

CONFIDENTIAL

MEMORANDUM

TO: File

FROM: Father Chuck Lienert

SUBJECT: Telephone Conversation with

DATE: March 16, 1989

of Victoria, B.C., called me on March 15, 1989. He told me he wished to discuss with me the sexual abuse he had received from a priest during the years of 1951 to 1957 while he was a student at St. Philip Neri grade school. The priest involved was Father Rocco Perone, C.S.P. He stated that he was simply seeking information. He wished to meet with me when he will be in Portland on April 28th, and I scheduled a meeting with him.

He said he would like to know whether Father Perone is still alive, whether an investigation was ever done on his activity. He told me that he had been questioned by a nun from the school and a lay person from the parish. They had asked him whether Father Perone had ever made sexual advances. He did not tell them anything at that time. They had questioned him because of a complaint of another student.

He told me at this time he was only seeking information. He also asked me not to contact his father who still lives in Portland. His phone number is [redacted]. After speaking with him, I discussed the matter with Kathleen Cleary. I intend to report this allegation to the priest in charge of personnel matters for the Paulists and ask him whether or not there have been any complaints or investigation against Father Perone. The Catholic Directory indicates that he is in a parish in Austin, Texas.

There is some possibility that [redacted] could sue Father Perone or the Paulist Order and the Archdiocese if he discovered his injury only recently as a result of therapy. He did not indicate an intent to do so.

PD 0179

CONFIDENTIAL

MEMORANDUM

TO: File

FROM: Father Chuck Lienert

SUBJECT: Telephone Conversation with Father Gallagher from the Paulist Provincial House

DATE: March 21, 1989

I spoke with Father Gallagher on March 20 concerning the allegation I had received from that Father Rocco Perone had sexually abused him at St. Philip Neri Parish sometime in the years between 1951 and 1957. Father Gallagher gave me the following information:

- 1) About a year and a half ago the Paulists received a call from a man in Portland who had been a student at St. Philip Neri during that same time frame. He complained that he had been sexually abused by Father Perone.
- 2) When Father Perone's personnel records were checked, there was no indication in the files that allegations or complaints had been made in the past.
- 3) Father Perone was called in. He admitted in a somewhat oblique way that he had sexually abused at least two students at St. Philip Neri. The reason that he admitted to more than one was when the events were described to him, he mentioned the name of a person he thought it was. In fact it was another person. Then he admitted to both. He also gave some oblique admission that he had been involved in some way with a relative after he had left St. Philip Neri.
- 4) The Paulists placed him in St. Luke's Institute for a six-month program. He responded well to treatment. They recommended that he be placed in an out-patient program.
- 5) Since he has left St. Luke's Institute, Father Perone has been in an out-patient program. Less than a year ago he

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MEMORANDUM

RE: Gallagher Conversation

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was placed in a parish in San Antonio, Texas. Prior to the placement the bishop was informed and agreed to allow him to work in the diocese. Also, the pastor of the parish was informed and asked to monitor his behavior during the time that he is there. He is continuing to take out-patient treatment and he is not allowed to have any contact with young people.

- 6) Father Perone is in his late sixties and will most likely leave Texas this year. He would like to retire, although the Provincial feels that he should remain active in some capacity.

CJL:gg

CONFIDENTIAL

MEMORANDUM

TO: File

FROM: Father Chuck Lienert

SUBJECT: A Conversation with

DATE: April 28, 1989

- 1) I met with \_\_\_\_\_ who had contacted me earlier, on April 228, 1989. He wished to speak with me concerning Father Rocky Perone, CSP, who was at St. Philip Neri parish in the early '50's. He had informed me previously that Father Perone had sexually abused him and had asked me to find out where Father Perone was, whether he was alive and whether he was still a priest.
- 2) I informed him that Father Perone was still a Paulist priest, that a year and a half to two years ago the Paulists had received a complaint from someone who had been abused by him at St. Philip Neri in the early '50's. They had sent him to a treatment program at St. Luke's Hospital, that he was currently in after care and living in Texas. He was living in a parish. The pastor knew of his problem and was supervising him. He was not allowed to have any contact with any children.
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_ told me that Father Perone had used the Confessional to initiate his sexual abuse. When he was in the eighth grade, he had gone to Confession and confessed something like impure thoughts. The next day Father Perone asked him to come into a room and to take down his pants and show him exactly what happened and he had fondled him briefly. Father Perone told him that that was his responsibility as a priest. Later after he reached puberty, he confessed masturbation to Father Perone. Father Perone again afterwards came and told him that he was as a priest responsible to help children with sexual matters. He initiated a sexual relationship that lasted about six years.
- 4) I asked \_\_\_\_\_ what motivated him to call me when he did a couple of months ago. He said that he had been thinking about it and that he felt some responsibility toward other people to ensure that this kind of thing did not happen. He also indicated that he wasn't certain how much it had

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effected him. He thought that it hadn't. But when he talked about it, it was very difficult. So he believed that it may have had more of an effect than he realized.

- 5) He told me that while he was at St. Philip Neri, Sister Patrick Ann Mary, a Holy Name nun, had asked him whether Father Perone had abused him. He denied it at that time. Also, his aunt or a family relation had asked him about the same time whether Father had abused him and he denied it. She again asked him on her death bed. This was after the Tom Laughlin affair. She asked him again whether Father Perone had ever done anything like Father Laughlin.
- 6) At request, I gave him the name and address of Father Gallagher, the Paulist superior. He indicated that he might want to contact him and find out whether anything had been done for the other victim or victims who had reported to the Paulists.
- 7) I asked him how I might help him. He wanted to know what we did with priests who abused children. I explained the process of investigation and removing the priest from the parish and getting therapy for him and making a determination whether he could continue in ministry. Also I explained that we attempt to assist victims with counseling. He asked me whether we made it public. I said we had not had occasion, but at the Archdiocese of Seattle, if they feel in the individual case that it would be helpful to victims or potential victims, they announce it in the parish and offer to provide assistance.
- 8) told me that he really was concerned principally about helping other victims. He believes that the best way to do this is by publicity. He gave me a written statement which he thought he might want the diocese to make public in some way. However, he wished to speak with his family before he would request that the Archdiocese make this public in some way. He said he was not certain exactly how that should be done, whether it ought to be announced in some way at St. Philip Neri parish or be put in the newspaper.
- 9) He asked me what the legal responsibility of the diocese was. I told him that I was not competent to advise him about that since I was not a lawyer. He told me that he had not seen a lawyer, but he had thought about it. He also said he didn't have a desire to press criminal charges against Father Perone or even hurt Father Perone in any way.
- 10) I gave him my card and invited him to call me after he had a chance to think about it more.

CJL:gg

Reverend Charles Lienert  
Director of Clergy Personnel  
Archdiocese of Portland in Oregon  
2838 E. Burnside Street  
Portland, Oregon 97214-1895

1 May 1989

*chuck*  
Dear ~~Father~~ Lienert,

Attached is a copy of the document (slightly altered) which I read to you over the telephone this afternoon. As I said, I have not contacted Father Gallagher, and would very much appreciate your apprising him of the situation and seeking his approval.

My request is that this statement (or something similar, subject to our mutual approval) be read at St. Philip Neri at all masses on some given Saturday/Sunday, and that it also be published in the diocesan newspaper (I believe it is called the Sentinel). I recognize that this will not reach all of the boys whom I suspect were abused by this particular priest, but I'm not sure of a better way to proceed.

I want to thank you for your kindness, understanding and tactfulness in our discussions. Incidentally, my own understanding of child sexual abuse has been enhanced by reading Alice Miller's Thou Shalt Not Be Aware. Her approach is psycho-analytic, which I have difficulty supporting in full, but I find her treatment wonderfully sympathetic. I enclose two pages of summary which are of particular relevance.

Sincerely,

PD 0184

The Archdiocese of Portland and The Paulist Fathers have received the following complaint:

that a Paulist priest at the parish of St. Philip Neri did repeatedly, over a several year period, sexually abuse a male child enrolled in St. Philip Neri elementary school 1949-1956, and that sexual contact and control of the abused child was maintained through the confessional.

The Archdiocese and The Paulist Fathers have reason to believe the validity of this complaint. The priest in question has undergone clinical treatment and is no longer allowed to hear the confessions of children.

Anyone who may have been sexually abused as a child by a priest, no matter how long ago, is invited to disclose this information to the Archdiocesan office. In this instance, the complainant, for therapeutic reasons, would very much like to contact individuals who were abused by the same priest. Please contact Father Lienert through the Archdiocese.

Signed,

Fr. Gallagher for the Paulists

Fr. Lienert for the Archdiocese



MEMORANDUM

TO: Archbishop Levada  
FROM: Fr. Lienert  
SUBJECT: Request of  
DATE: May 9, 1989

I have enclosed a copy of a letter from Mr. with an attached statement he wishes us to publish. He indicates in his letter that he is willing to modify this proposal by mutual agreement.

I have contacted Fr. Gallagher, CSP. Both Tom and I spoke with him about the potential seriousness of this case. He expressed a concern that Fr. Rocco Perone might be subjected to criminal prosecution. We told him that this was not likely, but that there could be civil suits if victims maintained that they had recently become aware of the damage that had been done to them. We recommended that he seek counsel in Oregon to advise him about the potential legal liabilities. We also suggested that we meet with him to discuss our course of action. He agreed to come out on the 16th or 17th of this month.

Tom Sellieken and I have discussed this case with Chuck Haberding and his Associate. They do not see a large risk in public disclosure because of length of time that has elapsed. (Fr. Perone was at St. Philip Neri from 1949 to 1956.)

I also consulted with Tim Smith of Northwest Associates. He believes that in this instance some kind of public statement encouraging victims to come forward would be beneficial. He said that in their experience when this is done, not many victims come forward immediately for help, but that it is a positive step in helping victims deal with the guilt and eventually seeking help.

Tom and I think that we should make some carefully prepared public statement. We should seek the assistance of a therapist experienced in treating child abuse as well as someone in public



relations. Tentatively, we think the following changes should be made:

- 1) The statement should not have a reference to the specific incident at St. Philip Neri. If Mr. insists, then it should be included at St. Philip Neri only.
- 2) The statement should not single out priests, but should invite anyone who has been abused by any individual working for the Church to contact the Archdiocese. The statement should also encourage anyone who has been sexually abused as a child to seek help.
- 3) Rather than printing this in the Sentinel, the statement should be presented in every parish of the Archdiocese.

We see a number of advantages in making such a public statement:

- 1) The Church does have concern for anyone who may have been victimized by its ministers or employees. Such a statement would make public acknowledgement of that concern.
- 2) If there are any child abusers working in the Church, it is to our advantage to find them out.
- 3) Because the statement would be made in all the Church, it would be a means of inviting victims from Sutherlin and St. John Fisher to come forward without singling out these parishes.
- 4) This would be a positive response to Mr. whose principal concern seems to be for other victims.

We need to respond to Mr. as soon as possible. Tom intends to vacation in Victoria the latter part of next week. He will be able to meet with Mr. to discuss our response with him.

Tom has asked who counsels people who have been sexually abused to meet with us to assist us in drafting a statement.

cc. Tom Selliken

Reverend Charles Lienert  
Director of Clergy Personnel  
Archdiocese of Portland in Oregon  
2838 E. Burnside Street  
Portland, Oregon 97214-1895

20 June 1989

*chuck*  
Dear Father ~~Lienert~~,

I enclose a copy of my letter to Father Gallagher. At the same time, I am asking the Archbishop to reconsider his decision to refuse to directly acknowledge my victimization. This story will come out. It is right and just that it do so. Revelation provides the invitation for victims to step forward in a much more galvanizing manner than the simple announcement of the Archdiocese's adoption of a generalized victimization program, however desirable such a program is.

Given that this story will be made public, it must be in the best interests of the Church that it do so at your telling, and in the Archdiocesan newspaper. My family is well prepared to accept the consequences of our name appearing in public, should you feel that revealing my name is necessary to dispel rumours.

Sincerely,

cc: Very Reverend Joseph V. Gallagher

PD 0188

Very Reverend Joseph V. Gallagher, CSP  
President  
The Paulist Fathers  
86 Dromore Road  
Scarsdale, NY 10583

copy

20 June 1989

Dear Father Gallagher,

I am writing to clarify one point from our telephone conversation of 12 June 1989. As you recall, I noted that the Archdiocese's adoption of a Victim's Advocacy Program, while laudable, does not fully meet what I feel would be necessary to resolve my case. As I said in our conversation, I feel that if the Archdiocese refuses to acknowledge the abuse that I suffered, then at least the Paulists should acknowledge the fact by reading a statement similar to that which I previously sent to Father Lienert (subject to mutual approval) from the pulpit at St. Philip Neri Church at the same time that the Archbishop's letter announcing the Advocacy Program is read.

The point I wish to make involves your concern that such a statement would lead to widespread speculation and rumour. I have no objection to names being used in the statement, whether it be my name and/or Father Perone's. My family is well prepared for the possibility that our name will be made public, and they support my proceeding. The only reason why the draft statement I sent to Father Lienert did not contain names was because I understood that you and the Archdiocese would not want Father Perone's name made public.

As I mentioned over the phone, I believe that this is a story that should come out. I am beginning to realize that disclosure is necessary for my own peace of mind. Perhaps more important, the more I delve <sup>into</sup> it, the more convinced I am that Father Perone has not revealed the extent of his activities. I know that he has lied (or forgotten) that there was an "investigation" into his pedophilia about 1955. I have also contacted a relative who was subjected to something very close to an attempt at active sexual abuse by Father Perone. As I said over the phone, I suspect dozens of boys were abused by this person, and giving some publicity to one case will encourage those men (now) to step forward; the healing process cannot begin until the victim acknowledges that he has been abused, and understands that the child is never at fault. Hearing about the abuse of one victim will give other similarly situated victims

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the strength to come forward and face the horrific traumas that they were subjected to as children.

Unless my resolve changes (and it grows stronger and more certain every day), this story will come out. I invite you and the Archdiocese to participate to the full extent. Needless to say, your concern must be with past victims and with the prevention of future victims.

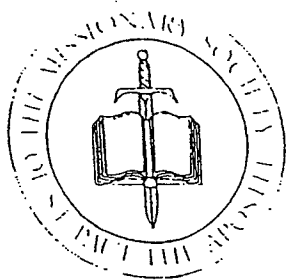
I look forward to hearing from you very shortly.

Sincerely,

cc: Fr. Charles Lienert

COPY

*The Paulist Fathers*



*St. Dremore Road, Scarsdale, NY 10583 (914) 472-4800*

June 26, 1989

Dear Mr.

Since our telephone conversation I have given your proposals a good deal of thought. As I understand them, you have two purposes in mind. One of them is to heighten the awareness of people generally about the existence of this aberration and ways in which it can occur. The other is to encourage some particular victims to come forward for mutual support and whatever other kinds of help might be needed in individual cases. These are good and positive responses to an aberration that is both personally and socially traumatic, and I believe some version of them is becoming standard practice. It cannot have been easy for you to take the initiative in this matter after all these years, and please be assured that we are ready to assist you with whatever pastoral or professional help from which you might benefit.

I have been in conversation with Fr. Leinert about the Archbishop's plans to issue a pastoral letter on the whole subject of abuse. I believe he has shared this with you, and it seems to me that this will be a very effective way of educating the public. It will be publicized in every parish, also in the diocesan paper, and I understand that there will be a specific press release along with the text to the secular media. It seems to me that this kind of publicity should do a good job toward the sort of public education you urge. Certainly, it will reach far beyond anything we might do in St. Philip's parish.

About that, I mentioned the real reservations I have about opening up events of years ago. This will surely foster all kinds of local speculation, rumor, and gossip, mostly negative. Any constructive results are much less clear. I think the Archbishop's letter better serves the education need, and at the same time invites persons like yourself, wherever they are, to come forward with any personal needs they may have. In presenting the pastoral letter at St. Philip's we can, of course, encourage any of our parishioners so affected to take advantage of the invitation and such help.

Mr.  
-2-

I have consulted two psychiatrists about the benefits of approaching victims after so many years. Both were cautious about such a move. They thought it could be helpful in some cases, and harmful in others. They were supportive of a general invitation that left individuals with the option to respond or not. This way the possibilities of further harm are avoided and a way toward help laid open without directly involving any particular person other than by his own choice. I think this is probably the wisest course after so many years, and I am inclined to follow it. I'd rather have the medical people make arrangements for group interaction in individual cases as people respond. I'm told the Archbishop's pastoral should be out within a month or two, so for the moment, why don't we leave it at that and be guided by what follows upon its publication?

I value your concern for others in all of this and I share in it. Indeed, if it weren't for the time element, I would be wholeheartedly supportive. I do think some good results will come from your initiative, certainly in the area of public education, and probably more personally for some individual victims. That will be a real contribution by you. It will not, of course, undo the personal scars you carry, and should you want any help in attending to them, please let me know. I shall continue to follow up on all aspects of this troubling matter.

Faithfully in the Lord,

*Joseph V. Gallagher CSP*  
Joseph V. Gallagher, CSP



Office of Clergy Personnel

CONFIDENTIAL

MEMORANDUM

TO: Tom Selliken  
FROM: Chuck Lienert  
SUBJECT: Gallagher's conversation with the Archbishop  
DATE: July 18, 1989

These are the points that Fr. Gallagher made in his conversation with the Archbishop:

- 1) It must be Fr. Perone's decision whether he will reveal the names of other victims.
- 2) His testimony may not be reliable. He may not know the objective truth any more because of his long denial and minimalizing.
- 3) Perone denies anything involving confession. (claims that he was approached by Perone on two occasions the day after he went to him for confession.
- 4) Perone insists that he was never called in while he was at St. Philip.
- 5) Perone's attorney is Robert Keefe (Boston) (617)742-9100
- 6) Gallagher has used a lawyer for interviews with Perone to maintain a client privilege

PD 0193

MEMORANDUM

TO: Archbishop William Levada  
FROM: Father Charles Lienert  
SUBJECT: Meeting with Rocco Perone about Father  
DATE: August 9, 1990

I have enclosed a memorandum of a meeting I had with  
He had been contacted by \_\_\_\_\_ and they  
intend to contact other students from St. Philip Neri.

At this point they seem to be concerned about the well-being of  
other victims and about Father Perone's status in the Church.

Tom Selliken and I agree that we should cooperate with them to  
the extent that we can. I intend to speak with the provincial to  
give him this new information.

CJL:gg

last week I called Fr. Gallagher, Pres. of  
the Paulist Fathers, to inform him that the  
were now interested in pursuing further contact  
with "victims" of Perone.

I urged Gallagher to contact our office  
in conjunction with his next visit to PDX, and  
to be available for a meeting with the aggrieved  
parties, which might help them in their anxiety  
about "doing whatever possible."

He mentioned that \_\_\_\_\_ had been to Toronto  
to see Perone, who was away at the time. + WJL

2838 E. Burnside Street, Portland, Oregon 97214-1895 503/234-5334

8/25/90



CONFIDENTIAL  
COPY

MEMORANDUM

TO: File

FROM: Father Charles Lienert

SUBJECT: Meeting with \_\_\_\_\_ about Father  
Rocco Perone

DATE: August 9, 1990

On Friday, August 3, Mr. \_\_\_\_\_ and his wife, \_\_\_\_\_ met  
with me at his request.

He told me that he was a student at St. Philip Neri School during  
the '50's and a classmate of \_\_\_\_\_. He said that he and Mr.  
\_\_\_\_\_ had met recently and discovered that they both were sexually  
victimized by Father Perone. He said this occurred between the  
4th and 7th grades. Father Perone would tell him that he needed  
to go to Confession. Then during Confession he would unzip his  
pants and lay on top of him. He would tell him just to be calm.  
This happened several times until he told his mother one day.

Mr. \_\_\_\_\_ said that he was fortunate in that this has not  
harmed him psychologically. He has remained active in the church  
and in the past has served on the pastoral council and other  
positions in his parish. He said that his concern, which he  
shared with \_\_\_\_\_ was for the other victims. He is aware of  
one other person, but intends to make a systematic effort to  
contact all of his classmates as well as other students who were  
there during the time that Father Perone was assistant pastor.

He told me that his concern was for justice. He believes that  
some of those who were victimized may need assistance. He said  
that he thought it would be good if all of them could confront  
Father Perone in person.

He asked me what I knew about Father Perone. I told him that we  
had done an investigation when \_\_\_\_\_ first contacted us.  
Father Perone's provincial had informed us that he had been  
through treatment a year or two prior and was in continued  
therapy. He was being monitored carefully. Mr. \_\_\_\_\_ asked

MEMORANDUM

RE: Meeting with

Date: August 9, 1990

me whether I knew who any of the other victims were. I told him that I did not because the provincial or Father Perone were not willing to release these names.

He asked me what the Church did to priests involved in sexual abuse of children. I told him that universal church law considered that a grievous offense. It allows for a range of disciplinary actions. I told him further that it was up to each diocese or religious order to establish its own policy. I briefly described our own procedures in such cases. I told him that Archbishop Levada had no direct authority over Father Perone since he was a religious and had not worked in the diocese since the '50's. I gave him the provincial's name and address.

I told him that we would be open to assisting in what way we could in counseling for those persons abused by Father Perone and encouraged him to keep in contact with me as he talked to others. I told him that we had no authority over Father Perone and that he should work directly with the provincial to arrange a possible meeting or to get answers about Father Perone.

I asked Tom Selliken to join us. Tom repeated basically the same advice which I had given to Mr. \_\_\_\_\_ and assured him and his wife that we were very concerned with the well-being of anyone who might have been sexually abused by a priest.

They thanked us for our cooperation and concern and told us that they would keep in touch.

CJL:gg