

ARCHDIOCESE OF SAINT PAUL AND MINNEAPOLIS

MEMO TO: Father Michael O'Connell

DATE: October 7, 1988

FROM: Father Kevin McDonough

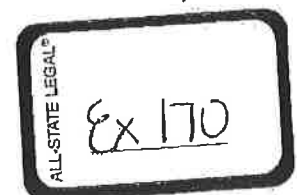
RE: MEETING WITH FATHER JOSEPH WAJDA, OCTOBER 4, 1988

Michael, I want to summarize for you the notes that I took from our October 4 meeting with Father Wajda. My notes are sometimes barely readable and often repeat themselves so I want to prepare this summary. Once I have prepared it, I will destroy the notes. I would ask you to review this and see if I accurately recorded what you remember from the conversation.

At the beginning of the meeting, you explained to Father Wajda why Monsignor Kneal was present. Basically, you said that he was there to serve as an advocate or canonical assistant to Father Wajda. Wajda consented to Kneal's presence. Next, you warned Father Wajda that any statements that he would make to us should be considered discoverable. Finally, you informed Father Wajda that you and I might have to make a decision to discipline him even if he were to choose to deny the allegations that follow.

You then handed to Father Wajda a written text which you entitled "The Proceedings." I presume that you are saving a copy of that because I have destroyed mine. He reviewed that text, and then he said that he found the written text to be clear.

Then you read the text of the written proceedings aloud. At the end of the text you "sketched some background." Among the points of background you reviewed were these. First, you reminded Father Wajda of the meeting in November of 1987 which you and Bishop Carlson had with him. It was prompted by your having been notified of a lawsuit against Father Wajda over a 1973 allegation of propositioning a young man. At the time of that interview, according to the background you were providing, Father Wajda denied the allegation in the lawsuit and said that he was willing to take a polygraph. You then asked him to describe his relationships with young people. At that time, Father Wajda gave several names to you of boys with whom he had vacationed. At the time of the interview, both you and Bishop Carlson found Father Wajda's denial convincing. However, this past spring reports of lack of impulse control by Father Wajda in anger led us to investigate the names that had been given to you by Father Wajda in November of '87. You told Father Wajda that you had met about ten days ago with the parents of [redacted]. You reported "incidentally" that the conversation with the [redacted] Family confirmed a suspicion that Bishop Carlson and Father Patrick Ryan of St. Rose of Lima parish had previously had. The suspicion was that it was the [redacted] Family who had been the victim of harrassing telephone calls in 1986, which telephone calls were subsequently traced to the St. Rose parish rectory. You indicated that Bishop Carlson had confronted Wajda about the phone calls in the fall of 1986. However, no direct evidence linking Father Wajda to the phone calls ever appeared. Therefore, none of this appeared in the written record of the proceedings because we have no direct link between [redacted]



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Father Wajda and the incident. Two days after meeting with the parents, you reported, you met with . is extremely angry at his alleged manipulation by Father Wajda. You described several elements of this manipulation.

You then warned Father Wajda that it was your understanding from our attorney that the incidents around the birthday spankings are probably chargeable under obscenity or solicitation statutes. You said several times that you believe that would be willing to press charges if Father Wajda does not follow through in the psychological help that we are recommending to him.

Father Wajda then asked if he could clarify one point in the text. He asked about the indication in the text that Father Wajda had "angrily" emphasize the need to shower in the nude. Father Wajda asked whether this was impression or your impression. You then said that it was clear impression. In fact, you said, had commented about this to his mother at the time and his mother remembered the comment.

You then reviewed the third page of the written text entitled "The Conditions." You went over each point individually. As we were going over the point about having no further contact with anyone who has talked with us about Father Wajda, Wajda interrupted you to say that he had called the preceding day and left a message for him at about 9:30 p.m. with his roommate at college. Then he had called again that same morning about 7:00 a.m. and talked with him asking to call Father Wajda back later.

You demanded that Father Wajda not receive a follow up call from . You emphasized again that Wajda was neither to talk with or call or be in any other sort of communication with anyone else whom he suspected of talking with the Chancery about him. This prohibition was to begin as soon as the present meeting was ended.

At this point, Monsignor Kneal asked what St. Luke's Institute is. I briefly described it as a psychiatric hospital specializing in alcohol treatment and the treatment of sexual dysfunction.

At this point, you then said, "All right, Joe, let's get down to the issues." You then said that the material in the written text showed a pattern of abnormal psychosexual development in friendship relationships. Furthermore, you pointed out that there is a civil lawsuit going on about his relationships with young men. You said that we have chargeable criminal violations here. You suggested that a failure to deal with the situation would probably complicate the first lawsuit. Finally, you indicated that the attorney in the current lawsuit might conceivably be in touch with the and that another lawsuit could result. However, you said you believed that if Father Wajda cooperated with the psychological assistance offered that the would be less likely to want to enter into a lawsuit. You then asked how Wajda would respond to all of this.

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Wajda then asked Monsignor Kneal how he should respond. You and I offered to leave the room if they wanted to be able to speak with each other confidentially. Wajda said that this was unnecessary. Kneal reminded Wajda that whatever he said to us could well become public knowledge if it were subject to discovery. Secondly, he said that he believed that the package of conditions as laid down by yourself looked positive and helpful to Father Wajda.

At that point, Father Wajda asked to reread the text. At that point, Father Wajda said that he would interpret several things in the text differently. He reported the following things.

First, he said that he checked out the gift of waterskis, before offering it, with the parents.

Next, he said that he did not simply give rides to from athletic contests and practices but to other children in the car at the same time.

Wajda claims to recall going to McCarthy Gym with alone only two or three times.

Wajda then denied that he angrily indicated the necessity of showering in he nude. He said that he would only point to the written text indicating this rule. At that point, I asked him whether he instructed the young people with him about other rules. He said yes. I asked him what other rules. He said for example, that he reminded all the young people he brought with him as guests that the gym was primarily intended for priests and seminarians. He also told them they should not dive into the lap swimming lanes at the pool, that they should not run in the pool area, that they should not use the weight room.

Father Wajda said that he encouraged the boys to shower because generally after exercising he would take them out for a dinner somewhere, and if they did not shower they would be sweaty.

You then asked Father Wajda if he remembered the incident reported by with the boy who would not shower. He said that he did not remember that.

Father Wajda next explained that he had talked with about his maturation as a young man after he had found crying at the graduation of the 8th Grade students who graduated the year before him. Father Wajda indicated that had been held back a year and, therefore, this graduation signalled to him that his peers and friends were moving on. Father Wajda encouraged him to socialize with his actual classmates in this context to discuss the maturity difference.

You then asked him if he talked "about getting hard" as the written text alleged. Wajda then said that he didn't remember doing so. He did say that one time had talked with him about having an erection while he was in school and that they had talked about that.

Father Wajda denied ever saying anything to about "ruining" him.

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Father Wajda then described a visual joke which he sometimes does with young people about birthday spankings. According to this joke, which he explained with gestures which are impossible to render here, Wajda would pretend to get ready to spank the child having a birthday. He would say to him, "Guess where this hand is going to be on your birthday." Then he would offer the child his hand in a handshake. You then pressed Father Wajda on the birthday spankings with

Wajda admitted that twice did take down his pants and lean over. This happened in the context of talking about birthdays and celebrating birthday with a dinner. Wajda insists that had instigated the removal of the pants. You insisted that remembered things differently. Wajda insisted that had been the instigator. You described rather graphically the process by which one removes one's pants and asked Father Wajda if he had permitted this entire process to go on twice and have the child lean over before he stopped him told him that it was inappropriate to do so. Wajda said that he, in fact, had done so.

You asked Wajda if he had ever done this with anyone else. Wajda said that he had not.

You then pressed the point of the inappropriateness of Wajda's behavior in this situation and of the potential chargeability of this behavior as a crime.

You then asked when the spanking incidents occurred. Father Wajda indicated that they both happened around 15th birthday within a couple of months of each other.

You then asked Wajda if he had anything else he wished to discuss. Wajda reaffirmed his objections as I have listed them above.

You then reviewed the names that you had received so far from Wajda of his minor friends. You developed a list of those names through discussion with Wajda. I saw Wajda writing those names down and I presume that he was preparing to get a list to you of the things that are required in the condition in regard to these young people.

You asked next whether Wajda had taken any vacations this past year. He said that he had taken one vacation of one week's endurance by himself.

I then asked him what he did on his day off. He said that he sometimes went home to see his family, he would have lunch with friends, he would go shopping or visit these shopping malls.

At this point, I then left the meeting. This is the extent of the notes that I have. Do these seem to you to be an accurate rendering of what happened?

KMM:ggr

cc: Andrew Eisenzimmer- Meier, Kennedy & Quinn