

REC'D APR 11 2002

## DIOCESE OF ORANGE



OFFICE OF HUMAN RESOURCES

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **THE DIOCESE OF ORANGE RELEASES INFORMATION ABOUT A DISMISSED PRIEST.**

#### **The Diocese is cooperating with Law Enforcement**

April 11, 2002 – After learning yesterday from the Orange County Register and the Anaheim Police Department that an incident report was filed on Saturday, April 6, 2002 alleging years-old sexual misconduct by a dismissed priest, Sigfried Widera, Diocesan representatives made immediate contact with the Anaheim Police Department and reviewed the dismissed priest's inactive file for further information.

Relevant information gleaned from that review pertained to Diocesan activity in 1976. In 1976, Bishop William Johnson, the first Bishop of the then newly established Diocese of Orange, was requested by the Archbishop of Milwaukee, William Cousins, to accept Father Sigfried Widera into the Diocese of Orange. At the time, Fr. Widera was undergoing treatment for what was described by Archbishop Cousins as a "moral problem having to do with a boy in school". Bishop Johnson was assured that from all the professional medical information Archbishop Cousins gathered, there would be "no great risk" in allowing Fr. Widera to return to pastoral work and that Widera was transferring his treatment to a doctor in California where some of his family members resided.

Bishop Johnson accepted Fr. Widera with those assurances, as that was the professional thinking at the time. When the first information of a possible problem with children was brought to the attention of the Diocese of Orange in 1985 by the Child Protective Services, Fr. Widera was relieved of pastoral duties and his faculties as a priest and placed in a

50900012

residential treatment program. He was discharged from the program the following year and he was not readmitted to this or any other diocese as an acting priest.

Child Protective Services conducted the investigation of the allegations in 1985. Bishop Johnson dealt with Sigfried Widera and removed him from the Diocese and removed any opportunity for him to again function as a priest. The Diocese does not have information of the results of that investigation.

According to Bishop Brown, "Today, if such a request were to be made by any Archdiocese or Diocese, the priest would not be admitted to pastoral work in the Diocese of Orange. While the acceptance of a priest undergoing treatment was considered acceptable then, it is not today and I regret any pain that may have been caused by accepting Fr. Widera in 1976."

Diocesan representatives are cooperating with the Anaheim Police Department. Both Bishop Johnson and Archbishop Cousins are deceased.

The Diocesan Web site, [www.rcbo.org](http://www.rcbo.org), now provides a complete explanation of the manner in which to report allegations of sexual misconduct by clergy, religious and lay personnel assigned in the Diocese of Orange. A toll-free and confidential telephone report line, 1-800-364-3064 has been made available for reports.

TB: Father McKernan

for  
Sig Widera  
file

DIOCESE OF ORANGE



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May 6, 1997

[REDACTED]  
Anahelm, California 92804

Dear Mrs. Parks,

I am writing to follow up our telephone conversation and appointment that was scheduled with Monsignor John Urell and myself for March 24, 1997. On that date [REDACTED] called to cancel your appointment because you had been in an accident and were in the hospital.

I want you to know that you have not been forgotten. When you feel up to re-scheduling, please call me.

I hope that you are recovering well from the accident. Please be assured that you are in my prayers.

Praying God's continued blessings upon you, I remain

Sincerely yours in Christ,

+ +  
Most Reverend Michael P. Driscoll, D.D.  
Auxiliary Bishop

C. Reverend Monsignor John Urell

509 00015

[REDACTED]  
3/17/97

Member: St. Justin Martyr Parish  
Referred: Deacon Ray Duthoy

Regarding: Reverend Sig Widera

Eldest Son

Currently 28  
Married with three (3) sons  
Wife has just left him  
Molested when 9 or 10  
Told mother three (3) weeks ago of molest - yelled at her  
about the church and why he has nothing to do with it. His sons  
are not baptized.

2nd Son

Currently 27  
Molested  
(Perhaps molested at same time as brother?)  
This son (when 13) molested a neighbor's girl (age 4/5).  
She is now in high school.

Mother had both sons in counselling a [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

3rd Son [REDACTED]

In [REDACTED] in the All American Chorus. After trip to Europe,  
[REDACTED] suddenly quit and never wanted to sing again. He has a good  
voice. Mother does not believe that [REDACTED] molested  
him. . . but now she wonders.

4th Son

Just graduated from Mater Dei High School  
No problems with him

Mother is wondering how to help her sons.

Mother has heard that Father Sig is no longer a priest. But she  
also has heard that he is now a Brother in Arizona.

Appointment with John Urell and I: Monday, March 24 at 10:30 a.m.

March 24, 1997. Appointment cancelled via Deacon Ray Duthoy.  
[REDACTED] was working; [REDACTED] had an accident and was in the  
hospital. She would re-schedule at a future time.

50900016

PHONE MEMO	TO	[REDACTED]	DATE	3/17	TIME	1:40	AM PM
	FROM	[REDACTED]	AREA CODE				
	OF	St. Justin's Parish	NO.	[REDACTED]	EXT.	(928) 428-1111	
	MES- SAGE	Deacon Ray Duthoy suggested she speak to you - won't say what it's regarding					
PHONED <input type="checkbox"/>		CALL BACK <input type="checkbox"/>	RETURNED CALL <input type="checkbox"/>	WANTS TO SEE YOU <input type="checkbox"/>	WILL CALL AGAIN <input type="checkbox"/>	WAS IN <input type="checkbox"/>	URGENT <input type="checkbox"/>

PHONE MEMO	TO	+ Mike	DATE	5/5	TIME	1:55	AM PM
	FROM	Deacon Duthoy	AREA CODE				
	OF	St. Justin Martyr	NO.	774-2595	EXT.		
	MES- SAGE	Name & Address: [REDACTED] Amenum 92807					
PHONED <input type="checkbox"/>		CALL BACK <input type="checkbox"/>	RETURNED CALL <input type="checkbox"/>	WANTS TO SEE YOU <input type="checkbox"/>	WILL CALL AGAIN <input type="checkbox"/>	WAS IN <input type="checkbox"/>	URGENT <input type="checkbox"/>

509 00017

4 sons =

oldest son - 3 boys - wife left

2nd son - molested - 28/27

youngst - grad from Mater Dei

3rd - [redacted] - in All Amer. Chorus + now  
wondering a term - no problem

now 28/27

9 + 10 at time

oldest son - 3 wks ago - yelly @ church

2nd son - molested neighbor's girl  
(13) - girl (4-5) - now - Hester  
had sons in counselling at [redacted]

wondering how to help sons -

- not a priest - but a "Brother" in  
Prizine?

phone call w/ [redacted] -  
I called her

1/2/92

- "How are you doing now"?
- She is "praying" about it all -
- "I don't think it was fair that I took my anger out on you" -
- my children are doing better now
- I will seek all possible ways take care of Sieg Wieders
- No advancement in the issues -
- She thanked me for the call and was quite appreciative ...
- I told her to call me at any time in the future.

Steve

PERSONAL RECORD OF REV. SIEGFRIED F. WIDERA

NAME IN FULL

Date 1-10-76

ORDAINED FOR DIOCESE OF MILWAUKEE  
 Date and Place 6-20-67  
 Ordaining Prelate Wm. Cousins  
 If incardinated in Orange Date NOVEMBER 23, 1981  
 IF NOT INCARDINATED IN Orange  
 Date of Arrival 6-10-76  
 What letters from own Ordinary or Superior?  
 Length and purpose of stay:  
 Residence: Phone No.  
 FACULTIES GIVEN UNTIL

Birth: Date and Place 12-20-40 DORTMUND, GERMANY  
 Baptism: Date and Place 1-6-41 HEILIGE KREUZ KIRCHE, DORTMUND, GERMA  
 Present Citizenship U. S. A.

If Naturalized, Date and Place 1957  
 Elementary School—Dates and Places DORTMUND, GERMANY + JUNE 1955 from  
SACRED HEART ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, ST. FRANCIS, Wis.

High School—Dates and Places (ST. FRANCIS MINOR SEMINARY)  
DE SALES PREP — JUNE, 1959 — MILWAUKEE, Wis.

College—Dates and Places ST. FRANCIS COLLEGE — 1963 —  
MILWAUKEE, Wis.

Seminary—Dates and Places ST. FRANCIS PASTORAL SCHOOL OF  
MINISTRY — 1967 — MILWAUKEE, Wis.

Post-Graduate Work—Dates and Places —

Degrees—Dates and Places

What foreign languages can you speak? GERMAN

Father's and Mother's (maiden) Name

Name and address of nearest relative or friend

Please type answers in full and return to the Chancery Office, 440 So. Batavia, Orange, Ca. 92668

(Over)

50900021

List of Appointments since Ordination

TOWN	PARISH	CAPACITY	DATES
MILWAUKEE	ST. JOHN De NEPOMUC	ASS - PASTOR	1967-1968
WEST ALLIS	ST. MARY	ASS - PASTOR	1968 - 1972
PT. WASHINGTON	ST. MARY	ASS - PASTOR	1972 - 1973
DELAVAN	ST. ANDREW	ASS - PASTOR	1973 - 1976
Burns Park	St. Paul	Hospitality	Jan. 12, 1977
Anaheim	St. Justin Martyr	Associate	April 11, 1977
	NAIM CONFERENCE	Chaplain	February 1, 1978
	Previous assignment	unchanged	
Dana Point	St. Edward	Associate	July 6, 1981
		Incardinated	November 23, 1981
Same	Same	Adm. Pro Tem	May 26, 1982
Santa Ana	Immaculate Heart of Mary Church	Associate	july, 1984
		Inactive Leave	Sept. 24, 1985
Outside Diocese			
12-17-93			
Bishop Selva			
called (414) 769-3486			
(Milwaukee)			
Asked @ status of			
Sig Skidera.			
Trying to figure out			
who's responsible			
for him.			

List of ecclesiastical dignities and date of reception.....

State any special work or assignment and give dates.....

M E M O R A N D U M

TO: FILE  
Siegfried Widera

FROM: Bishop Michael P. Driscoll *MPD*

RE: Reasons for Suspension 09-24-85

DT: October 27, 1992

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Rev. Msgr. John Urell was not able to find any notes as to why Siegfried Widera was suspended from ministry and his faculties of Orange removed on September 24, 1985.

My memory of that event is as follows.

A phone call had been received by me from a woman who wished to remain anonymous. She refused to give her name or the name of her two sons. She did not want to prosecute or be involved with the police, Department of Social Services, or get her name in the newspaper. She also refused help with counselling for her sons. Her only request was to get Widera out of the parish of St. Martin and help in some kind of treatment program.

She told me that Widera had been at her home. He had offered to "tuck her sons (ages unknown) into bed." While doing this he touched them improperly.

I informed Bishop Johnson of the telephone call. I called Widera and informed him of the phone call. I do not recall if he admitted the action. In any case, he was suspended immediately and given the choices for action by the Diocese as is recorded in written notes.