

Father Peter J. Dunne

Father Peter J. Dunne, ordained in 1954, served the Philadelphia Archdiocese as a teacher, pastor, administrator of a school for delinquent boys, and assistant director of the Archdiocese scouting program for 40 years. He remained a parish priest for seven and a half years after Archdiocese officials learned, in 1986, that he had sexually abused an altar boy who had been in the priest's Boy Scout troop. During those seven and a half years, Father Dunne was diagnosed as an untreatable pedophile. He personally paid \$40,000 to silence a victim. The Archdiocese was warned repeatedly that he had many victims, that he was most likely continuing to commit sexual offenses, that he should not be in a parish setting, and that he should not be around children or adolescents.

Yet, not until a former victim threatened a lawsuit did Cardinal Bevilacqua in 1994 finally remove Father Dunne from his assignment at Visitation B.V.M. in Norristown.

In an effort to escape legal liability, the Cardinal chose not to place Father Dunne in a supervised living situation as his therapists strongly urged. A committee of Cardinal Bevilacqua's advisers concluded that "overwhelming evidence of pedophilia is here!" But, rather than take action to protect present and future victims, the Cardinal responded to concerns that the Archdiocese might risk being held liable for the priest's crimes if it tried to supervise him. Cardinal Bevilacqua permitted Father Dunne to retire to his rural cabin where he was known to take boys for sleepovers.

The Archdiocese is informed in 1986 that Father Dunne has abused "Gordon" and several other boys; the priest attempts to buy the silence of one of his victims.

In April 1986, the Archdiocese was told that Fr. Peter Dunne, then pastor of Sacred Heart in Oxford, had sexually abused a boy for several years, beginning in the late 1950s when the boy was 13 years old. In an April 1986 letter, the pastor of the now-grown victim in Eugene, Oregon, Fr. Joseph Wood, informed Philadelphia's Chancellor, Msgr. Samuel E. Shoemaker, of the "detrimental effects" the priest's actions still had on his parishioner – a doctor, referred to in this Report as "Gordon." Father Wood asked the Philadelphia Chancellor to "look into the priest's activities to ascertain that he is not hurting other young people." Msgr. Shoemaker wrote back to Fr. Wood, asking that the victim put the specifics of his allegations in writing.

The victim, Gordon, asked his therapist, Dr. David A. Myers, and a lawyer he retained, R. G. Stephenson, to relate his story. Their letters told the Archdiocese that Fr. Dunne's sexual abuse of Gordon started after the boy told the priest in the confessional that

he was attracted to other boys his age. Shortly thereafter, Fr. Dunne began to take Gordon camping and to a cabin that the priest owned in Bucks County. The priest first had the boy sleep in the same sleeping bag or bed and the priest was naked. Soon he was asking the boy to remove his underwear.

Gordon was 13 years old when Fr. Dunne made the boy handle the priest's genitals. Before long the priest was demanding "sexual contact," including "ejaculation and other deviant sexual behavior," whenever they slept together. This behavior continued until the boy was 17 and picked up again when Gordon was an adult.

Dr. Myers explained to the Archdiocese the devastating impact that Fr. Dunne's abuse had, not only on Gordon, but also on his wife, his children, his patients, and his medical practice. The therapist wrote that Gordon first came to him for help in September 1985, because Gordon's wife, "Bonnie," had discovered he had "sexual inclinations toward their son," who was 11 or 12 years old. It came out later that Gordon himself had begun abusing 12- and 13-year-old boys on camping trips when Gordon was an 18-year-old Eagle Scout. Gordon followed in Fr. Dunne's path (Fr. Dunne had been a Scout leader for years), becoming a Boy Scout leader and preying on his young scouts. In 1991 he lost his medical license for molesting boy patients.

In a September 1986 letter to Msgr. Shoemaker, Dr. Myers described how Gordon's thinking and his pattern of living stemmed from his early interactions with Fr. Dunne – especially the priest's habit of initiating sexual encounters and then condemning them afterwards.

This pattern could be characterized as follows: on a public level he strives for perfection. He is a Boy Scout leader, active in his parish, the most popular physician in his clinic, a compulsive worker around the house, preoccupied with physical fitness, and an articulate, persuasive individual. Privately, he searches continuously for possible prey to his homosexual inclinations. He has become fixated on the preadolescent and adolescent sexual arousal memories.

Dr. Myers concluded that, "clearly, his relationship with Fr. Dunne has caused both malignant thinking patterns as well as very abnormal emotional functioning."

In later communications, Gordon provided the Archdiocese with the names of three other victims of Fr. Dunne of whom he was aware: “Elliot,” “Mason,” and “Gil.” Elliot was a student at the school for troubled boys that Fr. Dunne headed from 1974 to 1983. Mason was a student at Saint Charles Borromeo Seminary with whom both Fr. Dunne and Gordon had a sexual relationship. Gordon also told of many more boys whom Fr. Dunne seemed to be grooming for sexual relations.

Gordon’s lawyer, in an August 1986 letter to Msgr. Shoemaker, informed the Archdiocese that his client had “become aware of information which causes him to believe that Fr. Dunne is sexually abusing young boys to the present days.” Gordon’s lawyer indicated that his client was asking for some compensation for the damage caused to him and his family by Fr. Dunne’s actions. Equally important, the lawyer told the Archdiocese, was that Fr. Dunne “no longer [be] given the opportunity to ruin other lives for his sexual gratification.”

On September 4, 1986, upon receipt of the therapist’s and lawyer’s letters, Msgr. Shoemaker, along with the Assistant Chancellor, John W. Graf, interviewed Fr. Dunne. Informed of the accusation against him but not the name of his accuser, the priest named two altar boys from Saint Bartholomew, where he had lived while teaching at Cardinal Dougherty High School. The two names were Gordon and “Shane.” He admitted to swimming nude with an unstated number of boys, as well as sleeping nude with them in the same sleeping bag. He said that of “all the boys, [Gordon] was the most frequent camper.”

Monsignor Shoemaker’s notes of the 1986 interview state that at the time, Fr. Dunne had two “young men,” who, he said, were twenty and twenty-one years old, living with him at his rectory in Oxford. According to Fr. Dunne, the young males were from Saint Francis Vocational School, the school for troubled boys where the priest had been administrator before becoming pastor in Oxford in 1983.

Having learned of the devastating consequences of Fr. Dunne’s behavior on Gordon and his family, the Archdiocese responded on October 14, 1986. The response – a veiled threat to expose the victim’s history if he revealed Fr. Dunne’s crimes – came from the Archdiocese’s lawyer, John P. O’Dea of Stradley, Ronon, Stevens & Young. He wrote

to Gordon's attorney that "litigation would undoubtedly cause [Gordon] considerable discomfort in light of his activity since obtaining maturity." There was no offer to help the victim or his family with counseling. Perhaps most importantly, Fr. Dunne was not removed from his pastorate.

As it turned out, one of the victims Gordon named, Elliot, was one of the two males still living with Fr. Dunne at the Oxford rectory when Gordon came forward in 1986. The Archdiocese knew by September 4, 1986, that Elliot and another male from Saint Francis Vocational School were living in the rectory, and Msgr. Shoemaker ordered that they leave. Father Dunne admitted to sleeping in the same bed with them and "fondling" Elliot, but denied other overt sexual relations.

Despite these facts, which should have caused Archdiocese officials great concern, there is no evidence that they even interviewed either of the two young men at that time. It was not until December 1986, after attorney O'Dea learned that Gordon knew of Fr. Dunne's involvement with Elliot, that Elliot was questioned about his relationship with the priest. Even then, he was interviewed not by Archdiocese officials, but by O'Dea, their attorney.

What Elliot told O'Dea during the December 2, 1986, interview is not recorded in Archdiocese files. After talking to Elliot, however, O'Dea called Msgr. Shoemaker, "requesting an immediate meeting." O'Dea met with Msgr. Shoemaker and Fr. Dunne later that day. Monsignor Shoemaker's notes of the session recorded that it had become apparent at the meeting between O'Dea and Elliot that "Fr. D. had lied to me about his sexual relationship with [Elliot]."

Father Dunne told Msgr. Shoemaker at the December 2 meeting that, when Elliot was approximately 15 years old and a student at Fr. Dunne's school, the priest had taken him to Boys Town in Nebraska, a program that provided housing for troubled boys. The priest told the boy to contact Gordon, who lived nearby in Iowa, if he needed any assistance.

Meanwhile, according to a December 30, 1986, letter by Gordon's lawyer, O'Dea asked about a "settlement figure." Father Dunne resigned his pastorate on December 5, 1986, and was admitted to Saint John Vianney Hospital. Monsignor Shoemaker's notes of

November 1986 recorded that Fr. Dunne indicated to the Archdiocese that he might make a “personal payment of monies to save the church embarrassment.” According to Msgr. Shoemaker’s notes from the December 2, 1986, meeting, Fr. Dunne no longer denied having sex with minors but claimed “he didn’t remember any such happenings -- maybe, he stated, he has a mental block.”

Father Dunne remained at Saint John Vianney for nine months. His therapist there recommended that, upon release, he may need to be assigned to a specialized ministry “which would control his contact with children and adolescents, and [a residence with] someone who will assume responsibility for his whereabouts on a twenty-four hour per day basis.” Despite this advice, in September 1987 Cardinal Krol assigned Fr. Dunne as assistant pastor at Nativity parish in Warminster.

Memos by Msgr. Shoemaker in October 1987 reflect that the Archdiocese appears to have left it to Fr. Dunne to inform his new pastor of his history. In November 1987, more than a month after Fr. Dunne had started his assignment, Msgr. Shoemaker noted that the priest had not fully informed his pastor, Fr. William O’Donnell. Nowhere does it appear that the Archdiocese instructed Fr. O’Donnell to supervise Fr. Dunne.

On November 24, 1987, Gordon and Bonnie signed a “Full and Final Release and Confidentiality Agreement” with Fr. Dunne, purporting to release not only the priest, but also the Archdiocese, from any liability relating to Fr. Dunne’s abuse of Gordon, in return for \$40,000. With this agreement, the abuser also tried to purchase Gordon’s silence. Father Dunne negotiated the agreement with the assistance of Fr. Daniel J. Menneti, an attorney and priest with restricted ministry in the Harrisburg diocese. No one signed the agreement on behalf of the Archdiocese, and its attorney, O’Dea, claimed no knowledge of the agreement until after April 25, 1988.

Despite warnings and recommendations, Cardinal Bevilacqua retains and reassigns Father Dunne to parish ministry.

At the time that Anthony J. Bevilacqua took over as Archbishop in Philadelphia, the Archdiocese knew that Gordon had made a serious and unresolved allegation against Fr. Dunne. Father Dunne had, on his own, paid \$40,000 to silence his accuser. Monsignor

Shoemaker, Philadelphia's Chancellor, had learned, in the course of looking into the allegation, that Fr. Dunne admitted to sleeping and swimming in the nude with boys, and had two former students living with him in his rectory in Oxford. Gordon had identified one of these males, Elliot, as one of Fr. Dunne's young victims, not knowing that Elliot was still living with the priest in Oxford. After the Archdiocese's lawyer had spoken with Elliot, Msgr. Shoemaker had concluded that Fr. Dunne had lied when he denied overt sexual activity beyond fondling. Father Dunne's therapist, after nine months of trying to treat him, had suggested to the Archdiocese that the priest might need 24-hour supervision and should be in a specialized ministry, kept away from children and adolescents. Despite all this, Fr. Dunne remained an assistant pastor of Nativity parish, with no recorded restrictions on his faculties.

Archbishop Bevilacqua took over the Archdiocese of Philadelphia in February 1988. On June 16, 1988, Msgr. Shoemaker sent the Archbishop a four-page report updating him on the "very complicated case" of Fr. Dunne. The Chancellor also alerted Archbishop Bevilacqua that Fr. Dunne had "held very sensitive assignments in the Archdiocese," serving as a teacher for 13 years, the administrator of Saint Francis Vocational School for court-assigned boys, and assistant director of the Archdiocese's scouting program. Monsignor Shoemaker pointed out that Fr. Dunne's settlement with Gordon had to cast doubt on his claims of innocence. Finally, the Chancellor wrote to Archbishop Bevilacqua that Fr. Dunne had requested to meet with him. The Archbishop responded, thanking Msgr. Shoemaker for a "good report," but suggesting no action or response to Fr. Dunne's request for a meeting.

During Archbishop Bevilacqua's first months in office, the Archdiocese also received repeated warnings from Fr. Dunne's therapist, Dr. Thomas J. Tyrrell. In letters addressed or copied to Msgr. Shoemaker in April and June 1988, Dr. Tyrrell informed the Archdiocese that Fr. Dunne's aftercare program was not being adhered to, that Fr. Dunne was not attending his therapy sessions, and that he was "temperamentally unsuitable as a candidate for treatment." His aftercare program, as a result, called for removing Fr. Dunne from parish ministry and placing him in "supervised living which provides twenty-four

hour accountability.” Father Dunne, however, remained in the parish ministry, living in the parish rectory.

In early September 1988, apparently having received no direction from the Archbishop concerning Fr. Dunne, Msgr. Shoemaker wrote again. He reminded the Archbishop of the June 16 report, updating him on Dr. Tyrrell’s continued warnings (most recently on August 19, 1988), and telling the Archbishop that Fr. Dunne had been heard publicly bragging: “I have beaten the system.”

On September 20, 1988, Archbishop Bevilacqua met with Fr. Dunne, his priest/lawyer Fr. Menneti, and Msgr. Shoemaker. The group reviewed the recommendations of Dr. Tyrrell and Saint John Vianney. Archbishop Bevilacqua displayed his knowledge of aftercare theory by noting, according to minutes of the meeting, “that the directions of Dr. Tyrrell are formulated against the model used in Minneapolis.” The Archbishop told Fr. Dunne that aftercare was “indispensable for him,” and that if he violated the aftercare program he would be removed from ministry. Bevilacqua announced that, as Archbishop, he had to be concerned first with scandal, second with the good of the Church, and third with Fr. Dunne.

Further notes, which appear to record a conversation between Msgr. Shoemaker and Archbishop Bevilacqua after the others had left, related that “Dunne admits one incident,” that the “incident--is a crime,” and that there was a discussion of the “statute of limitations”--“2 yrs.” and “5 yrs.” Msgr. Shoemaker wrote: “directions of Villa Saint John Vianney--being question[ed] (???)” Specifically, he recorded the Archbishop asking: “Why (therapy) for the rest of the man’s life?--(Minneapolis).”

Monsignor Shoemaker later recorded that, in accord with Archbishop Bevilacqua’s instructions, he met on November 13, 1988, with Fr. Dunne and Dr. Tyrrell to “surface,” as Archbishop Bevilacqua put it, “if any accommodation can be made in the proposed aftercare model for Fr. Dunne.” As a result of this meeting, Dr. Tyrrell made several “accommodations” to Fr. Dunne’s aftercare program. These “accommodations” – in response to warnings that Fr. Dunne was violating Saint John Vianney’s and Dr. Tyrrell’s aftercare program, thereby putting parish boys at risk – in effect ended the aftercare program.

Dr. Tyrrell wrote to Fr. Dunne on November 25, 1988, releasing him from group therapy; individual therapy had already been discontinued as unsuccessful. The therapist backed off his demand that Fr. Dunne be removed from parish ministry and from his recommendation of a living situation with 24-hour supervision and accountability. The letter stated that Fr. Dunne was to be evaluated January 15-20, 1989, at Southdown Institute in Canada, and was to abide by its recommendations upon his return. Father Dunne continued in his parish ministry, now with no ongoing therapy, for another two months.

On January 20, 1989, Assistant Chancellor John W. Graf met with Fr. Dunne and his counselor at Southdown. In a memo dated January 24, 1989, Msgr. Graf recorded the findings and recommendations of the Southdown staff. Significant findings included: Fr. Dunne was homosexual, extremely intelligent and narcissistic, with a tendency toward manipulation. Monsignor Graf noted: "The counselor stated that Father's lifestyle shows evidence that the situations of inappropriate behavior could be beyond what we already know of Father's conduct." The Assistant Chancellor also recorded Southdown's recommendation that Fr. Dunne continue outpatient therapy with Dr. Tyrrell, that he procure a very strong spiritual director, and that he "never" work with young people.

In the face of all of these warnings and recommendations, Cardinal Bevilacqua nevertheless left Fr. Dunne as an assistant pastor, in two different parishes with easy access to children, for four more years. He did so despite:

- Dr. Tyrrell's warning, recorded by Msgr. Graf in a March 7, 1989, memo, that "he fe[lt] very strongly that Fr. Dunne [was] involved in other illicit relationships, ranging from youngsters to adults" and that he "recommended strongly that we remove Fr. Dunne from active ministry totally."
- Dr. Tyrrell's notice to the Archdiocese, by letter of March 8, 1989, that Fr. Dunne was not complying with his treatment plan.
- Dr. Tyrrell's stated opinion, recorded by Msgr. Graf in a February 1989 memo, that Fr. Dunne was a pedophile and his "intuition" that Fr. Dunne had been involved in "a myriad number of sexual misconduct cases." (Appendix D-8)

- A memo, dated March 16, 1989, from Assistant Chancellor Graf declaring: “It appears at this time that we have come to the point of decision concerning the ministry of Father Peter Dunne.” In the memo, Msgr. Graf reported Dr. Tyrrell’s opinion that the Archdiocese was sitting on a “powder keg,” that Fr. Dunne was a “very sick man,” and should “be relieved of active ministry.” (Appendix D-9)
- Notice on May 31, 1989, that the therapist responsible for Fr. Dunne’s group therapy, Dr. Eric Griffin-Shelley, had “never heard from Fr. Dunne.” The therapist went on to admit “wondering if the Archdiocese is not putting itself at risk with someone so uncooperative on the loose.” Dr. Griffin-Shelley told the Archdiocese: “I believe that he is quite likely acting out sexually and needs to have firm limits set on his behavior.”
- Another letter, dated August 8, 1989, from Dr. Griffin-Shelley telling the Archdiocese he had heard nothing further from Fr. Dunne and was still concerned.
- A letter, dated September 14, 1989, from Fr. O’Donnell, Fr. Dunne’s pastor at Nativity parish, to Secretary for Clergy John J. Jagodzinski, informing the Archdiocese that Fr. Dunne had spent three weeks camping with adolescent boys and their fathers. Father O’Donnell also said that he had discovered Fr. Dunne was counseling a 16-year-old boy without the pastor’s knowledge. This counseling, according to the pastor, was conducted in the priest’s car.
- A memo to Cardinal Bevilacqua from his Secretary for Clergy, on September 15, 1989, updating him in anticipation of a pastoral visit to Nativity parish. In the memo, Msgr. Jagodzinski wrote that four therapists had reached the conclusion that “there is much potential for a recurrence of sexual abuse by Father Dunne.” Father Dunne was about to begin anew with another therapist and was asking for a new assignment. The Cardinal, in response, wrote on the memo: “Be very cautious. I think he is trying to manipulate so that we act according to his agenda. AJB 9/19/89.” (Appendix D-10)
- A long letter to Assistant Chancellor Graf, dated August 18, 1989, from Dr. Tyrrell. In writing about Fr. Dunne, he described the characteristics of pedophiles and how they function. He explained “grooming,” denial, and resistance to change. He

showed how Fr. Dunne fit all the criteria and how his continued activities with adolescents – including camping and counseling – presented a continuing danger. The therapist, once again, recommended removing Fr. Dunne from ministry and sending him to an institution for resistive child abusers. So long as Fr. Dunne stayed in active ministry, the therapist said, the Archdiocese and potential victims remained at risk.

- A report from Fr. Dunne’s next therapist, Dr. Eric Griffin-Shelley, dated April 1, 1990, agreeing that the Archdiocese should remove Fr. Dunne from his parish assignment. Dr. Griffin-Shelley stated that it was generally agreed that “a parish assignment is out of the question for a pedophile.” Without providing a firm diagnosis, the therapist wrote, “there cannot at this time be a satisfactory resolution to the ongoing concern about his potential to sexually act out, especially with youth.” The therapist said it was “an untenable position for the Archdiocese” to leave Fr. Dunne in his parish assignment. “In his current assignment,” the therapist suggested, “it might appear to some that the Archdiocese is not acting with sufficient caution to protect possible victims of sexual abuse.”
- A “very urgent plea” to the Archdiocese from Fr. Dunne’s pastor at Nativity, “that specific arrangements be made to provide Father Dunne with the kind of help he needs but refuses to accept” In a letter written April 10, 1990, Fr. O’Donnell went on to complain that Cardinal Bevilacqua’s administration had allowed Fr. Dunne to avoid both supervision and therapy. He explained how monthly meetings between Fr. Dunne, the pastor, therapists, and Chancellor Shoemaker, required under Cardinal Krol’s administration, had been discontinued when Archbishop Bevilacqua took over. He requested that Fr. Dunne be removed from his parish and suggested that, wherever he go, a supervision team be reinstated.

Cardinal Bevilacqua finally reassigns Father Dunne, but ignores the advice of therapists to take him out of parish ministry.

In June 1990, Cardinal Bevilacqua did reassign Fr. Dunne, as both the priest himself and his pastor had requested. However, the Cardinal ignored the unanimous advice

of Fr. Dunne's therapists to take him out of parish ministry. He also ignored the entreaties of Fr. Dunne's pastor, Fr. O'Donnell, to provide for better supervision. Despite acknowledging Fr. Dunne's manipulative nature, and warning Msgr. Jagodzinski to "be cautious," the Cardinal acceded to a request by Fr. Dunne and assigned him as parochial vicar to Visitation B.V.M. (Appendix D-11)

Father Dunne's pastor at Visitation, B.V.M. was Msgr. Frank Clemins. A September 1989 letter from Fr. O'Donnell to Msgr. Jagodzinski reflects that the Archdiocese knew that Fr. Dunne had previously chosen Msgr. Clemins as his spiritual director and confessor. No supervision team was established, and no therapy was required of Fr. Dunne. Msgr. Clemins, as Fr. Dunne's spiritual director, was constrained in what he could share if he ever learned of misconduct by his parochial vicar.

Cardinal Bevilacqua left Fr. Dunne in this position for several years, insulated from any meaningful oversight. Every few months the priest reported to the Secretary for Clergy, Msgr. Jagodzinski, that all was well. In one such meeting, Fr. Dunne informed Msgr. Jagodzinski that he was spending an "overnight" each week at his cabin in Bucks County, the same cabin where he had abused Gordon. Monsignor Jagodzinski reported that the priest found this opportunity "most helpful."

An October 1990 memo by Msgr. Jagodzinski recorded that Fr. Dunne had told him that he thought therapy was not "necessary at this time," so the priest was not in therapy. After a November 1991 meeting, Msgr. Jagodzinski noted in a memo Fr. Dunne's refusal to undergo a recommended evaluation, but no consequence followed.

On May 6, 1992, Fr. Dunne informed the Archdiocese that he was conducting children's liturgies and delivering report cards to the children in the parish's grade school. In a memo reporting this meeting, Msgr. Jagodzinski recommended leaving Fr. Dunne as parochial vicar.

Had it not been for the persistence of Gordon, his mother, and his wife – and the threat of lawsuit and scandal that they posed to the Archdiocese – Cardinal Bevilacqua might have kept Fr. Dunne in his parish ministry indefinitely.

A victim of Father Dunne again seeks reparations from the Archdiocese.

On October 9, 1992, Gordon's mother wrote the Cardinal pleading for financial assistance for her son. She attached her son's resume, his description of what Fr. Dunne had done to him as a child, and his story of the devastation that the priest's abuse had caused in his own life.

Gordon had a wife and five children, but in 1991 had lost his medical license because he had sexually molested young boys who were his patients. In his attached communication to the Cardinal, he alluded to medical and psychological expenses he had incurred since 1985 and to \$130,000 in legal expenses. He was asking the Archdiocese for \$30,000 so he could enroll in a treatment program in hopes of getting his medical license back.

At an issues meeting on October 22, 1992, Cardinal Bevilacqua directed the Secretary for Clergy to "pursue the possibility of obtaining documentation to indicate that the Archdiocese of Philadelphia was released from legal liability in the matter concerning [her son, Gordon]." In other words, the Cardinal wanted a copy of the release and confidentiality agreement that Fr. Dunne had negotiated privately with Gordon.

Monsignor William Lynn, who had become Secretary for Clergy the previous summer, was able to procure from Fr. Dunne a copy of the November 24, 1987, agreement. He forwarded it to the Assistant Vicar for Administration, James Molloy. After reviewing the agreement, the Archdiocese agreed to pay \$10,000 toward Gordon's anticipated inpatient treatment. A November 17, 1992, letter from Msgr. Lynn to Gordon made no mention of other costs, totaling \$577,000, which Gordon had attributed to his abuse. Within a week of receiving the Archdiocese's offer of \$10,000, Gordon's wife, Bonnie, wrote again to Msgr. Lynn. This time she detailed \$120,000 of debts she said were "a direct result of [Gordon's] victimization."

In a follow-up letter dated January 18, 1993, Gordon provided more revelations and asked Msgr. Lynn to share his letter with the Cardinal. Gordon wrote of a time in the late 1970s and early 1980s when he was living in Iowa as a young unmarried doctor, and Fr. Dunne was administrator of Saint Francis, the vocational school for troubled boys. Father Dunne brought boys in his charge out to Boys Town in Omaha, Nebraska. According to

Gordon, Fr. Dunne sometimes asked Gordon to house the boys. Gordon told Msgr. Lynn and Cardinal Bevilacqua:

As late as 1981 I was informed by a young man from Saint Francis group home that their history was much like mine. I had been introduced to a number of them by father. I was prepared to restart the predatory cycle myself. On one occasion one of the young men was sent to me in Iowa. Father wanted me to help and shelter them. I picked him up at Boys Town in Omaha. He coyly seduced me while I was driving my car. I asked why he was doing this and he boyishly said, “father does this all the time; I bet he did it to you.”

Gordon’s account suggested the possibility that as head of an Archdiocese school for troubled boys, Fr. Dunne had not only abused the students himself, but had farmed them out to his former victim who also then abused them. After raising that possibility, Gordon again outlined expenses he attributed to his abuse and announced he was thinking of going “forward publicly with the reasons for my horrible reversal.” On January 21, 1993, Msgr. Lynn wrote Gordon informing him that the Archdiocese would cover the entire cost of his inpatient treatment after all.

Threatened with publicity and legal action, the Archdiocese seeks another psychological evaluation; it finds Father Dunne a danger and recommends that he be kept from children and adolescents.

On August 31, 1993, Msgr. Lynn learned that Gordon had a new lawyer who was threatening to file a lawsuit against the Archdiocese for non-therapy expenses attributed to Gordon’s abuse. A letter from the lawyer, Stephen Rubino, to Msgr. Lynn dated September 1, 1993, as well as memos by Msgr. Lynn to Cardinal Bevilacqua on September 9 and 13, show that – four days after informing the Cardinal – Msgr. Lynn for the first time since becoming Secretary for Clergy showed an interest in finding out about Fr. Dunne’s current status.

Monsignor Lynn consulted Dr. Tyrrell at Saint John Vianney. The therapist told Msgr. Lynn what he had been telling the Archdiocese for years – that he thought Fr. Dunne was a “time bomb” and a pedophile. He recommended a complete evaluation and assessment. Although nothing had changed in years with regard to Fr. Dunne, except the

imminence of a lawsuit, Msgr. Lynn, in a September 13, 1993, memo to Cardinal Bevilacqua, recommended that Fr. Dunne submit to an outpatient evaluation and assessment by Saint John Vianney. The Cardinal agreed.

Prior to Fr. Dunne's October 18-21, 1993, assessment, Saint John Vianney asked Msgr. Lynn to complete an "Assessment Referral Information" form. The information the Secretary for Clergy provided Saint John Vianney was replete with inaccuracies – often related more to defending the Archdiocese's actions than to Fr. Dunne himself. For example, under "reasons for referral," Msgr. Lynn stated, "came to the attention of the present Secretary for Clergy and subsequently to the Archbishop that Fr. Dunne was no longer in counseling." Monsignor Lynn went on to explain that in April 1990, Dr. Eric Griffin-Shelley had recommended continuing therapy. "The present administration," Msgr. Lynn declared in October 1993, "is not comfortable with this failure to follow through with professional recommendations."

Monsignor Lynn's suggestion on the form that he and the Cardinal had only recently learned that Fr. Dunne was not in counseling, and that they found this unacceptable, is misleading at best. A year earlier, on October 19, 1992, Msgr. Lynn had written a memo to the Cardinal's Assistant Vicar for Administration, Msgr. Molloy, informing him that "the files do not indicate any on-going therapy program since the evaluation by [Dr.] Eric Griffin-Shelley of 1990. On one occasion, Msgr. Jagodzinski raised the idea of a re-evaluation to Father Dunne. The file indicates Fr. Dunne was not receptive to this."

In his October 1992 memo to Msgr. Molloy, which was later forwarded to the Cardinal, Msgr. Lynn also had made reference to a memo, dated May 6, 1992, from Msgr. Jagodzinski to the file. That memo recorded Fr. Dunne's own report that, as part of his ministry at Visitation B.V.M., he conducted children's liturgies and delivered report cards to grade school children.

Nevertheless, Msgr. Lynn told Saint John Vianney, "[H]e is supervised and avoids work with children." The Secretary for Clergy declared that Fr. Dunne's work and ministry history had "always been good; seen as a hard worker," while an April 1990 letter from Fr.

O'Donnell to Msgr. Jagodzinski and memos from Fr. Graf to the file in March 1989 and to Msgr. Jagodzinski in April 1989 indicated just the opposite.

On November 22, 1993, after Fr. Dunne had undergone the four-day outpatient assessment at Saint John Vianney, Msgr. Lynn sent Cardinal Bevilacqua a memo, along with the hospital's findings, captioned "Diagnostic Impressions and Recommendations," by Dr. Richard Koenig. As before, the priest was diagnosed with pedophilia and narcissistic personality disorder. The psychologist told the Archdiocese, once again, "Father should not be involved with children or adolescents." He recommended, given the rules of confidentiality governing confession, what should have been obvious without a psychological evaluation: "Father's confessor should not be involved in ministry supervision." Finally, the report addressed "Father Dunne's wish to retire to a secluded, unstructured living situation," stating emphatically that such a living arrangement was "highly counter-indicated."

In his memo to Cardinal Bevilacqua, coming on the heels of a threatened lawsuit, Msgr. Lynn recommended that Fr. Dunne be placed on administrative leave, that his faculties be restricted to saying private Mass, and that he be encouraged to seek laicization.

Cardinal Bevilacqua rejects the therapist's advice and convenes a committee that recommends a course of conduct that protects only the Archdiocese.

On November 23, 1993, after receiving the recommendations from Saint John Vianney, Cardinal Bevilacqua directed his aide, Msgr. James E. Molloy, to have Msgr. Lynn convey the Cardinal's wishes to Fr. Dunne. According to Msgr. Lynn's notes and his November 30, 1993, memo to Cardinal Bevilacqua, Msgr. Molloy instructed the Secretary for Clergy to meet with Fr. Dunne and "strongly exhort" Fr. Dunne to voluntarily seek laicization.

Monsignor Lynn was also to inform Fr. Dunne that, in the meantime, he was to be on "administrative leave," but "not in [the] strict canonical sense." Monsignor Lynn was to make it clear that the Cardinal was "not removing his priestly faculties." Rather, Fr. Dunne was being asked to voluntarily refrain from ministering, other than for private Mass. He could appeal this restriction on a case-by-case basis.

Despite Saint John Vianney's clear statement that living alone in an unstructured situation was "highly counter-indicated," the Cardinal wanted Msgr. Lynn to instruct Fr. Dunne to do precisely that – to live on his own. Monsignor Lynn's notes indicate that he was aware of the therapist's warning, but that the Archdiocese's lawyer, John O'Dea, had advised for "civil law liability" reasons that the Archdiocese should take "every step we can to distance self."

On November 30, 1993, Msgr. Lynn sent Cardinal Bevilacqua a memo disagreeing with the Cardinal's instructions that Fr. Dunne should "live on his own." Monsignor Lynn quoted for the Cardinal the entire recommendation from Saint John Vianney: "At this time, Fr. Dunne's wish to retire to a secluded, unstructured living situation is highly counter-indicated by both his past history as well as his present ability and/or willingness to give a clear and coherent self-presentation in this interview." Monsignor Lynn recommended that Fr. Dunne "be assigned to a residence until the laicization process is complete."

Knowing that Fr. Dunne had already expressed his wish to retire and live alone, Cardinal Bevilacqua responded to Msgr. Lynn's recommendation of a supervised residence with the equivalent of a rejection: "If he requests to go." In ignoring Msgr. Lynn's advice, the Cardinal chose to reject the therapist's recommendation designed to protect future victims in favor of a lawyer's recommendation designed to protect the Archdiocese from civil liability.

A January 17, 1994, memo to the file reflects that when Msgr. Lynn met with Fr. Dunne on January 1, 1994, the priest announced he would "go to his cabin to live." He said it would be virtually impossible to contact him by phone.

In another memo to the file, Msgr. Lynn noted that on February 23, 1994, he was notified by Fr. Dunne's spiritual director, Msgr. Clemins, that Fr. Dunne "continues to keep up a good spiritual life, celebrating Mass publicly." On May 2, 1994, Fr. Dunne informed Msgr. Lynn that he would not seek laicization.

At a May 17, 1994, meeting, Cardinal Bevilacqua, faced with this refusal, directed that an ad hoc committee be established to study Fr. Dunne's case. The next day Msgr. Molloy spelled out in a memo to Msgr. Lynn the mission of this committee: "to evaluate this case and to recommend what can be done to minimize bonds of liability." The

committee members were Msgrs. Lynn, Stephen J. Harris (a canon lawyer), Robert McGinnis, and the Archdiocese's lawyer, John O'Dea. They met on June 28, 1994.

Handwritten notes from the meeting indicate that the group determined that Fr. Dunne's current status – that is, on administrative leave, with faculties (although requested to voluntarily refrain from exercising them) – was undesirable from a liability standpoint. The group was advised that under “case law,” a “priest is always on business of Bishop.” “If status quo remains,” the notes say, “some legal liability remains” and Fr. Dunne “would need to be highly supervised.” The notes from the meeting reflect the Archdiocese's knowledge that Fr. Dunne was at that time completely without supervision: “PD now – lives by self – he's totally free, he's seen around – we don't know what's what w/him.”

Several alternatives were outlined for the Cardinal's consideration. (It is not clear whether Cardinal Bevilacqua was present at the meeting. His initials, AB, appear on the fourth page of notes next to comments and questions as if he is being quoted.) While laicization was considered most desirable, it would involve – without Fr. Dunne's cooperation – a judicial process with “witnesses, publicity probably.” In addition, while his sexual behavior could have been grounds for laicization at the time the Archdiocese learned of his crimes, canon law provided that the conduct underlying a penal laicization action had to have occurred within the past five years. Monsignor Lynn noted that the last-known incident was in 1986, and involved “young men living in rect @ Oxford.”

Another alternative proposed by Msgr. Harris was to use an administrative process to declare “an impediment to exercise of Orders.” This would have the effect of suspending Fr. Dunne's faculties, but would not involve a penal process. An “impediment” could be based on his diagnosis as a pedophile. It was noted that “overwhelming evidence of pedophilia is here!” The risk involved in this option, according to the notes of the committee discussion, was that there would still be “civil liability for PD conduct because he's still priest of Archdiocese.” Still, it was noted, “Each step to remove PD – from Archdiocese – good.” A third alternative outlined at the strategy meeting was simply to assign Fr. Dunne, in essence, “to incarceration” as a “permanent resident @ Darby without getting out,” referring to a residential facility the Archdiocese runs for priests in Darby – Villa Saint Joseph.

The group discussed the hospital's warning that Fr. Dunne "shouldn't live by self." Notes record O'Dea opining: "Left as is right now – not good enough for civil law." The next note is: "What's he doing all day – PD – ??" However, rather than advising greater supervision, which might have protected potential victims, O'Dea advised the opposite. He said he didn't "see it as practical, taking responsibility for PD."

The group decided to recommend the second alternative – an administratively imposed "impediment to the exercise of Orders." This choice did nothing to change Fr. Dunne's actual situation or the risk he posed to children. He was still living completely unsupervised. He was still a priest and could wear a collar. He was already, supposedly, refraining from ministering publicly. What the decision accomplished, according to the meeting's notes, was: "civilly . . . takes away authority by Ch [the church] . . . [Fr. Dunne] doesn't represent Ch . . . in no position to act in name of Ch."

The recommendation by the Cardinal's advisers served only one purpose: the one they were charged with, "to minimize the bonds of liability." As an August 1994 memorandum by Msgr. Cullen stated, the Cardinal approved.

Father Dunne retires with no public censure.

The Archdiocese received the diagnosis of Fr. Dunne and the recommendations from Saint John Vianney in November 1993. Its own ad-hoc committee made its recommendations in July 1994. Nevertheless, by January 1995, the Cardinal had not suspended Fr. Dunne's faculties based on a declared "impediment." It was then, in a letter to the Cardinal dated January 10, 1995, that Fr. Dunne requested he be permitted to retire. His request was reviewed by O'Dea, and, on September 14, 1995, approved by Cardinal Bevilacqua. Father Dunne remained a priest, but was still asked to restrict his ministry to private Mass.

Through the spring and summer of 1994, Gordon and his wife continued to call and write the Archdiocese, requesting assistance for their damaged family. The Archdiocese provided the family with money for counseling for years, but their life never much improved. The damage begun with the abuse of one 13-year-old had multiplied, devastating the lives of the victim's parents, his wife, his children, and his own young

victims. Monsignor Lynn eventually notified Gordon and Bonnie by letter, on July 22, 1994, that he would no longer take their phone calls.

Thus, despite nine years of allegations of sexual abuse, Fr. Dunne retired from ministry, as would have any other priest, with full benefits, no public censure and no official recognition by the Archdiocese of the damage he had caused. As for Gordon and his family, as well as the other victims of Fr. Dunne's who have not come forward, they found themselves unable simply to "retire" from the effects of years of sexual abuse.

On October 21, 2004, faced with the possibility of involuntary laicization, Fr. Dunne agreed to live "a supervised life of prayer and penance" at Villa Saint Joseph, a retirement home for priests.

Father Dunne appeared before the Grand Jury and was given an opportunity to answer questions concerning the allegations against him. He chose not to do so.