

Assignment Record– Rev. Francis A. (Frank) Massarella

Summary of Case: Ordained in 1941, Frank Massarella worked in parishes of the Cincinnati archdiocese as a member of the Glenmary Home Missioners until 1945. From 1945-1951, with the exception of a year at Our Lady of the Holy Ghost Abbey in Conyers GA, Massarella was a Trappist monk at Gethsemani Abbey in KY, taking the name "Pius." Thereafter he was a priest of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati, working as a hospital chaplain, a high school faculty member, and assisting in a number of parishes. In 1956 Massarella was assigned as resident chaplain to Siena Retirement Home in Dayton, OH. He was on Sick Leave 1958-1959. For the next almost forty years, Massarella resided and ministered at Siena and assisted at St. John's parish in Tipp City. In 1993 the Archdiocese reviewed his personnel file and found that there were complaints that he had inappropriately touched girls in 1952 and in 1953-1954.

Massarella admitted to the allegations. He was allowed by Archbishop Pilarczyk to remain in "limited" ministry because, as Pilarczyk said, "it was clear that he no longer posed a threat to anybody." In 2003, after the U.S. Bishops' new policy of "zero tolerance" regarding the sexual abuse of minors, Massarella was removed from active ministry. In 2005 the Vatican ruled that he was to live a "life of prayer and penance."

Massarella died May 3, 2014 at Mercy Siena Woods Nursing Home.

Born: May 16, 1915

Ordained: June 7, 1941

Died: May 3, 2014

Start	Stop	Assignments	Town/ Accusations	State	Position	Notes
1941 Archdiocese of Cincinnati Archbishop was John Timothy McNicholas, O.P. (1925-1950).	1942					Massarella is not indexed in the 1942 Directory. Per his obituary, he was with the Glenmary Home Missioners 1941-1945 .
1942	1945	Our Lady of Lourdes	Otway	OH	1/2 Administrator	
1942	1945	St. Mary's	Manchester	OH		This was a mission of

						Our Lady of Lourdes in Otway.
1942	1945	St. Anne's	Buena Vista	OH		This was a mission of Our Lady of Lourdes in Otway.
1942	1945	Holy Trinity	Pond Creek	OH		This was a mission of Our Lady of Lourdes in Otway.
1945	1946					Massarella is not indexed in the 1946 <i>Directory</i> , nor is he listed as at his previous or next assignments in the Diocesan pages.
1946 Archdiocese of Louisville Archbishop was John Alexander Floersh (1924-1967).	1948	Abbey of Our Lady of Gethsemani	Trappist	KY		"Pius" Massarella, o.c.s.c.o.
1948 Diocese of Savannah Bishop was Gerald Patrick Aloysius O'Hara (1935-1959).	1949	Abbey of Our Lady of the Holy Ghost	Conyers	GA		
1949	1951	Our Lady of	Trappist	KY	Center	

1947	1951	Our Lady of Gethsemani Seminary	Happist	RI	Cantor 1951-1952	
Archdiocese of Louisville Archbishop was John Alexander Floersch (1924-1967).						
1951	1952	Good Samaritan Hospital	Cincinnati	OH	assistant chaplain	"Francis" Massarella
Archdiocese of Cincinnati McNicholas was succeeded by Karl Joseph Alter (1950-1969).						
1952		St. Mary's	Piqua	OH	assistant	
1952		Guardian Angels	Cincinnati (Mt. Washington)	OH	assistant	
1952		McNicholas High School	Cincinnati	OH	faculty	
1952	1954	St. Patrick's	Cincinnati (Northside) • Massarella admitted to inappropriately touching girls in 1952-53 and in 1954	OH	2/2	St. Patrick's had a school with 178-175 boys and 168-169 girls.
1954	1955	St. Mary's	Springfield	OH	2/2	St. Mary's had a school with 135 boys and 125 girls.
1954		Civil Air Patrol			chaplain	
1955	1956	St. Edward's (St. Ann Mission)	Cincinnati	OH	2/3	St. Edward's had a school with 77 boys and 85 girls.

1955		DePorres High School	Cincinnati	OH	faculty	
1956	1958	The Siena Retirement Home	Dayton	OH	resident chaplain	
1958	1959	Sick Leave				
1959 1960 Archdiocese of Cincinnati Paul Francis Leibold replaced Alter as archbishop (1969-1972), followed by Joseph Louis Bernardin (1972-1982). Bernardin was succeeded by Daniel Edward Pilarczyk (1982-2009).	1960 1999?	St. John's	Tipp City	OH	2/2 1959-60.	Massarella's obituary states that he served at St. John the Baptist in Tipp City for about forty years before his 2002 retirement.
1960	2003	The Siena Retirement Home/Mercy Siena Woods Nursing Home	Dayton	OH	resident chaplain until 1995 Retired 1990	Per the archdiocese, Masarella's personnel file was reviewed in 1993, and it revealed references to complaints that he had abused young girls in 1952-53 and in 1954. He admitted to the abuse

						to the abuse. He was kept in ministry under restrictions from 1993 until 2003, when he was suspended due to the U.S. Bishops' "zero tolerance" policy regarding abuse of minors. Archbishop Pilarczyk stated that Massarella had been "allowed to be in limited active ministry because it was clear that he no longer posed a threat to anybody."
2003	2007					Massarella is not indexed in the 2004-2007 <i>Directories</i> .
2005 Archdiocese of Cincinnati Dennis Marion Schnurr	2014	Priests Commended to a Life of Prayer and Penance	Dayton	OH		In 2005 the Vatican ruled that Massarella be permanently removed from ministry and

replaced Pilarczyk as archbishop (2009-).						that he was to live a life of prayer and penance. Massarella died May 3, 2014 at Siena Woods Nursing Home.
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Priests in a Parish: We use the following convention to show a priest's place among the clergy of a parish: 1/2 means that he is the first priest listed in the *Official Catholic Directory* (usually the pastor) and that there is a total of two priests at the parish. The shorthand 3/4 means that the priest is listed third on a four-priest roster. See our [sample page from the Directory](#).

Sources: *Official Catholic Directory* (Kenedy & Sons, 1942-2015).

- [Archbishop's Statement](#), Cincinnati Enquirer, August 11, 2003
- [2 Priests Suspended; More Allegations Arise](#), Cincinnati Enquirer, August 11, 2003
- [Accused Priest a Former Educator](#), By James Cummings, Dayton Daily News, August 11, 2003
- [2 Priests Restored, Others Permanently Removed](#), Archdiocese of Cincinnati, October 12, 2005
- [Former Area Priest Defrocked](#), By Jim Bebbington, Dayton Daily News, October 13, 2005
- [Accused Priests Remain on Payroll](#), By Tom Beyerlein, Dayton Daily News, April 22, 2007
- Frings and Bayliff Funeral Home, May 3, 2014
- [Prayer-and-Penance-Sanctioned Priest and Death Honors](#), By Kristine Ward, National Survivors Advocates Coalition, May 11, 2014

Note: The *Official Catholic Directory* aims to report the whereabouts of Catholic priests in the United States on January 1 of the *Directory's* publication year. Our working assumption is that a priest listed in the *Directory* for a given year was at the same assignment for part of the previous year as well. However, Kenedy and Sons will sometimes accept updates well into the year of publication. Diocesan clergy records are rarely available to correct this information. The *Directory* is also sometimes misleading or wrong. We have tried to create an accurate assignment record, given the source materials and their limitations. Assignment records are a work in progress and we are always improving the records that we post. Please [email us](#) with new information and corrections.

This assignment record collates Massarella's career history as it is represented in the *Official Catholic Directory* with the allegations against him, as reported in the media. We make no representation regarding the truth of the allegations we report, and we remind our readers that the U.S. legal system presumes that a person accused of or charged with a crime is innocent until proven guilty. Similarly, individuals who may be defendants in civil actions are

presumed not to be liable for such claims unless a plaintiff proves otherwise. Admissions of guilt or liability are not typically a part of civil or private settlements. For more information, see our [posting policy](#).

This assignment record was last updated on November 20, 2025.