

Father Donald Pock

Priest hides behind a drinking problem

Credible complaints date back to the 1950s, but in 2002, church officials told victim there were no other allegations of abuse

Complaints and allegations against Father Donald Pock date back to the 1950s, when Pock was a seminarian. But the first big issues blossomed in 1975, after two victims came forward to Bishop Blanchette. In a secret 1976 meeting, Blanchette decided to frame the issue as a drinking problem and put Pock on sick leave. Pock remained working in parishes the entire time.

In 1980, parishioners began to complain that Pock was discussing the pleasure of sexual intercourse with the congregation. They called the priest “sexually frustrated.” By 1991, Pock’s drinking was out of control, but he was not removed from the priesthood until 2002.

In 2002, when one of the victims spoke with Bishop Kaffer, Kaffer told the victim that there were no other allegations against Pock, with no mention of the prior sexual abuse complaints that were in Pock’s secret file.

In 2003, Pock received a letter of congratulations from Bishop Imesch for 45 years of ministry.

He died in 2004.

TIMELINE OF DOCUMENTS – DONALD POCK

6/7/58 – Ordained

6/28/58 – Assistant Pastor, St. Mary Magdalene, Joliet

1958 According to a 2008 report, Pock sexually abused a minor at St. Mary Magdalene Parish. (581)

2/22/61 – Assistant Pastor, Immaculate Conception, Morris

6/18/66 – Chaplain, St. Joseph, Joliet

6/17/67 – Chaplain, Lewis College

1/26/68 Letter from employer to Blanchette asking that Pock be withdrawn due to his lack of leadership. (149)

6/15/68 – Pastor, Divine Savior, Downers Grove

1969 According to 2002 report, Pock sexually abused a minor at Divine Savior. The abuse consisted of getting the minor drunk and consisted of oral sex. (441)

1969 According to a 2002 report to Cardinal George, Pock sexually abused a minor on an overnight at the rectory of Divine Savior. (457)

1975 According to 2002 report Blanchette set up a meeting with two persons accusing Pock of sexual abuse in 1975. Vomesch attended the meeting on Blanchette’s

behalf and Pock went into CD tx. “The whole concern at that time was framed as a drinking problem.” (408)

12/1/75 – Leave of absence

4/6/76 – In residence, St. Patrick, Joliet

4/6/76 Unofficial letter from Blanchette to Pock that canonically he have a sick leave of absence, be listed in residence at St. Patrick’s Parish although he is expected to work full time as an associate pastor and “the directives for therapy will be observed by Pock.” (171)

4/6/76 Official letter assigning Pock in residence at St. Patrick’s parish. (172)

6/1/76 – Associate pastor, St. Patrick, Joliet

6/21/77 – Administrator, St. Joseph, Manteno

7/7/78 – Pastor, St. Joseph, Manteno

9/17/80 Letter from parishioner to Imesch stating her dissatisfaction with Pock and that he often talks about sex quite boldly and has also talked about having intercourse and sex feeling good which was embarrassing for the congregation. “he is a sexually frustrated man who can find no way out of his circumstances.” (238-240)

6/17/87 – Pastor, St. Peter, Itasca

6/21/91 Letter from Kaffer to Imesch that parishioners and staff are complaining about his drinking. (295)

3/28/02 Kaffer meets with victim and confronts Pock who denies anything happened in 1975. In his memo he states “there is nothing in our personnel files or secret archives beyond alcoholism.” (409)

4/26/02 Letter from Kaffer to Pock placing him on administrative leave unless and until the allegations are satisfactorily resolved. (410)

4/26/02 – Administrative leave of absence

6/27/02 Letter from Bishop Fitzgerald to Pock with information about St. Luke’s Institute if Pock wishes to get help. (430)

6/5/03 Letter of congratulations from Imesch to Pock on his 45th anniversary of ordination. (459)

5/18/04 - Died