

ARCHDIOCESE OF CHICAGO

Office of Legal Services

John C. O'Malley
Director



Post Office Box 1979
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Tel: (312) 751-5379
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March 23, 2006

PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL

Ms. Shauna Boliker
Assistant State's Attorney
State's Attorney of Cook County
2650 South California, Rm. 11 D 10
Chicago, Illinois 60608

RECEIVED

MAR 23 2006

ARCHDIOCESE OF CHICAGO
OFFICE OF PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY

RE: Unknown 06 SC 047 # 2
Date of Birth: Unknown
Date of alleged abuse: Unknown
SCR #: 1686596-A

Dear Ms. Boliker:

Please be advised the Archdiocese of Chicago received a Notice of Investigation from the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS), dated February 2, 2006, on behalf of "unknown 2 minor". The unknown minor alleged that an Archdiocesan priest, Fr. Joseph Bennett, had sexually abused him/her at Holy Ghost Church in South Holland. No other information is available at this time. The priest was recently removed from active ministry.

The Archdiocese is not conducting an inquiry as DCFS is investigating. We will advise you of any developments.

Very truly yours,

Handwritten signature of John C. O'Malley in black ink.
John C. O'Malley
Director of Legal Services

JCOM:sm

cc: Mr. James A. Serritella
Ms. Leah Mc Cluskey
Ms. Elizabeth Yore

SC06SC047JCOMltr re DCFS Investigation to State's Attorney Office

AOC 000411

BENNETT

ARCHDIOCESE OF CHICAGO

Office of Professional Fitness Review
676 N. St. Clair, Suite 1910
Chicago, Illinois 60611



Post Office Box 1979
Chicago, Illinois 60690-1979

(312) 751-5205
Fax: (312) 751-5279

MEMORANDUM

TO Ralph Bonaccorsi, Victim Assistance Ministry
Rev James Kaczorowski, Vicar for Priests
Jimmy Lago, Chancellor
Leah McCluskey, Professional Fitness Review
John O'Malley, Legal Services
✓ Rev Thomas Paprocki, Cardinal's Delegate to the PFRB
Rev Thomas Tivy, Vicar for Priests

FROM Laura Neri-Palomino^{LNP}, Administrative Assistant
Professional Fitness Review Office

DATE October 23, 2002

RE [PFR-170] Bennett, Rev. Joseph [REDACTED]

Attached is a copy of a new allegation received by this office on 10/23/02. We are opening a file and Leah McCluskey, Interim Professional Fitness Review Administrator will begin the Review Process by attempting to arrange an interview with [REDACTED]. Please advise this office of any information you may have in your files regarding Bennett, Rev Joseph [REDACTED].

Thank you

Attachment

cc Most Rev Raymond E Goedert

✓ PCAC Notification Memo

AOC 000185

LAW OFFICES
THOMAS J. FLEISCHMANN
& ASSOCIATES

000000

THOMAS J. FLEISCHMANN

473 DUNHAM ROAD
SUITE 200
ST. CHARLES, ILLINOIS 60174

(630) 584-5555
FAX (630) 584-9868
EMAIL TJFLEISCH@AOL.COM

November 12, 2002

Ms Leah McCluskey
Acting Fitness Review Administrator
Office of Professional Fitness Review
The Archdiocese of Chicago
676 North St. Clair
Suite 1910
Chicago, Illinois 60611

Mr. James A. Seritella
Burke, Warren, MacKay & Seritella, P.C.
22nd Floor IBM Plaza
330 North Wabash Avenue
Chicago, Illinois 60611-3607

Received
11-13-02 LNP

Re: [REDACTED] and Rev. Joseph Bennett

Dear Ms. McCluskey and Mr. Seritella:

As I mentioned to Ms. McCluskey, my client, [REDACTED] is willing to discuss this matter with whomever the Archdiocese deems appropriate. However, you will only interview my client once. Therefore, Jim if you or one of your colleagues wishes to attend and interview [REDACTED] we have no objection.

By way of background, [REDACTED] was born on [REDACTED]. He is one of eight sons and one daughter of [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. He currently resides at [REDACTED]. His social security number is [REDACTED]. His Illinois driver's license number is [REDACTED]. He is currently employed by [REDACTED].

Enclosed is the report of the polygraph examination conducted by Steven Kirby. It is my understanding that Mr. Kirby conducts polygraph examinations for

AOC 000322

ARCHDIOCESE OF CHICAGO

Office of Professional Fitness Review
676 N. St. Clair, Suite 1910
Chicago, Illinois 60611



Post Office Box 1979
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January 14, 2003

Francis Cardinal George, O.M.I.
Archbishop of Chicago
155 E. Superior Street
Chicago, Illinois 60611

Dear Cardinal George,

Please be advised that the Professional Fitness Review Board met on January 11, 2003. The Board fully considered all oral and written reports in the matter of Fr. Joseph Bennett [Active] in the allegation made by [REDACTED]. A First Stage Review was conducted pursuant to Article §1104.08 of the Review Process for Continuation of Ministry.

The Board recommends that at this time, there is insufficient information to make a finding of reasonable cause to suspect that Fr. Joseph Bennett engaged in sexual misconduct with a minor.

In a vote of 5-1 [with one abstaining], the Board recommends the following:

1. PFRA contact Tom Fleischmann [attorney for [REDACTED]] to request a copy of [REDACTED] marriage certificate.
2. PFRA ask Tom Fleischmann to speak with [REDACTED] regarding having the alleged victim's brother [REDACTED] write his accounts of alleged abuse by Joseph Bennett.
3. PFRA contact Fr. Kaczorowski, Vicar for Priests to determine who is monitoring Joseph Bennett and to ensure that it is not Fr. Leonard Dubi.

If you have any questions, please contact me at your convenience.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Leah McCluskey".

Leah McCluskey
Professional Fitness Review Administrator

Cc: Rev. Thomas J. Paprocki, Cardinal's Delegate to the Review Board
Rev. James Kaczorowski, Vicar for Priests
Ralph Bonaccorsi, Victim Assistance Ministry
Rev. Patrick Lagges, Judicial Vicar
John O'Malley, Legal Services

AOC 000194

ARCHDIOCESE OF CHICAGO

Office of Professional Fitness Review



Post Office Box 1979
Chicago, Illinois 60690-1979

(312) 751-5205
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Professional Fitness Review Board
Saturday, April 26, 2003

MINUTES

Review Board Members Present:

[REDACTED]

Members absent:

[REDACTED]

Non-members present:

Leah McCluskey, Professional Fitness Review Administrator [PFRA] 
Rev. Daniel Smilanic, Archbishop's Delegate to the Review Board

I. Approval of Minutes – March 15, 2003

II. Case Reviews

Second Stage Reviews

A. In the Matter of Joseph Bennett [Active] – PFR-170

The Review Board conducted a Second Stage Review regarding the allegation of [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] The claim is as follows: fondling over and under [REDACTED] clothes by JB; oral sex.

In a unanimous 7-0 vote, the Review Board determined that there is no reasonable cause to suspect that misconduct did occur.

B. In the Matter of [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

ARCHDIOCESE OF CHICAGO

Office of the Archbishop



Post Office Box 1979
Chicago, Illinois 60690-1979

February 23, 2004

Dear Father Bennett:

In light of the recommendation of the Diocesan Priests' Placement Board, which reflects the endorsement of your Episcopal Vicar and Dean, I am pleased to appoint you to serve a second term as Pastor of Holy Ghost in South Holland, commencing July 1, 2003, the date your previous term ended. Your term of office will be for an additional six years, but will officially remain in effect until you are reappointed or transferred or your successor is named.

The support you have received for this reappointment is an indication of the fine pastoral leadership you have rendered to the people of Holy Ghost parish as you have proclaimed the Gospel message through your time and effort these past six years.

Joe, it is my hope that this will be a time of renewal for you personally as you continue to offer your priestly gifts with the people of God who have been entrusted to your care.

Fraternally yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Francis Cardinal George".

Francis Cardinal George O.M.I.
Archbishop of Chicago

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rev. J. Moore".

Ecclesiastical Notary

Reverend Joseph R. Bennett
Holy Ghost Parish
700 E 170th St
South Holland, IL 60473

AOC 000309

Office of Professional Responsibility

P.O. Box 1979
Chicago, Illinois 60690-1979(312) 751-5205
Fax: (312) 751-5279

July 2, 2004

Rev. Joseph Bennett
C/o Mr. Patrick Reardon
221 N. LaSalle Street
Suite 1938
Chicago, IL 60601*Mental Health*

Dear Fr. Bennett,

I am writing this letter on behalf of the Professional Responsibility Review Board regarding Ms. [REDACTED] allegation of sexual misconduct against you.

In light of the information presented, the Review Board has requested that you participate in a psychological evaluation. If you are in agreement with the Review Board's request, Rev. James T. Kaczorowski, Vicar for Priests would be able to assist with making the necessary arrangements. I ask that you respond to this letter in writing with your decision.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at [312] 751-5205. As you know, you may also reach Fr. Kaczorowski at [312] 642-1837.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Leah McCluskey".

Leah McCluskey
Professional Responsibility AdministratorCc: Rev. Daniel Smilanic, Cardinal's Delegate to the Review Board
Rev. James Kaczorowski, Vicar for Priests
Rev. Joseph Bennett

B. In the Matter of Rev. Joseph Bennett [Active] – PFR 170

The Review Board conducted an Initial Review regarding the allegation made by [REDACTED]. The claim is as follows: Fr. Bennett exposed himself to [REDACTED]. Fr. Bennett instructed [REDACTED] to perform oral sex on him.

In a 8-0 vote, in light of the information presented, the Board determined that this matter warrants additional investigation. The Board also requested that PRA complete the following tasks:

- That PRA contact Sr. [REDACTED]'s order and ask for her assignment history as well as the reason as to why she left the order.
- That PRA attempt to determine if Sr. [REDACTED] was known as "the singing nun."
- That PRA request to meet with Sr. [REDACTED] in person.
- That PRA review Fr. Bennett's file in the Vicar for Priests and the Chancellor's offices.
- That Fr. Bennett is asked to undergo a physical examination by a doctor of the choice of the Vicar for Priests office.
- That Fr. Bennett is monitored until the end of the Review Board process.
- That Fr. Bennett's monitor is either Rev. Thomas Cima or Rev. Thomas Cabala and not Rev. Leonard Dubi.

Review for Cause

C. In the Matter of Rev. Joseph Bennett [Active] – PFR – 170

The Review Board was to conduct a Review for Cause regarding the allegation made by [REDACTED]. The claim is as follows: penetration; Fr. Bennett had [REDACTED] perform oral sex on him; mutual masturbation; mutual oral sex between Fr. Bennett and Sr. [REDACTED] as well as intercourse [observed by [REDACTED]]; Fr. Bennett penetrated [REDACTED] with the handle of a paten.

In a 8-0 vote, the Board recommended to postpone this matter until PRA could complete the following tasks:

- That PRA contact Sr. [REDACTED]'s order and ask for her assignment history as well as the reason as to why she left the order.
- That PRA attempt to determine if Sr. [REDACTED] was known as "the singing nun."
- That PRA request to meet with Sr. [REDACTED] in person.
- That PRA review Fr. Bennett's file in the Vicar for Priests and the Chancellor's offices.
- That Fr. Bennett is asked to undergo a physical examination by a doctor of the choice of the Vicar for Priests office.
- That Fr. Bennett is monitored until the end of the Review Board process.
- That Fr. Bennett's monitor is either Rev. Thomas Cima or Rev. Thomas Cabala and not Rev. Leonard Dubi.

ARCHDIOCESE OF CHICAGO

Office of Professional Responsibility



P.O. Box 1979
Chicago, Illinois 60690-1979

Professional Responsibility Review Board
Saturday, July 16, 2005 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

(312) 751-5205
Fax: (312) 751-5279
www.archchicago.org

MINUTES


Review Board Members Present:

[REDACTED]

Members absent:

[REDACTED]

Non-members present:

Leah McCluskey, Professional Responsibility Administrator [PRA] 
Rev. Daniel Smilanic, Cardinal's Delegate to the Review Board

I. Approval of Minutes – June 18, 2005

- [REDACTED]
- The Board then unanimously approved the minutes 7-0

II. Case Reviews

Review for Cause

A. In the Matter of Rev. Joseph Bennett [Active 2005] – PFR - 170

The Review Board was to conduct a Review for Cause regarding the allegation made by [REDACTED]. The allegation is as follows: Fr. Bennett penetrated [REDACTED]; [REDACTED] performed oral sex on Fr. Bennett; mutual masturbation; mutual oral sex involving Fr. Bennett and Sr. [REDACTED]; Fr. Bennett penetrated [REDACTED] rectum with handle of a paten; [REDACTED] witnessed Fr. Bennett and Sr. [REDACTED] having sexual intercourse.

In a 7-0 vote, the Board unanimously agreed to postpone the Review for Cause of this matter until the scheduled August 20, 2005 meeting until the following information could be obtained/determined by PRA:

- That PRA speak with Rev. Edward Grace, Vicar for Priests, regarding the need for clarification on Dr. [REDACTED]'s report of his physical examination of Fr. Bennett. Specifically, to determine if Dr. [REDACTED] noted a birthmark on the back of Fr. Bennett during his exam or not. PRA will ask Fr. Grace if he would prefer to speak with Dr. [REDACTED] regarding the report or if he feels that it is appropriate for [REDACTED] to discuss the matter with Dr. [REDACTED] on behalf of the Review Board. [REDACTED] works with Dr. [REDACTED] at Loyola.

- That PRA check with Fr. Grace to determine if Rev. Leonard Dubi is currently on sabbatical or not. Fr. Dubi is Fr. Bennett's identified monitor.

In the Matter of Rev. Joseph Bennett [Active 2005] – PFR - 170

The Review Board was to conduct a Review for Cause regarding the allegation made by [REDACTED]. The allegation is as follows: Fr. Bennett exposed himself and then instructed [REDACTED] to perform oral sex on him.

In a 7-0 vote, the Board unanimously agreed to postpone the Review for Cause of this matter until the scheduled August 20, 2005 meeting until the following information could be obtained/determined by PRA:

- That PRA speak with Rev. Edward Grace, Vicar for Priests, regarding the need for clarification on Dr. [REDACTED]'s report of his physical examination of Fr. Bennett. Specifically, to determine if Dr. [REDACTED] noted a birthmark on the back of Fr. Bennett during his exam or not. PRA will ask Fr. Grace if he would prefer to speak with Dr. [REDACTED] regarding the report or if he feels that it is appropriate for [REDACTED] to discuss the matter with Dr. [REDACTED] on behalf of the Review Board. [REDACTED] works with Dr. [REDACTED] at Loyola.
- That PRA check with Fr. Grace to determine if Rev. Leonard Dubi is currently on sabbatical or not. Fr. Dubi is Fr. Bennett's identified monitor.

B. In the Matter of [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

C. In the Matter of [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

ARCHDIOCESE OF CHICAGO

Office of Professional Responsibility



PO Box 1979
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www.archchicago.org

MEMORANDUM

To: File – PFR-170
From: Laura A. Neri-Palomino
Re: Bennett, Rev. Joseph (Active)/ [REDACTED]
Date: July 16, 2005

A summary of the discussion from the Professional Responsibility Review Board Meeting on July 16, 2005:

The Review Board was to conduct a Review for Cause regarding the allegation made by [REDACTED]. The allegation is as follows: Fr. Bennett exposed himself and then instructed Ms. [REDACTED] to perform oral sex on him.

In a 7-0 vote, the Board unanimously agreed to postpone the Review for Cause of this matter until the scheduled August 20, 2005 meeting until the following information could be obtained/determined by PRA:

- That PRA speak with Rev. Edward Grace, Vicar for Priests, regarding the need for clarification on Dr. Koeller's report of his physical examination of Fr. Bennett. Specifically, to determine if Dr. Koeller noted a birthmark on the back of Fr. Bennett during his exam or not. PRA will ask Fr. Grace if he would prefer to speak with Dr. Koeller regarding the report or if he feels that it is appropriate for Dr. Domeena Renshaw to discuss the matter with Dr. Koeller on behalf of the Review Board. Dr. Renshaw works with Dr. Koeller at Loyola.
- That PRA check with Fr. Grace to determine if Rev. Leonard Dubi is currently on sabbatical or not. Fr. Dubi is Fr. Bennett's identified monitor.

ARCHDIOCESE OF CHICAGO

Office of the Archbishop



155 E. Superior St.
Chicago, Illinois 60611

November 7, 2005

Ms. Leah McCluskey
Office of Professional Responsibility
676 N. St. Clair St.
Chicago, IL 60611

Dear Ms. McCluskey,

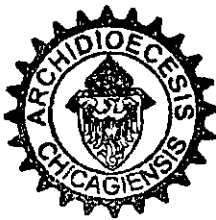
I am writing to you with regard to the matter of **Reverend Joseph Bennett**, a priest of the Archdiocese of Chicago, who has been accused of sexual misconduct by [REDACTED]. I had initially indicated that I accepted the Review Board's recommendation that there was a reasonable cause to suspect that the misconduct did occur. However, I have since reconsidered this matter and would like to postpone a final decision for the time being. I need more time to review the material gathered in the preliminary investigation and to consider it in light of the Review Board's recommendation.

I realize this creates a rather awkward situation, but I believe I need to reflect on this matter further. Thank you for your understanding. Please communicate this decision to the members of the Review Board and assure them that this does not represent any lack of confidence in them for the fine work they do.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Francis Cardinal George".

Francis Cardinal George, O.M.I.
Archbishop of Chicago



Rev. Richard Aoudia
Ecclesiastical Notary

AOC 000386

ARCHDIOCESE OF CHICAGO

Vicar General



Post Office Box 1979
Chicago, Illinois 60690-1979

(312) 751-8271
Fax: (312) 337-6379

February 1, 2006

Most Reverend. Dale J. Melczek
Diocese of Gary
9292 Broadway
Merrillville, IN 46410

Dear Bishop Melczek:

A priest of our Archdiocese, Rev. Joseph Bennett, pastor of Holy Ghost Parish in South Holland, Illinois, has been placed on leave. As of this moment, he has been asked to reside at his home that is within the Diocese of Gary. His address is:



The incident in question occurred about thirty years ago and surfaced about two years ago here in the Archdiocese. The circumstances have been under review for some time, but the information is not completely clear. For this reason, he has not been canonically removed from his parish. To the best of our knowledge, there have been no other reported allegations related to him.

I would ask that, if possible, someone of your choice would act as a monitor for him during the time he will be on leave. Rev. Edward Grace, one of our Vicars for Clergy, will be happy to be in contact with the person who will act as monitor.

Thank you for your kind cooperation and assistance in this matter.

Fraternally yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "George J. Rassas".

Most Reverend George J. Rassas
Vicar General

cc: Francis Cardinal George, O.M.I.
Rev. Edward Grace
Jimmy Lago

AOC 000356

FAXED
6/4/06

FAX TRANSMISSION SHEET

**Archdiocese of Chicago
Office of the Archbishop
155 East Superior Street
Chicago, Illinois 60611**

DATE: June 3, 2006
TO: Rev. Joseph Bennett
[REDACTED]
FROM: Rev. Daniel Flens (for Cardinal George)
RE: revisions to your draft letter

You should receive 2 pages. This number includes the cover sheet. If you do not receive all pages, please call [REDACTED] or [REDACTED].

Joe,

Cardinal George made a few changes to your draft letter, which can be seen on the following page. In case his handwriting does not come through clearly on this fax, the last two sentences of the second paragraph now read as follows:

The Cardinal has told me that for the present time I will still hold the office of pastor, for which I am grateful. But the Cardinal needs to see to it that you are pastored day by day, and I encourage your cooperation with the arrangements he made.

You may print the revised letter in the June 11 bulletin. Please give me a call if you have any questions about these changes. God bless you.

Phone Number [REDACTED]
Fax Number [REDACTED]

AOC 000338

ARCHDIOCESE OF CHICAGO



Office of Professional Responsibility

Leah R. McCluskey, MSW, LSW
Administrator
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Patricia J. Zacharias, LCPC, CADC, CEAP
Assistant Administrator
312-867-8793
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1-800-994-6200
312-751-5279 (fax)

MEMORANDUM

To: File – PFR-170

From: Review Board Meeting

Re: Bennett, Rev. Joseph (Temporarily Withdrawn) [REDACTED]

Date: July 15, 2006

A summary of the discussion from the Review Board Meeting on Saturday, July 15, 2006:

The Review Board conducted an Initial Review [REDACTED] allegation of sexual misconduct against Rev. Joseph Bennett. A summary of the allegation is as follows: less than five incidents; after serving mass, Fr. Bennett would take [REDACTED] into the rectory and down into the basement where collection money was counted; Fr. Bennett would ask [REDACTED] to change into [REDACTED] [which

[REDACTED] would not do in the same room as Fr. Bennett] and return to the room; Fr. Bennett would then have [REDACTED] lay on his lap, either face up or face down; Fr. Bennett would then rub [REDACTED] chest or back and genital area over and under his clothing.

The Board discussed the details of the allegation. Fr. Bennett is a classmate of [REDACTED]'s. As a result, [REDACTED] was able to confirm that Fr. Bennett did visit [REDACTED]. As per [REDACTED], their class were ordained deacons in October 1965 and then ordained priests on April 26, 1966. [REDACTED] stated that at the time deacons were not given a parish assignment.

In a 6-0 vote in light of the information presented, the Review Board determined that this matter warrants additional investigation. The Board recommended that PRA do the following:

- Speak with Rev. Francis [Frank] Kub, as he and Fr. Bennett were assigned together at St. John de LaSalle. Ask Fr. Kub his recollection of where the money would be counted after masses [to determine if an assistant associate would ever count the money in the basement]
- Ask [REDACTED] if he can recall when he was at [REDACTED] and the approximate time frame of the alleged abuse