



DIOCESE OF WILMINGTON

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OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

November 20, 2003

His Eminence  
Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger  
Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith  
Vatican City State, Europe 00120

CONFIDENTIAL

Dear Cardinal Ratzinger:

I would like to submit *votums* in regard to clergy sexual abuse for the following clergy from the Diocese of Wilmington:

Rev. William E. Irwin

Born: 9/30/38, Presently 65 years old

Ordained: May 23, 1964

Removed from Active Ministry: April 2, 2002

Current Status: Fr. Irwin [Redacted - Conf. Med Recs.]

[Redacted - Conf. Med Recs.] in Wilmington, DE.

[Redacted - Conf. Med Recs.]

Facts of the Case:

April 2, 2002: Fr. Irwin makes a full admission to Msgr. Clement Lemon, Vicar for Priests for the Diocese of Wilmington, that he had abused brothers [Redacted] in the [Redacted] family over several years and that he had done "everything." He is immediately removed from active ministry. (Source: Documentation provided by Msgr. Lemon on 12/26/02)

October 18, 2002: Msgr. J. Thomas Cini, Vicar General of Administration, takes the following testimony from victim [Redacted]

[Redacted] "The victim identified that the abuse by Fr. Irwin began when he was about 14 years of age and

continued until he was near 18 years of age. The abuse began with massages, then fondling and masturbation, then oral and anal sex." Another victim [Redacted - Conf. Med Recs.] stated that Fr. Irwin fondled him on a family trip when he was 14 years old. (Source: Documentation of interviews of victims by Msgr. Cini on 10/18/02).

November 28, 2002: Fr. Irwin submits a letter to Bishop Saltarelli requesting retirement from ministry and the Bishop accepts the resignation on December 12, 2002.

January 23, 2003: Following an investigation which included review of the documentation above, the Diocesan Review Board found credible the allegations that Fr. Irwin had committed sexual abuse of minors in the 1970s and Bishop Saltarelli accepted this conclusion. (Source: Director of Communications' Robert Krebs' 1/26/03 Summary of Review Board decisions).

Fr. Irwin is 65 years old.

[Redacted - Conf. Med Recs.]

[Redacted - Conf. Med Recs.]

Bishop Saltarelli's *Votum*: Section 8B of the *Essential Norms* reads: "If the penalty of dismissal from the clerical state has not been applied (e.g. for reasons of advanced age or infirmity), the offender ought to lead a life of prayer and penance. He will not be permitted to celebrate Mass publicly or to administer the sacraments. He is to be instructed not to wear clerical garb or to present himself publicly as a priest." Given the facts of the case established including Fr. Irwin's direct admission of the sexual abuse of minors and Fr. Irwin's advanced age and failing health, I ask the CDF to approve the Diocese of Wilmington's judgment that Fr. Irwin's case should be handled according to Section 8B of the *Essential Norms* and that no further action or penal process is necessary.

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Rev. Francis G. DeLuca

Born: 8/1/29, Presently 74 years old

Ordained: February 3, 1958

Removed from Active Ministry: November 29, 1993

**Current Status:** Fr. DeLuca lives in Syracuse, NY in retirement in his own residence. The Bishop of the Diocese of Syracuse, NY has been notified.

**Facts of the Case:**

December 13, 1993 Letter from Bishop Robert E. Mulvee (Bishop of the Diocese of Wilmington) to Fr. DeLuca: "Accepting your resignation and approving early retirement is a very painful duty for me. I remember your years of faithful service to this diocese. Only you can agonize more than I over the tragedy that your actions of so many years ago has caused you and the Church." Redacted - Conf. Med Recs.

Redacted - Conf. Med Recs. this is the only way we can address the real grave pastoral concern that confronts us because of those actions. It is understood that you will not function publicly as a priest without seeking specific permission to do so."

Redacted - Conf. Med Recs.

"Father DeLuca, in discussion with Monsignor Lemon (Vicar for Priests for the Diocese of Wilmington), acknowledges his behavior with this boy as well as others. Monsignor Lemon states that Father DeLuca said that 'something happened' although there was no sexual contact, no fondling, no touching private parts, no sodomizing nor penetration. Father DeLuca stated to Monsignor Lemon that it was more of a 'physical closeness' thing.

Father DeLuca stated in similar fashion his molestation of the individual described above. He also acknowledged that he has had similar contact with approximately five other boys prior to this young man. He also stated, however, that his behavior did result in having an orgasm and ejaculating while on top of the boys that he was involved with. When asked of his understanding of his behavior he expressed that he wanted to be friendly and close although in retrospect, his behavior was very foolish and a terrible gamble. When asked about whether he felt his behavior was hurtful to the boys involved he stated that it was hard to say and that he did not know. He did say, 'I would presume they would think it's not right.' When asked if the boys involved ever objected to his behavior, he said 'they liked it.' When asked about his motivation for his sexual abuse, he stated that it initially

began with fatherliness and a desire to be close but which ultimately resulted in his own personal satisfaction. Father DeLuca stated that the duration of his sexual abuse was approximately for five years at a frequency of approximately once monthly. He stated that it primarily occurred when he could get away with a boy or, at times, in the rectory. Father DeLuca denied any other sexual behavior other than with the boys described above.”

February 12, 2003 Complaint by “John Doe” [Note: John Doe is victim W-003 – see below] (represented by Mark R. Waterfill of DANN PECAR NEWMAN & KLEIMAN, P.C.) against Francis DeLuca, St. John the Beloved Church and the Catholic Diocese of Wilmington: “On numerous occasions during the time that the Plaintiff, JOHN DOE, was a parishioner of the Defendant, ST. JOHN THE BELOVED CATHOLIC CHURCH, the Defendant FRANCIS DELUCA, unlawfully fondled, molested, touched, abused, sexually assaulted and/or battered the Plaintiff, JOHN DOE, while an Associate Pastor at the Defendant ST. JOHN THE BELOVED CATHOLIC CHURCH.”

October 28, 2003 Memo from Msgr. J. Thomas Cini: “Documentation is in the file, written by Msgr. C. Lemon [Vicar for Priests], stating that on November 29, 1993 Msgr. Lemon ‘confronted Frank at the rectory...reviewed the testimony I (he) had received from W-003 and his parents – stated the allegation and (I) asked if it was true. No denial.’ The testimony goes on to state that Fr. DeLuca went to ‘Trinity’ [A Retreat House in Larchmont, New York] to discuss with Fr. Benedict Groeschel] and [Redacted - Conf. Med Recs.] In testimony in the report from [Redacted - Conf. Med Recs.] Fr. DeLuca stated that there was contact with five young men/boys and while no penetration or fondling was involved, orgasm occurred ‘while on top of the boys that he was involved with.’ In a telephone conversation with Frank [Fr. DeLuca] on September 17, 2002, I told him of the allegation made by W-003 and W-003’s retention of counsel. In that conversation I stated we were a little confused since W-003 was abused by another priest. Did W-003 mistakenly identify Fr. DeLuca? I said, ‘Would I be correct in concluding W-003 was probably mistaken in accusing you (Frank)?’ Fr. DeLuca responded, ‘I [Msgr. Cini] would not be correct’ in that conclusion. Fr. DeLuca went on to describe the incident: ‘There was one time on a trip...’”

Bishop Saltarelli's *Votum*: Section 8B of the *Essential Norms* reads: "If the penalty of dismissal from the clerical state has not been applied (e.g. for reasons of advanced age or infirmity), the offender ought to lead a life of prayer and penance. He will not be permitted to celebrate Mass publicly or to administer the sacraments. He is to be instructed not to wear clerical garb or to present himself publicly as a priest." Given the facts of the case established above and Fr. DeLuca's advanced age, I ask the CDF to approve the Diocese of Wilmington's judgment that Fr. DeLuca's case should be handled according to Section 8B of the *Essential Norms* and that no further action or penal process is necessary.

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Rev. Douglas W. Dempster

Born: 8/31/37, Presently 66 years old

Ordained: May 26, 1962

Removed from Active Ministry: May 17, 1993

Current Status: Fr. Dempster lives in Marydel, MD in a private residence. Bishop Saltarelli has strongly recommended that Fr. Dempster move from this area (his former parish) but Fr. Dempster has not complied. The Diocese has also had some difficulty getting Fr. Dempster to comply with the Bishop's specific order not to present himself publically as a priest. The Diocese continues to monitor Fr. Dempster and will take more forceful measures if Fr. Dempster continues to be careless about the Bishop's directives.

#### Facts of the Case:

February 13, 2003 Summary of Fr. Dempster's situation by Msgr. J. Thomas Cini, Vicar General, Diocese of Wilmington: "Fr. Dempster was officially retired from active public ministry in an order from Bishop Mulvee dated December 30, 1993. The reason for the early retirement (Fr. Dempster was 55 years of age in 1993) is the admission of two instances of sexual abuse with minors. The abuse took place either in the late 1950's or early 1960's. One case was settled out of court." A review of the supporting documentation in Fr. Dempster's file confirms Msgr. Cini's summary.

**Bishop Saltarelli's *Votum*:** Section 8B of the *Essential Norms* reads: "If the penalty of dismissal from the clerical state has not been applied (e.g. for reasons of advanced age or infirmity), the offender ought to lead a life of prayer and penance. He will not be permitted to celebrate Mass publicly or to administer the sacraments. He is to be instructed not to wear clerical garb or to present himself publicly as a priest." Given the facts of the case established above and Fr. Dempster's advanced age, I ask the CDF to approve the Diocese of Wilmington's judgment that Fr. Dempster's case should be handled according to Section 8B of the *Essential Norms* and that no further action or penal process is necessary.

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**Rev. John Sarro**

**Born:** December 7, 1941, Presently 61 years old

**Ordained:** December 8, 1979

**Removed from Active Ministry:** January 1998

**Current Status:** Fr. Sarro [Redacted - Conf. Med Recs.] and currently resides at the Oblates of St. Francis de Sales Nursing Home in Childs, MD.

**Facts of the Case:**

February 13, 2003 Summary of Fr. Sarro's case by Msgr. J. Thomas Cini, Vicar General of the Diocese of Wilmington: "Fr. Sarro had been a missionary in New Guinea for a number of years, [Redacted - Conf. Med Recs.] he returned to the United States and was accepted as a fully incardinated priest here in the Diocese of Wilmington. Some years after his return the Bishop received a letter from a family in England which accused Fr. Sarro of molesting the family's two children. Father was confronted with the letter. He admitted to the charges and was permanently removed from ministry by Bishop Saltarelli. He has not functioned as a priest since that time. He has been most cooperative. [Redacted - Conf. Med Recs.]" A review of Fr. Sarro's file confirms Msgr. Cini's summary.

**Bishop Saltarelli's *Votum*:** Section 8B of the *Essential Norms* reads: "If the penalty of dismissal from the clerical state has not been applied (e.g. for reasons of advanced age or infirmity), the offender ought to lead a life of prayer and penance. He will not be permitted to celebrate Mass

publicly or to administer the sacraments. He is to be instructed not to wear clerical garb or to present himself publicly as a priest.” Given the facts of the case established above and Fr. Sarro’s advanced age and  
Redacted - Conf. Med Recs. I ask the CDF to approve the Diocese of Wilmington’s judgment that Fr. Sarro’s case should be handled according to Section 8B of the *Essential Norms* and that no further action or penal process is necessary.

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**Rev. Edward Dudzinski, Jr.**

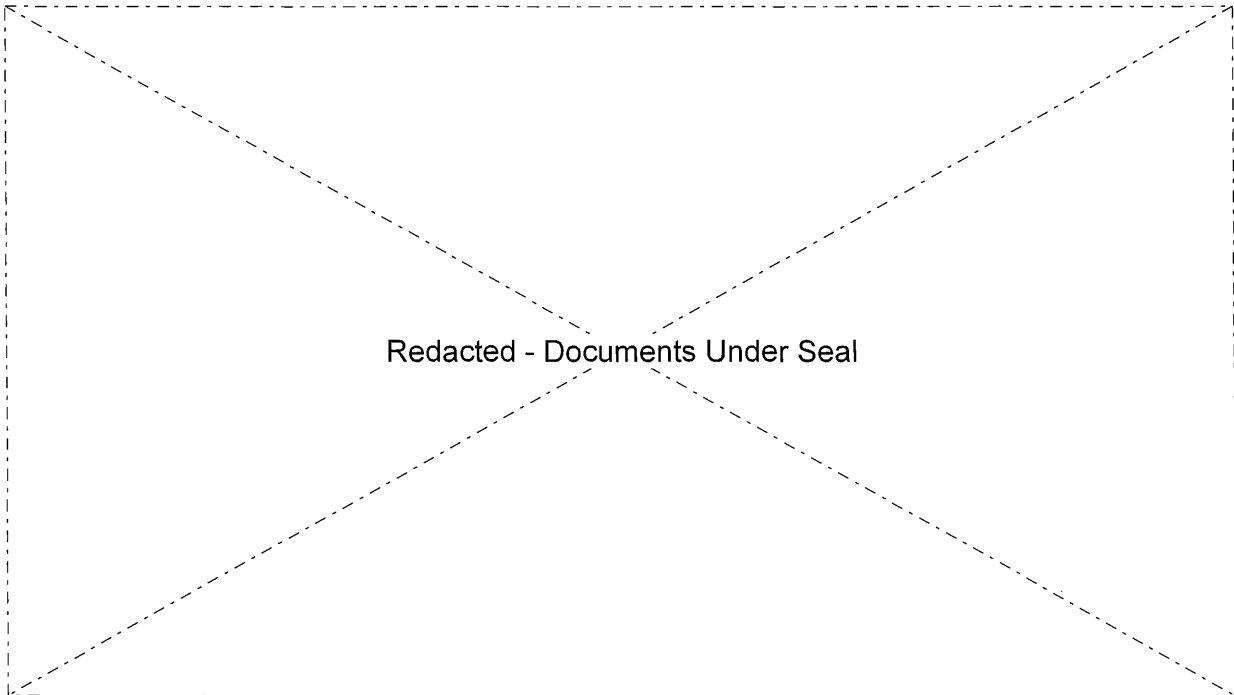
**Born: March 26, 1950, Presently 53 years old**

**Ordained: April 8, 1978**

**Removed from Active Ministry: September 6, 1985**

**Current Status: Fr. Dudzinski resides in Herndon, Virginia in a private residence with his mother. The Bishop of the Diocese of Arlington, VA has been notified.**

**Facts of the Case:**



June 6, 2003 *Wilmington News Journal* newspaper article: “A former Catholic priest from Delaware who was accused of sexually abusing teenage boys in the mid-1980s has agreed to give up his license to counsel children in Virginia. Edward F. Dudzinski, Jr. surrendered his

license last month as part of a settlement with the Virginia Board of Counseling. The board ruled that he had violated the terms of an earlier order that required him to confine his practice to adults and to work only under the supervision of another counselor. State officials had issued the order after reviewing allegations that he slept in the same bed with a minor on at least 10 occasions in 2001." This article points to the ongoing difficulty of monitoring Fr. Dudzinski and the urgent need to have him laicized as soon as possible.

October 7, 2003 letter from Fr. Dudzinski to Bishop Saltarelli: "I do not believe I deserve the honor of being involved in any active ministry and am truly sorry for any harm caused to you, the people of our Diocese and to those priests who work so hard to spread the gospel with integrity and holiness. I spend many hours in prayer asking for forgiveness and guidance."

October 22, 2003 letter (enclosed) from Fr. Dudzinski to Bishop Saltarelli requesting voluntary laicization: "First of all, thank you for taking the time to offer your guidance and your prayers. Believe me, both are needed and gratefully accepted. After receiving your letter and consultation with my program sponsor and my family, I have decided to voluntarily submit the letter you requested. It is enclosed with this letter. This is another sad and shameful day for me and I pray daily for a merciful fathers' forgiveness. I would also like to thank you Bishop Saltarelli for the holiness and faith with which you care for the people of the Diocese of Wilmington. Your reputation as a truly 'pastoral' Bishop is well known and admired."

Bishop Saltarelli's *Votum*: In accord with section 8A of the *Essential Norms*, I ask the CDF for a dispensation from prescription as well as a permanent removal from ecclesiastical ministry based on Fr. Dudzinski's own request for voluntary laicization (see enclosed letter). The sexual abuse of a minor is well established. His October 7, 2003 letter is a direct admission of his misconduct with minors. Fr. Dudzinski was removed from ministry quickly in 1985 and so this is an old case that we would like to complete. He is 53 years old and while the Diocese has helped him significantly financially through the years we want to create further canonical distance especially in light of his continued misbehavior.

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**Rev. Harry Walker**  
**Born: 5/5/34, presently 69 years old**  
**Ordained: May 27, 1961**  
**Voluntarily Left Active Ministry: November 18, 1972**  
**Current Status: Fr. Walker lives and works in Wilmington, DE.**

**Facts of the Case:**

March 20, 2003 Memo of Msgr. J. Thomas Cini, Vicar General of Administration, to Bishop Saltarelli: "Fr. Harry Walker is described as a 'former priest of the Diocese of Wilmington' ordained in 1961. He left ministry in 1972. Sometime in April of 2002 he made a telephone call to Fr. Jim Richardson [a priest of the Diocese of Wilmington] because of the significant press coverage of the clergy scandal. At that time, Mr. Walker told Fr. Richardson of his involvement with underage children at St. Paul's parish back in the 1960s. He called Fr. Richardson to seek counsel and advice. Walker stated to Fr. Richardson that

Redacted - Conf. Med Recs.

Enclosed July 21, 2003 letter from Harry D. Walker to Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger requesting voluntary reduction to the lay state and a dispensation from celibacy.

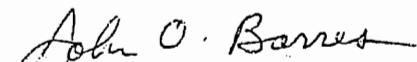
Bishop Saltarelli's *Votum*: In accord with section 8A of the *Essential Norms*, I ask the CDF to honor Fr. Walker's own request for voluntary laicization (see enclosed letter).

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely in Christ,



Most Reverend Michael Saltarelli  
 Bishop of Wilmington



Rev. Msgr. John O. Barres  
 Chancellor



Patricia S. Bossi  
 Notary for the Curia

