

Robert Becker

Former President of the Canon Law Society of America and Self-Admitted Child Molester

Molested boys with Kenneth Ruge – at least 9 abused by both men

The Robert Becker personnel file has more questions than answers. Although Becker was a prominent priest—former president of the Canon Law Society of America and a member of the Metropolitan Tribunal—allegations of sexual abuse haunted him his entire career. By 1986, parishioners, who had had enough of Becker, reported their concerns to a school principal. She reported Becker to the Department of Child and Family Services. Within a month of the report, Becker confessed to Cardinal Joseph Bernardin that he had sexually abused kids.

According to other files released and victims attorneys, Becker molested children with Fr. Kenneth Ruge. The two priest owned a camper together and would frequently abuse the same child in their camper. At least nine boys were molested by both men.

Bernardin sent Becker to treatment at the St. Luke institute, but by November of 1986, Becker was back living in a parish and working in the Judge Metropolitan Tribunal. Although the Vicar for Clergy claims to have interviewed boys Becker molested, there are no additional reports to social services.

The questions that remain are myriad: What happened after the initial 1986 report to DCFS by school principal Dawn Murphy? What did Bishop Thomas Paprocki do with Becker's sealed envelope from the file in 1999? Where are Cardinal Bernardin's notes from meetings with Becker? What did Bishop Gerald Kincanas do with his knowledge of Becker in 1986? Why didn't he report what he knew?

Becker died in 1989.

TIMELINE OF DOCUMENTS – ROBERT BECKER

4/29/65 - Ordained

6/30/65 - Associate Pastor, Queen of Martyrs

Father Becker orally copulates “H” and Becker visits 7th and 8th grade boys' locker room. (AOC000092)

11/1/72 - Canon Law Studies Gregorian University Rome Italy

7/24/74 - Associate Pastor, Our Lady of the Snows

1974 According to a 2008 report to the Archdiocese, a survivor is sexually abused by Becker at Our Lady of the Snows. (AOC000168)

7/24/74 - Procurator/Advocate, Metropolitan Tribunal

10/14/75 – Treasurer, Canon Law Society of America

10/17/75 Becker requests a change in residence from Our Lady of the Snows because Becker and Father Kinsella have had a parting of the ways. Clergy personnel board agenda. (AOC000177)

11-26-75 - Associate Pastor, Saint Clements

3/31/76 – Vice Officialis, Metropolitan Tribunal

Spring 1976 According to a 2009 report to the Archdiocese, Becker takes a survivor and another to his trailer with Father Ken Ruge where Becker and Ruge sexually abuse the boys. (AOC000162)

Summer

1980 to 1985 Becker and Father Ken Ruge brought a survivor with group of boys to Woodhaven Lakes RV park which they co-owned. Becker and Ruge showed boys porno films, provided alcohol, sauna, slept in same bed with boys where they fondled and masturbated the survivor according to Archdiocesan report from 1997. (AOC000149)

1982 – President, Canon Law Society of America

10/83 Father Becker masturbates survivor “T” and attempts anal rape during trip to Woodhaven Lakes RV Park. (AOC000094)

12/22/83 – Officialis, Metropolitan Tribunal

1984 According to a 2005 report to the Archdiocese, a survivor is taken to Woodhaven and is awakened by Becker masturbating him, Becker says it is appropriate and natural. (AOC000142)

2/28/86 Parishioners of Saint Clements meet with Principle Dawn Murphy and parish social worker Joan Callaghan with concerns about Becker. (AOC000139 - AOC000141)

2/28/86 Dawn Murphy makes child abuse report to DCFS. (AOC000139 -AOC000141)

2/28/86 Vicar for Clergy questions Becker who stated he never touched or fondled any boy, that he instructed the boys to shower and change their underclothes and that in his sleep Becker had rolled on to one of the boys. (AOC000139 -AOC000141)

- 2/28/86 Vicar for Clergy mandates that Becker never bring a boy or boys under 18 to the trailer and that he was to curtail his involvement with children. (AOC000139 - AOC000141)
- 3/9/86 Becker self-reports to Cardinal Bernardin, is placed on sick leave.
- 4/22/86 Vicar for Priests, father Tom Ventura, writes Becker at the Saint Luke Institute in Suitland Maryland acknowledging Becker's letters to him "on these complex and sometimes painful matters" and the sad reality of a priest suicide at the Institute. (AOC000136 –AOC000137)
- 4/28/86 Investigation by father John Fahey at St. Clements completed. "Talked to all of the boys whose names surfaced." (AOC000135)
- 9/5/86 Joseph Cardinal Bernadin writes on Becker memo " I was not that Cardinal Bernardin not interested for Becker living at teaching at Mundelin, will talk with Father Gerald Kincanas about teaching a course part time. (AOC00126 – AOC000127)

3/86 – 11/86 – Resident at Saint Luke Institute in Suitland, Maryland.

11/7/86 - Judge Metropolitan Tribunal and in residence St. Gertrude

12-10-87 - Becker meets with Cardinal Bernardin. (AOC00120)

10-22-89 - Deceased

- 2/27/92 Chancellor Father Robert Kealy at the Metropolitan Tribunal receives complaint that two boys were fondled by Becker at Woodhaven. (AOC000110 - AOC000111)
- 3/29/93 Anonymous call regarding Becker sexual abuse of minor males at Queen of Marytyrs. Becker was in charge of Sex Education and asked the survivor to weigh in in the nude for a Catholic League study. (AOC000075)
- 1/6/99 Father Thomas J. Paprocki requests Father Becker's file from Jac Treanor in the archives, retains the sealed envelope in the file. File sent to Chancellor, now placed in misconduct cases. (AOC 00070)
- 11/22/99 Becker complaint before review board consistent with previous allegations. (AOC000074)
- 11/29/99 Review board concludes there is a reasonable cause Becker sexually abused a minor. (AOC000088)

- 7/24/2002 Professional Conduct Administrative Committee reviews Archdiocese civil settlement with survivor of both Father Robert C. Becker and Father Ken Ruge. (AOC000077)
- 4/28/05 Mr. John C. O'Malley writes State Attorney General that the Archdiocese received a complaint of child abuse against Becker from conduct in 1985. (AOC000147)
- 11/13/07 Bishop Goedert is deposed in order to meet a non-monetary demand of sex abuse survivors. In the deposition, he is asked about Robert Becker. Goedert denies any knowledge of Becker until he became Vicar for Priests in 1987.