

Father Phillip Deder

A bishop thinks guilty priests can be trusted

Cleric criticized for “lifestyle” of partying with and abusing junior high boys

Bishop Imesch: Priests guilty of abuse can be effective and caring ministers

Instead of being removed, Deder is promoted after numerous allegations of abuse

Less than six years after becoming a priest in Joliet, Father Phillip Deder was working in Romeoville in the Chicago Archdiocese. While there, he was criticized by a fellow priest for his lifestyle, which included giving junior high boys alcohol and sexually abusing them. A year later, Deder was put on restricted ministry, but the parish was not informed of the problem.

Despite Deder’s crimes, Bishop Imesch promoted the priest to pastor and gave him the leadership of the local deanery. But when Imesch received a letter that Deder performed a private baptism, Imesch said that it was fine as long as he did not perform those kinds of ceremonies in Romeoville, where it could cause scandal.

In 2002, Deder was removed from ministry when allegations of abuse were made public. In letters, Bishop Imesch told a parishioner that, “It is people like Father Phil who convince me that some priests who are guilty of abuse can be effective and caring ministers.” In another letter, he said, “I know several priests who have been guilty of abuse, who have reconstructed their lives, undergone therapy and have been involved in safe and productive ministry.”

Deder currently lives in Warrenville, Illinois.

TIMELINE OF DOCUMENTS- PHILLIP JOSEPH DEDER

11/1/72 – Ordained

11/1/72 – Associate Pastor, St. Andrew’s, Romeoville, IL

Fall 1974 15 or 16 year old victim abused by Fr. Deder

1/27/76 – Associate Pastor, St. Pius X, Lombard, IL

1976-1978 Victim abused in St. Pius Parish

7/7/78 – Associate Pastor, Visitation, Elmhurst, IL

7/18/78 – Granted faculties for Archdiocese of Chicago by Cardinal Cody

- 12/7/78 Letter from Fr. Valentino to Fr. Ryan expressing displeasure with Dedera's lifestyle and recognizing that Dedera drinks with junior high school boys. (Dedera 301)
- 2/22/79 **Letter from Fr. Kucera transferring Dedera to St. Walter Parish in Roselle, IL, expressly limiting his ministry to adults and saying that Dedera shall not engage in youth ministry at St. Walters. (302)**
- 2/28/79 – Associate Pastor, St. Walter, Roselle, IL
- 6/18/84 – Associate Pastor, St. Scholastica's, Woodridge, IL
- 4/3/86 – Pastor, St. Mary's, Paxton, IL
- 6/22/88 – Dean of Ford/Iroquois Deanery
- 8/18/97 Letter from Bishop Roger L. Kaffer to Bishop Joseph L. Imesch stating that Dedera is performing a wedding and a private baptism for a 4-month old child. Bishop Kaffers states that Dedera doing these is ok under the circumstances, but that he would not want Dedera performing these ceremonies in Romeoville. (Dedera 510)
- 6/21/89 – Pastor, St. Patrick, Momence, IL
- 3/8/94 Psychologist reports to diocese that male patient of hers reported abuse by Dedera, which occurred in the 1970's when victim was 17. (Dedera 586)
- 7/15/96 – Chaplain, St. Patrick Residence, Naperville, IL
- 4/15/98 – Chaplain in Residence, Edward Hospital and St. Thomas the Apostle, Naperville, IL
- 4/12/02 – Dedera removed from all types of ministry based on credible allegations of sexual abuse occurring in the mid-1970's (Fall 1974) at St. Andrew's Parish
- 4/29/02 **Letter from Bishop Imesch to parishioner stating "It is people like Father Phil who convince me that some priests who are guilty of abuse can be effective and caring ministers." (624)**
- 5/9/02 **Letter from Bishop Imesch stating "I know several priests who have been guilty of abuse, who have reconstructed their lives, undergone therapy and have been involved in safe and productive ministry." (630)**
- 11/10/04 Review Committee minutes show that abuse by Dedera was reported in March 2004. Review Committee decides to let Bishop decide whether Dedera can have contact with children (18)

3/13/07

Memorandum detailing abuse by Dederer of 12-14 year old boy in St. Andrew's Parish (776)