

CONFIDENTIAL

MEMORANDUM

TO: File

FROM: Father Chuck Lienert

SUBJECT: Telephone Conversation with

DATE: March 16, 1989

of [REDACTED], [REDACTED], called me on March 15, 1989. He told me he wished to discuss with me the sexual abuse he had received from a priest during the years of 1951 to 1957 while he was a student at St. Philip Neri grade school. The priest involved was Father Rocco Perone, C.S.P. He stated that he was simply seeking information. He wished to meet with me when he will be in Portland on April 28th, and I scheduled a meeting with him.

He said he would like to know whether Father Perone is still alive, whether an investigation was ever done on his activity. He told me that he had been questioned by a nun from the school and a lay person from the parish. They had asked him whether Father Perone had ever made sexual advances. He did not tell them anything at that time. They had questioned him because of a complaint of another student.

He told me at this time he was only seeking information. He also asked me not to contact his father who still lives in Portland. His phone number is [REDACTED]. After speaking with him, I discussed the matter with Kathleen Cleary. I intend to report this allegation to the priest in charge of personnel matters for the Paulists and ask him whether or not there have been any complaints or investigation against Father Perone. The Catholic Directory indicates that he is in a parish in Austin, Texas.

There is some possibility that [REDACTED] could sue Father Perone or the Paulist Order and the Archdiocese if he discovered his injury only recently as a result of therapy. He did not indicate an intent to do so

PD 0179



ARCHDIOCESE  
OF PORTLAND  
IN OREGON

Office of Clergy Personnel

MEMORANDUM

TO: Archbishop Levada  
FROM: Fr. Lienert  
SUBJECT: Request of  
DATE: May 9, 1989

I have enclosed a copy of a letter from Mr. [redacted] with an attached statement he wishes us to publish. He indicates in his letter that he is willing to modify this proposal by mutual agreement.

I have contacted Fr. Gallagher, CSP. Both Tom and I spoke with him about the potential seriousness of this case. He expressed a concern that Fr. Rocco Perone might be subjected to criminal prosecution. We told him that this was not likely, but that there could be civil suits if victims maintained that they had recently become aware of the damage that had been done to them. We recommended that he seek counsel in Oregon to advise him about the potential legal liabilities. We also suggested that we meet with him to discuss our course of action. He agreed to come out on the 16th or 17th of this month.

Tom Selliaken and I have discussed this case with Chuck Haberdigg and his Associate. They do not see a large risk in public disclosure because of length of time that has elapsed. (Fr. Perone was at St. Philip Neri from 1949 to 1956.)

I also consulted with Tim Smith of Northwest Associates. He believes that in this instance some kind of public statement encouraging victims to come forward would be beneficial. He said that in their experience when this is done, not many victims come forward immediately for help, but that it is a positive step in helping victims deal with the guilt and eventually seeking help.

Tom and I think that we should make some carefully prepared public statement. We should seek the assistance of a therapist experienced in treating child abuse as well as someone in public

relations. Tentatively, we think the following changes should be made:

- 1) The statement should not have a reference to the specific incident at St. Philip Neri. If Mr. [redacted] insists, then it should be included at St. Philip Neri only.
- 2) The statement should not single out priests, but should invite anyone who has been abused by any individual working for the Church to contact the Archdiocese. The statement should also encourage anyone who has been sexually abused as a child to seek help.
- 3) Rather than printing this in the Sentinel, the statement should be presented in every parish of the Archdiocese.

We see a number of advantages in making such a public statement:

- 1) The Church does have concern for anyone who may have been victimized by its ministers or employees. Such a statement would make public acknowledgement of that concern.
- 2) If there are any child abusers working in the Church, it is to our advantage to find them out.
- 3) Because the statement would be made in all the Church, it would be a means of inviting victims from Sutherland and St. John Fisher to come forward without singling out these parishes.
- 4) This would be a positive response to Mr. [redacted] whose principal concern seems to be for other victims.

We need to respond to Mr. [redacted] as soon as possible. Tom [redacted] intends to vacation in Victoria the latter part of next week. He will be able to meet with Mr. [redacted] to discuss our response with him.

Tom has asked [redacted] who counsels people who have been sexually abused to meet with us to assist us in drafting a statement.

cc. Tom Selliken

PD 0187

Reverend Charles Lienert  
Director of Clergy Personnel  
Archdiocese of Portland in Oregon  
2838 E. Burnside Street  
Portland, Oregon 97214-1895

20 June 1989

*chuck*  
Dear Father Lienert,

I enclose a copy of my letter to Father Gallagher. At the same time, I am asking the Archbishop to reconsider his decision to refuse to directly acknowledge my victimization. This story will come out. It is right and just that it do so. Revelation provides the invitation for victims to step forward in a much more galvanizing manner than the simple announcement of the Archdiocese's adoption of a generalized victimization program, however desirable such a program is.

Given that this story will be made public, it must be in the best interests of the Church that it do so at your telling, and in the Archdiocesan newspaper. My family is well prepared to accept the consequences of our name appearing in public, should you feel that revealing my name is necessary to dispel rumours.

Sincerely,

cc: Very Reverend Joseph V. Gallagher

PD 0188



ARCHDIOCESE  
OF PORTLAND  
IN OREGON

Office of Clergy Personnel

CONFIDENTIAL

MEMORANDUM

TO: Tom Selliken  
FROM: Chuck Lienert  
SUBJECT: Gallagher's conversation with the Archbishop  
DATE: July 18, 1989

These are the points that Fr. Gallagher made in his conversation with the Archbishop:

- 1) It must be Fr. Perone's decision whether he will reveal the names of other victims.
- 2) His testimony may not be reliable. He may not know the objective truth any more because of his long denial and minimalizing.
- 3) Perone denies anything involving confession. (claims that he was approached by Perone on two occasions the day after he went to him for confession.
- 4) Perone insists that he was never called in while he was at St. Philip.
- 5) Perone's attorney is Robert Keefe (Boston) (617)742-9100
- 6) Gallagher has used a lawyer for interviews with Perone to maintain a client privilege

PD 0193