. In approving the appointment, Cardinal Bevilacqua created an extraordinary series of instructions that he directed Msgr. Lynn to pass on to Fr. Brennan, confirming that the Cardinal was well aware of the danger posed by the priest.

According to the Cardinal's instructions recorded in Archdiocese files, Msgr. Lynn was to inform the pastor at Resurrection, Fr. Thomas C. Scanlon, of Fr. Brennan's background and direct the pastor to supervise the priest closely, and to report any suspicious incident. Father Brennan, moreover, was to "be kept as much as possible away from youth." Most strikingly, Fr. Brennan was "to be told to keep his hands off everyone.... He is not even to put his hand on someone's shoulder as a sign of congratulations or anything."

Finally, Msgr. Lynn was to check with legal counsel and ask, in the event of a “public relations crisis in this case, can we say that Fr. Brennan had been sent away and can we have a statement that he is not a pedophile?” The expression of such a concern and the advance plans to minimize liability for Fr. Brennan’s anticipated future misconduct speak for themselves about whether the Cardinal himself saw a risk in returning Fr. Brennan to active ministry.

**Father Brennan remains an assistant pastor with full and unsupervised access to children for more than 10 years despite continuing complaints of inappropriate touching of boys.**

Father Brennan began as assistant pastor at Resurrection on December 15, 1993. Despite the strict-sounding instructions officially recorded in the Archdiocese files, none of the restrictions was implemented. Monsignor Lynn did not make the pastor, Fr. Scanlon, aware of Fr. Brennan’s history. Nor was the pastor asked to supervise carefully or report suspicious behavior. Father Scanlon was never told to keep Fr. Brennan away from youth. And so, as assistant pastor, Fr. Brennan did all the usual things. He celebrated Mass, visited schools, provided counseling, and heard confession – even in the grade school – all the while socializing as a priest with the parish’s children.

Father Scanlon was never told he was a member of a “ministry supervision team.” He was not even aware there was supposed to be such a team. The “team” apparently never met, despite the therapists’ insistence that a supervisory group was crucial if Fr. Brennan was to continue ministering. Even the therapists’ repeated entreaties to Msgr. Lynn (in letters by one therapist in May and June 1994, and by another in November 1994) to meet just once with the alleged team, in order to explain each member’s role, went unheeded.

In the absence of any instruction to report suspicious behavior immediately, Fr. Scanlon ignored, for months, reports of Fr. Brennan’s inappropriate and sexual behavior with adolescent boys. The social minister at Resurrection, Marie McGuirl, testified that she repeatedly reported the priest’s inappropriate actions to the pastor and begged him to do something. Her entreaties were so persistent, she said, that the usually polite and gentlemanly pastor told her to “shut up” more than once. McGuirl told the Grand Jury

what she had reported to Fr. Scanlon. At least as early as the fall of 1995, McGuirl began to observe Fr. Brennan's improper, and sometimes bizarre, behavior. That fall, she saw Fr. Brennan grabbing a 15-year-old boy from behind and "wrestling" with him. The boy, "Stuart," was a sophomore at Father Judge High School and worked in the rectory. McGuirl described another occasion when she overheard Fr. Brennan speaking to Stuart in a "very seductive" manner, "like how a woman would flirt with a man."

McGuirl testified that Fr. Brennan had two 8th-grade boys – "Walt" and "Robbie" – in the rectory with him at times when they should have been in school. She said he took them on outings – to the mall, for ice cream, to a bookstore. She described in particular Fr. Brennan's enthusiasm as he prepared to take boys out in his car.

McGuirl also testified that she thought the church organist, Tina Nase, had reported to Fr. Scanlon that she had seen Fr. Brennan on top of a boy in the sacristy.

Father Scanlon finally reported these incidents to Msgr. Lynn and his assistant, Msgr. Michael T. McCulken, on June 11, 1996. The pastor said he was aware that Fr. Brennan had had some difficulties in the past, but was unaware exactly what they were. Even at this point, when it had become clear that Fr. Brennan was acting out again and that Fr. Scanlon did not know what he was dealing with, Msgr. Lynn was not forthcoming with information that might have helped protect the children he was being warned were at risk.

Monsignor Lynn began the meeting with Fr. Scanlon by describing Fr. Brennan's problems as merely "boundary issues." The Secretary for Clergy reiterated his carefully worded assurance that Fr. Brennan was "not diagnosed" a pedophile. Monsignor Lynn told Fr. Scanlon that the accusation of inappropriate behavior at Saint Mary's — which included at least seven children Msgr. Lynn knew of and multiple complaints — "was simply that he touched the altar boy's hand who was holding the book during Mass." Even after this meeting, Fr. Scanlon said he did not fully understand the extent of Fr. Brennan's problems or the danger that he posed to the children of the parish.

Although Msgr. McCulken's handwritten notes from the meeting include Walt's last name next to the description "very vulnerable," the typewritten memo to the official Archdiocese file omitted this. Also omitted was Msgr. McCulken's handwritten recording of Msgr. Lynn's comments: "may want to move but maybe shouldn't" and "powder-keg



situation I believe.” Father Scanlon reassured the Archdiocese managers that he did not believe there was “any parish-wide concern, just among rectory staff.”

Perhaps because of this assurance that parishioners were not aware of the priest’s continuing misconduct with boys, Fr. Brennan was never moved or sent for another evaluation. Monsignors Lynn and McCulken met with Frs. Brennan and Scanlon on June 13, 1996. At this meeting, Msgr. Lynn belatedly passed on the Cardinal’s instructions to Fr. Brennan never to touch a child. Monsignor Lynn acknowledged that he had never “fully” informed Fr. Scanlon about Fr. Brennan’s history. But Msgr. Lynn still did not tell Fr. Brennan or his pastor that Fr. Brennan was not to work with the youth of the parish.

Monsignor McCulken’s handwritten notes from the meeting used the initials “BC” to identify another boy whom Fr. Brennan was seen “touching” in the sacristy. Again, this identifying information was excluded from the typed memo to the official file.

A week after Fr. Scanlon’s allegations were brought to the Archdiocese, Fr. Brennan’s therapist reported to Msgr. Lynn, as he’d been doing for years, on Fr. Brennan’s supposed progress in therapy. In his letter, the therapist stated that Fr. Brennan had “shown positive growth in being able to establish and maintain boundaries.” Monsignor Lynn, a member of the phantom “ministry supervision team,” wrote back on June 28, 1996, thanking the therapist for his report, never mentioning the many “boundary” violations of which Msgr. Lynn had recently learned.

Cardinal Bevilacqua allowed Fr. Brennan to remain at Resurrection with no restrictions on his ministry or his access to children. Father Scanlon and Marie McGuirl, both of whom had complained to the Archdiocese about Fr. Brennan’s misconduct with boys, however, were both removed. The pastor appointed by Cardinal Bevilacqua to replace Fr. Scanlon, Fr. Michael J. Ryan, told the Grand Jury that he was told nothing about Fr. Brennan’s history. The new pastor further said that, as a result, he permitted Fr. Brennan full access to the parish youth.

Ignoring the therapists’ warnings of “risk,” of “serious problems which might predispose [the] Archdiocese to major scandal,” and of indications of pedophilia, Cardinal Bevilacqua told the Grand Jury that he viewed Fr. Brennan’s problems as

innocuous-sounding “boundary issues,” which “he has to take up with . . . himself.” The Cardinal expressed satisfaction with his administration’s actions that left Fr. Brennan in place with full faculties and access to parish youth despite complaints about his behavior with more than 20 boys from four parishes.

The Cardinal testified he did not recall being told of the 1996 complaints from Resurrection, and would not be concerned, in any case, if he had not been notified. He explained that only “serious matters” needed to come to his attention. Father Brennan’s behavior, including being caught on top of a boy in the sacristy, was merely a matter of “boundary issues.”

Monsignor Cullen told the Grand Jury that assigning Fr. Brennan to Resurrection and leaving him there, without restrictions, endangered the children of the parish. Nevertheless, Fr. Brennan remained an assistant pastor at the parish until June 2004.

#### **Father Brennan is appointed Chaplain at Camilla Hall, a retirement home for nuns.**

On June 28, 2004, Fr. Brennan was appointed Chaplain at Camilla Hall, a retirement home for the Sister Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. The reassignment followed a finding by the Archdiocesan Review Board that Fr. Brennan’s actions did not violate the “Essential Norms” defining sexual abuse of a minor contained in the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People* adopted in 2002 by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. Despite this finding, Msgr. Lynn acknowledged in a letter to Fr. Brennan on June 10, 2004, that “there is convincing evidence that over a number of years, you have engaged in behavior that is entirely inappropriate and unacceptable for a priest.”

According to a September 23, 2004, memo from Msgr. Timothy Senior, who succeeded Msgr. Lynn as Secretary for Clergy in July 2004, Fr. Brennan does not now minister outside of the retirement home “on any regular basis,” although he is not precluded from doing so in the future. Monsignor Senior wrote that Fr. Brennan’s supervisor is aware of his situation. The priest has been warned that if his inappropriate behavior is ever repeated, he will be removed from ministry.

Father Brennan appeared before the Grand Jury and was given an opportunity to answer questions concerning the allegations against him. He chose not to do so.