

ARCHDIOCESE OF MILWAUKEE

OFFICE OF THE ARCHBISHOP

July 17, 1996

His Eminence, Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger  
Prefect, The Sacred Congregation for  
the Doctrine of the Faith  
00120 Vatican City State  
Europe

Your Eminence,

I am writing to inform you of two situations in which two priests of this Archdiocese have been accused of solicitation of a penitent so as to commit a sin against the sixth commandment of the Decalogue (c. 1387). The cases are completely unrelated and happened at very different points in time, but only recently have come to light. I now seek your counsel as to the procedure I should follow.

Shortly before I began my sabbatical on January 1, 1996, I directed my Vice Chancellor, the Reverend James E. Connell, J.C.D., to investigate the allegations that had been made against the two priests. Now, upon my return on July 1st, Father Connell informs me that in both cases sworn testimony has been given concerning the charges I mentioned above. Father Connell believes that the testimony has been given to the Church in good faith and must be taken seriously, and I concur.

The first case concerns the Reverend Lawrence C. Murphy, a priest whose only assignment was as Chaplain, and eventually Director, of Saint John School for the Deaf in Milwaukee from 1950 to 1974. According to the person who has given the sworn testimony concerning Father Murphy's use of the confessional to solicit sinful actions against the sixth commandment of the Decalogue, many other students were also victims of Father Murphy in this same manner, and we are now in the process of gathering additional testimony from some of these other persons. Although allegations against Father Murphy had been brought to my predecessor, allegations that resulted in a civil suit that was later dropped, this is the first that I had heard of the abuse of the confessional. I find that the deaf community tends to keep its problems and embarrassments to themselves, thus explaining the reluctance of these victims to bring forth allegations earlier.

Father Murphy was ordained a priest in May of 1950, began a leave of absence during September of 1974, and has never lived within the territory of the Archdiocese of Milwaukee during my years as Archbishop. Soon after I took office, I became aware that Father Murphy's leave of absence was due to sexual matters, but it was only less than one year ago when I learned of the possibility that solicitation in the confessional might be part of the situation. That is when I decided to have Father Connell conduct an investigation. My concern now is not simply for necessary justice, I am even more interested in a healing response from the Church to the deaf community within the Archdiocese so that their anger may be defused and their trust in ecclesiastical ministers be restored.

Ex. 1

3501 South Lake Drive, P.O. Box 07912  
Milwaukee, WI 53207-0912 • (414)760-3497

ARCH\_MARSHALL -  
01309

*Connell*  
*Emerson*

The second case concerns the Reverend Michael T. Neuberger, a priest who has had a variety of sexual and financial allegations brought against him in recent years. Dealing with Father Neuberger included a process to remove him from the office of pastor of a parish in Milwaukee. Also, suggestions came forth that Father might have used the confessional to solicit sinful actions against the sixth commandment of the Decalogue. Thus I decided to have Father Connell investigate this matter as well. As a result of Father Connell's investigation, sworn testimony has been obtained from three highly respected and credible persons that Father Neuberger admitted this crime to them, thus establishing an "extra-judicial" confession (cc. 1536, §2 and 1537). The three witnesses are a psychologist employed by the Catholic Social Services of the Archdiocese of Milwaukee and two licensed clinical social workers employed by the State of Wisconsin who specialize in the assessment and treatment of sex offenders. These witnesses proclaim under oath to Father Connell that during their discussions with Father Neuberger about the sexual allegations that had been made against him, Father in fact acknowledged a variety of crimes, including use of the confessional for the purpose of solicitation.

REDACTED

Let me also say that once I became aware of the possibility that both Father Murphy and had committed the crime of solicitation (c. 1387), I discussed the particulars of the cases with my canonists and requested that they research what canonical process is appropriate, given the length of time since the crimes, or if this subject matter is reserved to the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (c. 1362, §1, 1°), thus not under the norms of prescription presented in the Code of Canon Law. Now that the investigations have been conducted and the canonists have researched the issue, I have the understanding that this offense is under your jurisdiction. So I seek your counsel on how to proceed.

Finally, Your Eminence, while my comments in this letter have been very factual and legalistic in tone, please be assured that my primary concern is the spiritual well being of all the persons involved with these cases, and that includes Father Murphy and

REDACTED

Thank you for your assistance, and I have the honor to be, Your Eminence,

Sincerely yours in Christ,

+ *Rembert G. Weakland*

Most Reverend Rembert G. Weakland, O.S.B.  
Archbishop of Milwaukee

REDACTED

ARCH\_MARSHALL -  
01310

  
ARCHDIOCESE OF MILWAUKEE  
OFFICE OF THE ARCHBISHOP

March 10, 1997

COPY

His Eminence, Gilberto Cardinal Agustoni  
Prefect, The Supreme Tribunal of the Apostolic Signatura  
00120 Vatican City State  
Europe

Your Eminence,

I am writing to request your assistance in a matter of justice for certain persons under my jurisdiction. A priest of this Archdiocese has been accused by three penitents of solicitation in the confessional so as to commit a sin against the sixth commandment of the Decalogue (c. 1387). Also, each penitent is a deaf person and the alleged offenses occurred while all of the penitents were minors. Furthermore, because these deaf persons tend to have very limited communication skills, these crimes did not come to my attention until long after canonical prescription would allow a penal action on my part. Finally, true scandal in the near future seems very possible because in November of 1996, I received a letter from an attorney suggesting the possibility of civil court action which no doubt would become well known in this community.

I approach you now requesting that a waiver of the canonical requirements concerning peremptory time periods be issued. With such a waiver we would be able to proceed with appropriate canonical processes to effect justice in this case.

I wrote to His Eminence, Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, Prefect of the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, in July of 1996 when I became aware of the details of the situation. My hope was that, given the condition of the penitents, the length of time since the alleged crimes, and that the subject matter seems to be reserved to that Congregation (c. 1362, §1, 1°), perhaps His Eminence would grant special norms for a penal process in this case. So far, however, I have received no response.

Hence, I now seek your assistance. The issue concerns how the Church can provide justice when the administration of justice was impossible because all of the penitents were physically prohibited from reporting the crime at the time of the incidents, or soon thereafter, due to a lack of the vocabulary and skill necessary to acknowledge their psychological trauma.

The cause concerns the Reverend Lawrence C. Murphy, a priest whose only assignment was as a Chaplain, and eventually Director, of Saint John School for the Deaf in Milwaukee from 1950 to 1974. Moreover, according to the three persons who have given sworn testimony concerning Father Murphy's use of the confessional to solicit sinful actions against the sixth commandment of the Decalogue, many other students were also victims of Father Murphy in this manner. Consequently, I believe there are in reality many additional victims needing justice and assistance.

Ex. 4

3501 South Lake Drive, P.O. Box 07912  
Milwaukee, WI 53207-0912-(414)769-3497

ARCH\_MARSHALL-  
01333

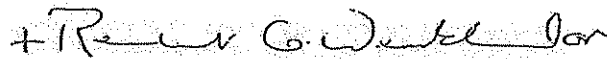
Although allegations against Father Murphy had been brought to the attention of my predecessor, allegations that resulted in a civil suit that was later dropped, I first became aware of the matter in 1995. So, shortly before I began my sabbatical on January 1, 1996, I directed the Reverend James E. Connell, my Vice Chancellor, to investigate the allegations. Then, upon my return on July 1, 1996 and after learning the results of this investigation, I instructed the Reverend Thomas T. Brundage, J.C.L., my Judicial Vicar, to research which canonical process would be appropriate. His effort convinced me to write to Cardinal Ratzinger in July of 1996.

My concern now is not only for the necessary justice, but I am also very interested in a healing response from the Church to the deaf community within the Archdiocese of Milwaukee, so that their anger may be defused and their trust in ecclesiastical ministers be restored.

Finally, Your Eminence, while my comments in this letter have been very factual and legalistic in tone, please be assured that my primary concern is the spiritual well-being of all the persons involved in this case, including Father Murphy. Now I await your response.

Thank you for your assistance, and I have the honor to be, Your Eminence,

Sincerely yours in Christ,



Most Reverend Rembert G. Weakland, O.S.B.  
Archbishop of Milwaukee



CONGREGATIO  
PRO DOCTRINA FIDEI

00120 Città del Vaticano,  
Palazzo del S. Ufficio

24 March 1997

Prot. N. 111/96 e 112/96-03971

(In responsione fiat merito huius numeri)

Your Excellency,

In your letter of the 11 December 1966, you requested direction regarding the procedure to be followed in the cases of Revv. Lawrence C. MURPHY and Michael T. NEUBERGER, priests of your Archdiocese accused of the crime of solicitation during confession (cf. c. 1387).

In setting forth the matters in detail which you have reported, the Congregation would ask Your Excellency to instruct the respective processes in accord with the attached "*Instructio de modo procedendi in causis sollicitationis*" with particular attention to numbers 5 and 55. While the norms of this document remain in force, they must obviously be read them in light of the new canonical legislation especially with respect to the citation of canons.

With every good wish, I remain,

Yours devotedly in the Lord,

*Carmino Bertone*

(enclosure)

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His Excellency  
Most Rev. Rembert G. WEAKLAND, O.S.B.  
Archbishop of Milwaukee, USA

Ex. 6

ARCH\_MARSHALL -  
01338

Dear Msgr. Punderson:

I am Fr. Thomas Brundage, Judicial Vicar of the Archdiocese of Milwaukee. You may know me as the moderator of the canon group on the internet. The Archbishop gave me permission to speak with the Bishop of La Crosse, who in turn suggested that I be in touch with you to get your advice on how to handle a particularly delicate situation here in the Archdiocese. I will use some canon references and other methods of coding just in case e-mail is not yet fully secure.

In the late 1960's and early 1970's, we had a presbyter who was the principal of a grade school for deaf children in our Archdiocese. There is not much of a paper trail on him in our archives, including our secret archives. In the records there are remote references to his being exiled to the Diocese of Superior, Wisconsin, but not that much more is known about him from the records.

Approximately two years ago, the Archbishop began receiving letters from alleged victims and their attorneys about incidents concerning C. 1395.2. The Archbishop acted promptly and began an investigation into the matter. The results of the investigation was that there are between 100-150 possible victims.

Even more disturbing, as part of the investigation, it was learned that incidents concerning c. 1387 had occurred in almost every single case. We now have the sworn testimony of three persons to this effect.

In July of 1996, the Archbishop wrote to the CDF asking for direction on how to proceed with this case. No answer was received. In December, 1996, the Archbishop again wrote to the CDF.

After having heard nothing from the CDF, on March 3, 1997 the Archbishop wrote to the Signatura about these incidents and also included much of the testimony in that correspondence. In that correspondence, the Archbishop specifically asked for a waiver of the peremptory time period in effect that would have made prosecution of these cases impossible (most of the cases happened 25 years ago). The Archbishop also pleaded on behalf of the deaf community of the Archdiocese, that if there was ever a case where someone was physically prohibited from reporting such incidents, it was this case. In a sense their handicap prohibited the administration of justice. So far we have not heard from the Signatura.

Meanwhile on April 2, we received a response from CDF. That response enclosed the 1962 document and requested the Archbishop to proceed instructing the case using the 1962 document with the changes necessary from the 1983 Code, with special attention to nn. 5 and 55.

I have a couple of questions that I need direction on. First, is this the final answer that we will get or should we wait for another answer from the Signatura? Secondly, when we were asked to instruct the case, does that mean that the CDF is willing to consider the case even though the legal peremptory time periods have expired? Should we write back to the Signatura and simply state that the CDF answered our question?

Any light that you can shed on this would be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Rev. Thomas Brundage  
Judicial Vicar  
Archdiocese of Milwaukee

DIOCESE OF SUPERIOR

1201 HUGHITT AVE.  
P. O. BOX 969  
SUPERIOR, WISCONSIN 54880

Si/98 Superior

Decree Citing the Accused

In accord with Chapter Two of the 1962 *Instructio De Modo Procedendi In Causis Sollicitationis* and canon 1507 of the 1983 Code of Canon Law, I, the undersigned Presiding Judge in this process against the Reverend Lawrence Murphy, hereby cites the Reverend Murphy with regards to the accusations of the crime of Solicitation in the Confessional (c. 1387) made against him. The Reverend Lawrence Murphy is to respond in writing to the undersigned within 15 usable days to make a response to the charges that he solicited penitents to sin against the Sixth Commandment during the time that he was assigned to the St. John's School for the Deaf in St. Francis, Wisconsin.

In accord with cc. 1481.1, and 1723, the Reverend Lawrence Murphy is requested to engage a procurator-advocate and within 15 usable days to present an authentic mandate to this Tribunal.

The undersigned judge will be in contact with your advocate in the near future for an interview date with the judges in this case.

Finally, your advocate has been supplied with copies of the "Inquisition Process" and the "Canonical Directives" documents. You may wish to consult with your advocate about these documents prior to the hearing.

*Rev. Thomas T. Brundage*  
Reverend Thomas T. Brundage, J.C.L.  
Presiding Judge  
Diocese of Superior, Wisconsin  
3501 S. Lake Drive  
Milwaukee, WI 53207

*Rev. John D. Aiello*

Notary

January 6, 1998

001130

Ex. 15

Reverend Lawrence Murphy  
P.O. Box 50  
Boulder Junction, WI 54512

COPY

12 January, 1998

His Excellency  
Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger  
Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith  
Piazza della S. Uffizio 11  
00193 Rome  
ITALY

Dear Cardinal Ratzinger:

I am a priest of the Milwaukee Archdiocese, living in the Diocese of Superior in Wisconsin. I am writing to you about a procedure which was begun against me by the Superior Diocese at the urging of the Milwaukee Archdiocese. It is a procedure concerning my dismissal from the clerical state, using the Norms issued by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith in 1962, entitled De modo procedendi in causis sollicitationis.

My case can be summarized as follows: In 1974, I resigned from the St. John School for the Deaf, St. Francis, Wisconsin, in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee, because of accusations of sexual misconduct. Archbishop Cousins, then Archbishop of Milwaukee, agreed that I could reside at a summer home owned by my family in the Superior Diocese. I have lived there ever since. My ministry was never restricted, but I received no further pastoral assignments. Because of my ability to communicate in sign language, however, I was called upon to assist in this area from time to time. Also, because my ministerial priesthood had not been restricted in any way, I also assisted local parishes in the Superior Diocese when called upon. There have been no further accusations against me since I left St. John's in 1974.

Nearly five years ago, however, some former students of St. John's began contacting the Archdiocese of Milwaukee, raising allegations against me. These were not allegations of recent misconduct, but were for offenses allegedly committed between the years 1963 and 1969. Some of the allegations involved solicitation in the confessional.

Without examining these accusations according to the 1962 norms, the Archdiocese of Milwaukee began penal proceedings against me, to dismiss me from the clerical state. When my Advocate, Rev. Patrick R. Lagges, J.C.D., from the Archdiocese of Chicago, pointed out that the time limits had run out for bringing such cases to the penal process, the Archdiocese of Milwaukee attempted to begin a procedure against me based on solicitation in the confessional. My Advocate again pointed out that the proceedings could only be instituted by the diocese

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Ex. 18



COPY

where I was living, that is, the Superior Diocese. Therefore, the Archdiocese of Milwaukee prevailed upon the Diocese of Superior to begin these proceedings according to the 1962 Norms published by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. A decree was issued on 6 January, 1998 informing me of this fact. The Diocese of Superior is using the personnel of the Archdiocese of Milwaukee to prosecute the case.

I am appealing to the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith for the following reason: I ask that the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith declare the decree of citation by the Diocese of Superior invalid. The accusations against me were for actions alleged to have taken place over twenty-five years ago. This goes against the 1962 Norms which state that an action must be brought within one month of the alleged solicitation.

I am seventy-two years of age, your Eminence, and am in poor health. I have just recently suffered another stroke which has left me in a weakened state. I have followed all the directives of both Archbishop Cousins and now Archbishop Weakland. I have repented of any of my past transgressions, and have been living peaceably in northern Wisconsin for twenty-four years. I simply want to live out the time that I have left in the dignity of my priesthood. I ask your kind assistance in this matter.

Because of my poor health and the severity of the winter weather in Wisconsin, I will be visiting my brother in Houston, Texas until after Easter. Therefore, I would ask that any of your correspondence until that time be addressed to my Advocate, Rev. Patrick R. Lagges, J.C.D., Judicial Vicar, Archdiocese of Chicago, 155 East Superior Street, Chicago, IL 60611, USA. I have enclosed a copy of the mandate I signed appointing Father Lagges my Procurator and Advocate. I will keep Father Lagges apprised of my whereabouts until I return to my home in Boulder Junction.

Sincerely yours in the Lord Jesus,

*Rev. Lawrence C. Murphy*

(Rev.) Lawrence Murphy

ARCH\_MARSHALL -  
01382

CASE NUMBER: S1/98 Superior

APPOINTMENT OF PROCURATOR AND ADVOCATE

I, the undersigned, hereby authorize and appoint to act as Procurator and Advocate before the Tribunal of the Diocese of Superior, Wisconsin in the above named process against me for the crime of solicitation in the confessional:

Rev. Patrick R. Lagges, J.C.D.

By this mandate I authorize the said Procurator and Advocate to act on my behalf before the Tribunal of the Diocese of Superior with all the rights and privileges granted to the Procurator and Advocate by ecclesiastical law, including the right of abandoning the case should it become necessary.

Rev. Lawrence C. Murphy  
Rev. Lawrence Murphy

Grace Sheffi  
Signature of Witness

1/12/98  
Date

I, Rev. Patrick R. Lagges, J.C.D., accept the appointment as Procurator and Advocate to Rev. Lawrence Murphy. Given at Chicago, Illinois, on this 14th day of January, 1998.

Patrick R. Lagges  
Rev. Patrick R. Lagges

ARCH\_MARSHALL -  
01383



CONGREGATIO  
PRO DOCTRINA FIDEI

00120 Città del Vaticano.  
Palazzo del S. Uffizio

6 April, 1998

Prot. N. 111/96-06252  
*(In responsione fiat mentio huius numeri)*

CONFIDENTIAL

Your Excellency,

I am writing in relation to the case, already known to you, of Fr Lawrence MURPHY, a priest of the Archdiocese of Milwaukee who resides at present in Boulder Junction (WI), accused of solicitation in confession against disabled minors. Fr MURPHY wrote a letter dated 12 January, 1998 to this Congregation requesting that the Decree of citation issued from your diocesan Tribunal on 6 January be declared invalid because of disconformity with the norms of the "Instructio de modo procedendi in causis sollicitationis" since "an action must be brought within one month of the alleged solicitations".

Fr Murphy also stated that he wished to live out the time that he has left in the dignity of his priesthood and added the following considerations:

- the accusations refer to actions alleged to have taken place over 25 years ago (1963-69),
- in 1974 "because of accusations of sexual misconduct" he resigned from St John's school and in agreement with the then Archbishop of Milwaukee took up residence in Superior with no further pastoral assignment,
- he has always followed the instructions given him by both the former and the present Archbishop of Milwaukee and has lived peaceably in Northern Wisconsin for 25 years,
- he is now 72 years old with delicate health and declares that he is repented of any past sins.

..!..

His Excellency  
Most Rev. Raphael Michael FLISS  
Bishop of SUPERIOR, U.S.A.

ARCH\_MARSHALL -  
01386

Ex. 19

This Congregation, after an attentive examination of the whole situation, would like to point out firstly that the finality of the period of one month fixed by the norms of the "Instructio" was to bring the penitent to comply with the obligation imposed by canon 904 of the 1917 Code (not incidentally adopted formally by the 1983 Code), and not to fix a term for penal action.

Secondly and taking into consideration what has been expressed by Fr Murphy in his letter, and before deciding upon a judicial process to establish the canonical responsibilities of the accused priest, this Congregation invites Your Excellency to give careful consideration to what canon 1341 proposes as pastoral measures destined to obtain the reparation of scandal and the restoration of justice.

I take the opportunity to wish you a blessed Easter in the joy of the risen Christ and with sincere respects, I remain,

Yours devotedly in the Lord,

*Garcisio Bertone*

DIOCESE OF SUPERIOR

1201 HUGHITT AVE.  
P. O. BOX 969  
SUPERIOR, WISCONSIN 54880

May 13, 1998

Monsignor Tarcisio Bertone  
Secretary  
The Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith  
00120 Vatican City State  
Europe

RE: Prot. N. 111/96-06252

Your Excellency:

I wish to gratefully acknowledge your letter of April 6, 1998 regarding Fr. Lawrence Murphy, a priest of the Milwaukee Archdiocese who lives in the Diocese of Superior.

After having carefully considered your request that the pastoral measures expressed in Canon 1341 be employed, it is my judgment that all reasonable pastoral methods have been exhausted. I have come to the conclusion that scandal cannot be sufficiently repaired, nor justice sufficiently restored, without a judicial trial against Fr. Murphy.

The scandal and the sense of injustice that pervades the deaf Catholic community is of such a level that demands the careful administration of justice in this very tragic situation.

I have instructed the Tribunal to employ the 1962 Norms in this process, as per your request.

Sincerely in Christ,

+ 

Most Reverend Raphael M. Fliss  
Bishop of Superior

bcc: Reverend Thomas T. Brundage

Ex. 21

ARCH\_MARSHALL -  
01388

103. Lawrence Murphy

On February 8, 1996 I received an inquiry from Paul Janette who stated that Lawrence has disconnected his phone and mail has been returned from the Boulder Junction address. Apparently a phone call to St. Ann's Rectory in Boulder Junction revealed that Lawrence generally goes to visit a brother in Texas for the winter and closes up his residence for the season.

RJS

385. Lawrence Murphy

✓ On May 30, 1998 I joined Archbishop Weakland and Bishop Fliss in meeting with Archbishop Bertone and staff regarding the case. It became clear that the Congregation was not encouraging us to proceed with any formal dismissal on the basis of 24 years of apparent good conduct and the precept impeding exercise of orders currently in effect. We were also cautioned about the difficulty of the question of the Confessional, both in terms of the strict canonical definition of the crime as well as the time lapse between obtaining the information and acting thereon. Archbishop Bertone noted that disobedience of any precept forbidding contact with community members could form the basis for another canonical process.

RJS

491. Lawrence Murphy

On July 1, 1998 in the context of a meeting with Attorney M. Flynn and Archdiocesan office heads I learned that the deaf community had urgently requested that his name be registered with the State as an offender, that some money be provided to victims and that he never be buried as a priest in order to underscore the seriousness of his actions. I learned that a relationship had continued up to two years after his move to Boulder Junction.

RJS

✓522. Lawrence Murphy

On July 22, 1998 I joined Archbishop Weakland in meeting with T.Brundage, B.A. Cusack, C.Deehr-Koob, J.Mullooly, Fr.Patrick Leaggas (of the Chicago Tribunal) and L.Piasecki in discussing the current status of Archdiocesan action against Fr. Lawrence Murphy. In discussion of various options and in view of the absence of any funeral directives, it was decided that the precepts would be repeated and reinforced, especially with regard to lack of contact with members of the deaf community, that his agreement would be sought for a private funeral with closed casket at St. Ann Parish in Boulder Junction upon the occasion of his death, that a letter of apology to the deaf community would be requested immediately, that the Archdiocese would investigate the extent of his personal property and prepare a statement from the Archdiocese to be given to the deaf community accompanying his own letter of apology.

RJS

ARCHDIOCESE  OF MILWAUKEE  
METROPOLITAN TRIBUNAL

NO.  
KINDLY REFER TO THIS  
NO. WHEN RETURNING REPLY.

IN CAUSA

August 15, 1998

Bishop Fliss  
Diocese of Superior  
1201 Hughitt Ave.  
Superior, WI 54880

Dear Bishop Fliss:

Thank you for the time on the phone a couple of weeks ago. In that discussion, I indicated that I had put the CDF letter through a computer translator. I have enclosed a copy of the translation. It is a very rough translation and the computer certainly cannot distinguish some of the peculiarities of canon law. Nevertheless, it does give us non-Italian speakers a rough idea of what happened.

Peace to you and again thanks,



Rev. Thomas T. Brundage  
Judicial Vicar  
Archdiocese of Milwaukee

001071

Ex. 26

Resume of the meeting of the Superiors of CDF with the prelates interested to the case of the Rev. Lawrence C. MURPHY, a priest accused of solicitation in Confession (Prot.N. 111/96)

The meeting occurred Saturday May 30 the 1998 in the center of the CDF. For the CDF they were present: S.F. Mons. Tarcisio Bertone, Secretary, which has presided at the meeting, the R.P. Gianfranco Girotti, Under Secretary, Don Anthony Manna of the Disciplinary office, Don Michael Jackels (translator) and P. Anthony Ramos. They were introduced to those who requested the meeting: S.F. Mons. Rembert Weakland, Archbishop of Milwaukee (USA), his Assistant, S.E. Mons. Richard Sklba and S.F. Mons. Raphael Fliss, Bishop of Superior (USA).

1. S.E. Mons. Weakland has briefly described the issued, making notice of the following: 1) there are a lot of the victims of abuse by the Rev. Murphy, all not identified; 2) in 1974 there was an intervention towards the Rev. Murphy, but nothing was recorded in the files of archdiocese (this occurred after the threat of a civil trial, concluding with the imposition of the punishment for the accused and which resulted in the priest being sent to another diocese, i.e. Superior); 3) the community of the deaf at present maintains a great indignation for this case and it refuses every pastoral solution; 4) because of the long period of time spent from the facts of the case, it is no longer possible to start a civil trial in the state of Wisconsin; 5) the Rev. Murphy doesn't have any sense of remorse and it seems not to realize gravitates it of that that you/he/she has done. Besides, 6) there and the danger of big scandal if the case was publicized by the press. According to the picked testimonies, the misdeeds of the Murphy would have origin in the Confession.

2. The Secretary CDF underlined the long period of time by now departed (more than 35 years!) from when they took place, that it also constitutes a true canonical problem, and the fact that no other accusations news of crimes or scandals have arisen from during the years to he has been in Superior and that there are not enough elements to instruct a canonical trial. Yet it notices and unacceptable that he can celebrate the Eucharist in the community of the deaf community of Milwaukee; the diocese will need therefore to prevent him from celebrating Eucharist, and may also recourse to some penal remedies. Fr. Murphy can be summoned him to celebrate the Eucharist only in the diocese of Superior only with permission of his

001075



Ordinary i.e. the archbishop of Milwaukee and that of the ordinary one of the place where he resides. Such permission however must be communicated to him in writing.

3. Regarding the eventuality of a canonical trial for the crime of solicitation in Confession, S.F. the Secretary attracts the attention on some problems that it introduces: 1 () The innate difficulty trying such a crime, whose interpretation must be done strict secrecy; 2 The difficulty that they have the furnish proofs and testimonies without increasing the scandal, taking into account some inherent limits of the impairment caused by the distance of the facts in the time. However the case underlines the need to reflect seriously on the grave evil perpetrated by him and on the fact that there needs to be proof of the evil.

3) it should be mentioned to the generous law of defense that exists in USA and the difficulties that would arise from the execution of this case.

4. S.F. Mons. Weakland should try to have the Rev. Murphy declared impeded from ministry; Three psychologists would have to examine him, decide if he is a typical pedophile, which therefore. To the The Secretary, Gianfranco Girotti, stated that the priest must give clear signs of repentance, otherwise he must be applied to a trial.. It is recommended that Fr. Murphy be entrusted it to a priest who like his spiritual director then would have periodic meetings with him every one or two months.

5. 5. F. finally the Secretary restates the two central points to be followed towards the priest in question: 1 () the territorial restriction of the celebration eucharist and 2 () the needed remorse and reform of the priest.

Before the conclusion of the meeting, S.F. Mons. Weakland reaffirmed the difficulty he will have explaining this to the community of the deaf.

May 30 th 1998

001076

  
ARCHDIOCESE OF MILWAUKEE  
OFFICE OF THE ARCHBISHOP

August 19, 1998

Re: Murphy, Prot. N. 111/96

His Excellency  
Most Reverend Tarcisio Bertone, S.D.B.  
Secretary, Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith  
Piazza del S. Uffizio 11  
00193 Rome ITALY

Your Excellency,

Thank you for the summary of the meeting that I, Bishop Fliss, and Bishop Sklba had with you in Rome on May 30, 1998, regarding Father Lawrence C. Murphy, a priest of the Milwaukee Archdiocese accused of solicitation in the confessional. I found the document an excellent summary of our conversation.

After I returned home from the *ad limina* visit, I met with my advisors to put together a pastoral plan that would address the needs of Father Murphy, the victims of the abuse, and the wider Catholic deaf community in Milwaukee. I wish to briefly inform you of the decisions I have made in this regard.

First, I have instructed my Judicial Vicar to formally abate the judicial process that had begun against Father Murphy.

Secondly, I have instructed our canonists to immediately begin an administrative process to have Father Murphy declared Irregular for Ministry (C. 1044.2, 2). Following your suggestion, I certainly will have Father Murphy assessed by psychological experts as part of this process. Ample care will be provided so that all of Father Murphy's rights are respected throughout the process. I should note also that Father Murphy has an advocate in these matters, Father Patrick Lagges, J.C.D., of the Chicago Archdiocese.

Thirdly, I plan on strengthening the precepts that have already been placed upon Father Murphy. I need to do this to assure that Father Murphy does not continue to seek contact with members of the deaf community, which often in the past has resulted in considerable dismay in the deaf community.

Ex. 27

  
**ARCHDIOCESE OF MILWAUKEE**  
OFFICE OF THE ARCHBISHOP

August 19, 1998

His Excellency  
Most Reverend Tarcisio Bertone, S.D.B.  
Secretary, Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith

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Working with my Vicar for Clergy, I will strongly urge Father Murphy to write letters of apology to the persons whom we know he has sexually abused. I assure you that there will be no reference in any form concerning the sacrament of penance in these letters.

Also, seeing that Father Murphy is in poor health, I have also drawn up plans for his funeral that will be pastorally sensitive to the needs of Father Murphy's family as well as the needs of the deaf community.

Finally, we will continue to pay for the counseling for any of the victims of the sexual abuse.

Again, I wish to express my appreciation for your concern about this grave pastoral situation in my Archdiocese.

Sincerely yours in the Lord,



Most Reverend Rembert G. Weakland, O.S.B.  
Archbishop of Milwaukee

  
ARCHDIOCESE OF MILWAUKEE  
OFFICE OF THE ARCHBISHOP

September 2, 1998

His Excellency  
M. Rev. Tarcisio Bertone, S.D.B.  
Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith  
Piazza del S. Uffizio 11  
00193 Rome, ITALY

Prot. N. 111/96-06888

Your Excellency,

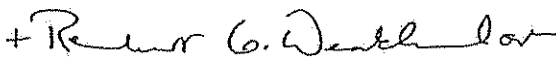
I am writing to inform you that Father Lawrence Murphy, a priest of the Archdiocese of Milwaukee accused of solicitation in the Sacrament of Confession and resident in the Diocese of Superior (cf. your protocol number), died on August 21, 1998, of natural causes. I am writing to inform you that you can now close your files on this sad case.

Although we thought the family had agreed to a private funeral Mass at the chapel of one of our cemeteries and that the casket would be closed, they did just the opposite, defied our agreement, invited people from the deaf community to attend, had the casket open and Father dressed in full vestments. The Mass was celebrated by the Auxiliary Bishop of Milwaukee, His Excellency Bishop Richard Skiba. Bishop Skiba, in his carefully prepared words, alluded to the good work Father Murphy did, but also, in deference to the deaf community present, had to mention that some shadows had been cast on his ministry.

In spite of these difficulties, we are still hoping we can avoid undue publicity that would be negative toward the Church.

Thank you for your help in this matter.

Sincerely yours in the Lord,



Most Reverend Rembert G. Weakland, O.S.B.  
Archbishop of Milwaukee