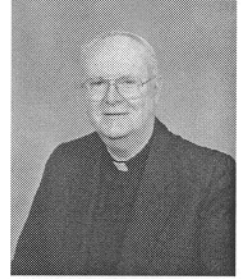




ARCHDIOCESE OF PHILADELPHIA PRIEST DATA PROFILE

Name: Address:

Rev. Thomas F. Shea
Villa Saint Joseph
1436 Lansdowne Avenue Darby,
PA 19023-1298



Phone Number: (610)586-8535

Date of Birth: 11/02/1936

CURRENT ASSIGNMENT(S)

PRIMARY POSITION(S) Retired, Villa Saint Joseph

DATE ASSIGNED
07/03/1995

ORDINATION, ECCLESIASTICAL HONORS

Status: Retired, Diocesan

Incardination: Philadelphia (PA)

Date of Ordination: 05/16/1964 **Ordaining**

Bishop: John Cardinal Krol

TALENTS/HOBBIES/INTERESTS

Archives

Liturgy

PREVIOUS ASSIGNMENTS

Previous Positions

Dates Assigned

Assistant Pastor, St. Paul, Norristown	06/1964-	06/1969
Assistant Pastor, St. Helena, Phila	06/1969	-06/1975
Assistant Pastor, St. Joseph, Collingdale	06/1975	-02/1979
Assistant Pastor, Old Saint Mary's, Phila	03/1979	-06/1980
Assistant Pastor, St. Barnabas, Phila	06/1980-	06/1985
Assistant Pastor, St. Laurence, Upper Darby Parochial Vicar, St. Clement, Phila (Closed 06/2004) Health Leave, (Health Leave)	06/1985	-06/1989
	06/1989	-11/1994
	11/1994-	07/1995

CATALOGUE OF SEXUALLY ABUSIVE PRIESTS

PRIEST'S NAME	DATE OF ABUSE	DATE ARCHDIOCESE NOTIFIED	VICTIM OR INCIDENT	PRIEST'S ASSIGNMENT AT TIME OF ABUSE	ACTION TAKEN BY ARCHDIOCESE AFTER NOTIFICATION OF ABUSE	PRESENT STATUS OF PRIEST
Shea Thomas F. Ordained: 5-16-64	1972-77	10-26-94	Fifth grade male altar server	- Assistant Pastor, St. Helena, Philadelphia (6/69-6/75) - Assistant Pastor, St. Joseph, Collindale (6/75-2/79)	- Rev. Shea was placed on Health Leave in November 1994. - He underwent a psychological evaluation at St. John Vianney Hospital. - He retired at Villa St. Joseph on July 3, 1995.	
	mid 1970s	10-27-94	Male minor	- Assistant Pastor, St. Helena, Philadelphia (6/69-6/75) - Assistant Pastor, St. Joseph, Collindale (6/75-2/79)	- Rev. Shea was placed on Health Leave in November 1994. - He underwent a psychological evaluation at St. John Vianney Hospital. - He retired at Villa St. Joseph on 7-3-95.	
	mid 1970s	7-25-02	1 minor male 3 altar boys	Assistant Pastor, St. Joseph, Collingdale (6/75-2/79)		- On 9-10-04, the Archdiocese imposed further restrictions on Rev. Shea's priestly ministry and informed him that his name would not appear in the 2005 Catholic Directory. - On 10-8-04, Rev. Shea agreed to the removal of his priestly faculties, to forgo the Church penal process and to accept the imposition of a supervised life of prayer and penance.

Father Thomas F. Shea

It was a victim's lawyer who, on October 26, 1994, brought the first recorded sexual abuse allegation against Fr. Thomas Shea to the attention of the Archdiocese. By November 2, 1994, the accused priest was at Saint John Vianney Hospital for evaluation, never to return to his Philadelphia parish, Saint Clement, or to active ministry. The Grand Jury would commend this prompt handling of a sexually abusive priest, except that it merely illustrates what Cardinal Bevilacqua did when a victim's lawyer was involved – and what he did not do in other cases.

Documents in the Secret Archives file of Fr. Shea, who was ordained in 1964, reveal why Archdiocese officials acted promptly in this case. They clearly did so not to protect the children of the Church, but only because legal action was threatened. A contemporaneous case – that of Fr. Stanley Gana, who was sent for evaluation as a sexual offender at the same time as Fr. Shea – demonstrates how differently cases that did not immediately threaten the Archdiocese with public scandal or legal liability were handled. Cardinal Bevilacqua had received reports four years earlier that Fr. Gana had molested and anally sodomized an altar boy for years, beginning when the victim was 13 years old. Yet the Cardinal did not remove Fr. Gana from ministry until 2002, seven years after Fr. Shea's forced retirement.

A lawyer reports to Archdiocesan legal counsel in 1994 that his client was sexually abused by Father Shea for several years in the mid-1970s.

On October 26, 1994, Secretary for Clergy William J. Lynn learned from John O'Dea, the Archdiocese's lawyer, that Fr. Thomas Shea had been accused of sexually abusing one, and maybe two, boys when he was assigned as assistant pastor at Saint Helena parish in Philadelphia from 1969 until 1975. It was a lawyer representing a man named "Scott" who informed O'Dea of the abuse. The lawyer told O'Dea that Fr. Shea had abused Scott when he was an altar boy, that the abuse lasted several years, and that it took place in the rectory and at a motel in Cape May, New Jersey. The lawyer said that he had been in contact with another man who said that Fr. Shea had also abused him.

Monsignor Lynn, accompanied by his assistant, Msgr. Michael T. McCulken, interviewed Fr. Shea the next day. According to a memo recording the meeting, Fr. Shea admitted having "genital contact" with Scott and another boy – "Alfred." He said that he did not know if Alfred was the other victim that Scott's lawyer referred to. Father Shea told Msgr. Lynn that he did not know how many times he had genital contact with Scott and did not remember abusing any others.

Father McCulken's October 27, 1994, memo describes the Secretary for Clergy assessing for Fr. Shea the likelihood of a lawsuit or adverse publicity. It records Msgr. Lynn explaining that the reason for psychological treatment "right away" is to "show responsibility by Father Shea and by the Church in this situation." Finally, after Fr. Shea claimed he was not Scott's first sexual experience, Msgr. Lynn suggested to the accused priest that perhaps he "was seduced into it" by the altar boy. (Appendix D-27)

The same day that he met with Fr. Shea, Msgr. Lynn sent Cardinal Bevilacqua a memo describing the allegations against Fr. Shea, as well as the priest's admission that he had sexually abused at least two minors at Saint Helena parish. The Secretary for Clergy recommended that Fr. Shea be sent to Saint John Vianney Hospital for inpatient treatment. The Cardinal approved sending the priest to the hospital, but questioned whether the usual procedure wasn't to have the hospital evaluate the priest before deciding whether inpatient treatment was called for.

On November 2, 1994, Fr. Shea was sent to Saint John Vianney.

Monsignor Lynn reports to the Cardinal that Father Shea has admitted many more acts of pedophilia to therapists.

On December 27, 1994, Msgr. Lynn forwarded to Cardinal Bevilacqua a letter from a therapist outlining his diagnosis. In Msgr. Lynn's accompanying memo, the Secretary for Clergy informed the Cardinal that the therapist had told Msgr. Lynn that he thought pedophilia would be the diagnosis, based on many more acts of sexual contact with children. The letter was in response to Msgr. Lynn's request that the therapist put his diagnosis in writing as soon as it was determined.

Cardinal Bevilacqua discussed Fr. Shea's situation with his top aides at an issues meeting on January 3, 1995. According to a January 13 memo to Msgr. Lynn from Msgr. Joseph R. Cistone, then Assistant to the Vicar for Administration, the Cardinal had several questions he wanted answered before deciding what to do with Fr. Shea. His first question, as recorded by Msgr. Cistone, was: "When was the last act of pedophilia? Are we within the statute of limitation on any one of these acts?" The Cardinal also wanted to know if the victims were now older than 28, a factor relevant to the statute of limitations. He wondered if Fr. Shea would willingly seek laicization.

On January 20, 1995, Msgr. Lynn met with Fr. Shea and a therapist. Monsignor McCulken recorded the meeting in a memo dated January 24, 1995. According to that memo, the Secretary for Clergy tried to get the answers Cardinal Bevilacqua sought. Father Shea, however, was not forthcoming and refused to admit even relationships that he had previously acknowledged. He would not repeat the admission made to the therapist that there had been many more acts of pedophilia. He denied any victims other than Scott, even though he had told Msgrs. Lynn and McCulken in October that he had sexually abused a boy named Alfred as well.

Uncharacteristically, the Secretary for Clergy pushed Fr. Shea to reveal the existence, if not necessarily the names, of other victims. Monsignor Lynn told the priest that based on “the evidence of the medical profession,” it was “very unusual for such instances to be with only one youngster.” Monsignor Lynn asked Fr. Shea to “seriously reflect on this question.” According to Msgr. McCulken’s handwritten notes (but not transcribed into the typed version), the Secretary for Clergy even told the priest that if there were “other times,” that “probably won’t change status.” The therapist counseled his patient “that if there are other occurrences, not brought out into the open, then the pain of shame is a very heavy cross.” According to Msgr. McCulken’s memo, Fr. Shea said “that he will really have to think about this.”

Had Fr. Shea confessed to recent acts of pedophilia, the Archdiocese could have proceeded to laicize the priest without his consent. As was detailed in documents in the file of Fr. Peter Dunne, another diagnosed pedophile that the Cardinal was dealing with at this time, the Archdiocese could only laicize a priest against his will for an offense committed within five years. (Handwritten notes kept by Msgr. McCulken record Msgr. Lynn telling Fr. Shea, incorrectly, that the Cardinal “can’t impose laicization” unless there were incidents “last week;” Msgr. McCulken changed this to “unless misconduct was recent” in his typed memo.) The documents in Fr. Dunne’s file also reveal that the Cardinal’s aides and lawyers were advising him at this time that laicization could protect the Archdiocese from liability for future acts of sexual abuse by an accused priest. Accordingly, Msgr. Lynn told Fr. Shea that it would be problematic for him to remain a priest and live at home with his mother, even with no ministry, because “[t]he Archdiocese continues to be legally responsible.”

Monsignor McCulken recorded that after Fr. Shea left the room, the therapist and Msgr. Lynn continued to discuss the case. Monsignor Lynn's assistant wrote: "It is believed that there are more incidents than what has so far been reported by TFS. The diagnosis is pedophilia with the strength of the diagnosis being very strong because TFS was in a relationship with the boy, rather than just anonymously acting out."

Father Shea refuses to seek laicization and is permitted to retire in 1995.

On May 20, 1995, Msgr. Lynn sent a memo to the Cardinal about the January meeting at which Fr. Shea refused to admit to more than one victim – Scott. The Secretary for Clergy reported that on May 5, 1995, the priest, still at Saint John Vianney, had admitted to having one more victim, who had since died in a motorcycle accident. According to Msgr. Lynn's memo, Fr. Shea had been paying the victim to remain silent. Monsignor Lynn answered the Cardinal's questions concerning the statute of limitations, writing: "The known acts of pedophilia in this case are beyond the statute of limitations. The first known act occurred over ten years ago. The one known living victim is in his thirties." Monsignor Lynn also informed Cardinal Bevilacqua that Fr. Shea "will not seek laicization." Having failed to elicit evidence of a more recent incident that could support involuntary laicization of the priest, the Secretary for Clergy recommended that Fr. Shea be permitted to retire and live at Villa Saint Joseph, a home for retired priests.

Although Fr. Shea was only 59 years old, Cardinal Bevilacqua in June 1995 permitted him to retire, and expressly allowed him to participate in "celebrations with permission of Secretary of Clergy." Father Shea has lived at Villa Saint Joseph ever since. For nearly 10 years, he was without apparent supervision. The Archdiocese has never made public that he retired early because he sexually abused minors.

In July 2002 Cardinal Bevilacqua receives allegations against Father Shea from his assignment at Saint Joseph in Collingdale in the late 1970s.

On July 25, 2002, Cardinal Bevilacqua received a letter alleging that Fr. Shea had sexually abused minors at Saint Joseph parish, in Collingdale, where he was assistant pastor from June 1975 until February 1979. The letter was anonymous, but came from someone who said he or she was "privy" to abuse perpetrated by Fr. Shea on a "male

family member.” The author, who explained that he/she could not break the victim’s trust by revealing names, said that the victim “can not to this day stop running away from his life.”

The writer told Cardinal Bevilacqua that the victim’s mother had relied heavily on Fr. Shea to guide her son because the boy’s father was absent. The priest betrayed this trust, according to the letter, by providing alcohol to the boy and sexually abusing him “from an early age, well through adulthood.” The writer said that Fr. Shea had paid the victim money “at first to continue with this misconduct and later to ensure its secrecy.” These payments were said to continue until just a few years before the letter was written. The writer encouraged the Archdiocese to investigate the payments, saying that they were made with checks. The writer also claimed to know that Fr. Shea had been “affiliated with” at least three altar boys from Saint Joseph parish.

Father Shea was living at the Villa Saint Joseph retirement home when this letter was received. The only response documented in Archdiocese files is that the letter was forwarded to legal counsel.

Church officials’ strategy for handling Father Shea’s case reflects their priorities.

Father Shea’s case demonstrates how the Archdiocese molded its strategy for handling abuse allegations to fit its exposure to legal liability. This case was different because it was a client’s lawyer who brought forward the allegation. For this reason, it could not be ignored for four years, like the allegation against Fr. Gana, which was brought by a seminarian who could be intimidated and silenced. And because Fr. Shea admitted the sexual abuse, there was no benefit in attacking or questioning the victim’s credibility. The Archdiocese’s therapist had expressly diagnosed the priest as a pedophile, so that made him ineligible for the usual response in such cases: reassignment.

The only option left was to try to distance the Archdiocese from its priest in order to avoid liability for his crimes. This could explain why the Secretary for Clergy would so uncharacteristically seek evidence of more recent misconduct, and why he would note that, according to medical evidence, it would be “very unusual” for an abuser of minors to have just one victim. An admission to the existence of recent victims, particularly if unnamed, could serve the Archdiocese’s legal purposes by providing grounds for

involuntary laicization. The case of Fr. Shea was not about actually looking for victims, much less helping or protecting them. It was about cynical legal maneuvers intended to shield the Archdiocese from responsibility.

On October 8, 2004, Fr. Shea agreed to live “a supervised life of prayer and penance.”

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

OFFICE FOR CLERGY

FROM THE DESK OF: Reverend Michael T. McCulken ^{DJ7M}

TO: File

DATE: October 27, 1994

ITEM: Interview

RE: Reverend Thomas F. Shea [1964]

CONFIDENTIAL

Father Shea [TFS] was interviewed at the Office for Clergy by Reverend William J. Lynn [WJL] and Reverend Michael T. McCulken. The reason for the interview was to review with Father Shea allegations that had been received through the Archdiocesan attorney, Mr. John O'Dea.

WJL clarified with TFS that he was assigned to Saint Helena from 1969-75.

WJL stated that the claims included genital abuse at the Rectory and Cape May. He asked TFS if he had a home in Cape May. TJS stated that parents were in Stone Harbor and he was staying in a motel at Cape May. TFS picked up and a friend and they spent the weekend with him. After which time he drove them back home. WJL stated that another man was also making allegations and was going to put everything into writing to Mr. O'Dea. As soon as the letter is given to WJL, he will apprise TFS about what is alleged.

WJL then asked TFS if he knows and if it is true. TFS replied that he did know the man as a youngster and that "maybe it might be true, I don't know. What does it mean?" WJL asked again if anything did happen, saying that he had to know. TFS stated yes, it did happen. WJL asked how many times and if there was genital contact. TFS stated yes sometimes there was genital contact and that he did not know how many times. TFS admitted that

AD 003696

A memo recording an interview of Fr. Shea by Secretary for Clergy Lynn and his assistant, Fr. Michael McCulken. Fr. Shea admits abusing at least two boys. Monsignor Lynn suggests the priest may have been "seduced into it" by an altar-boy victim. GJ-476

D-27a

D-57

it did occur in the motel and in the rectory.

WJL asked if he was involved with others and TFS stated that he was similarly involved with a but does not know if that is the other person is referring to. TFS stated that he does not remember any other kids. WJL asked if there was genital activity and TFS said that there was touching and that it happened twenty years ago.

TFS was rather emotional and his color changed quite a bit. WJL asked if he was alright and TFS said that he was. WJL asked TFS to leave the parish. TFS said that he takes care of his mother, who lives in Saint Barnabas. He asked if he should resign and that he was ready to resign. WJL told him that we are here to help and that we know it is overwhelming. TFS asked if was suing the Diocese and WJL said he did not yet know.

WJL explained that the policy is to have the priest immediately leave the parish setting if he has admitted guilt and go to Immaculate Conception parish until Cardinal Bevilacqua can review the situation. Usually there is treatment required. TFS asked what is he to do with his mother, since his sister works and he said that this will kill her. Then he asked if he needs to leave tonight and WJL explained that he should to protect himself and the parish. He will go to Immaculate Conception for a residence and that he can continue to take care of his mother.

TFS was very emotional. He asked about resigning or taking a leave of absence. WJL explained that normally treatment is requested and is he willing to do so? TFS asked if this will hit the papers. To which WJL replied that he hoped not but that there is cause for concern since this law firm is known for that.

TFS asked if he should tell Father John Cox, his pastor? He has been there six years with no problems. WJL asked TFS if anything else happened besides during his stay at Saint Helena. TFS replied that his father had lost a leg and that was about fifth or sixth grade and an altar boy. WJL asked how much TFS trusted Father Cox concerning the possibility of sharing the allegations with him. At first TFS seemed hesitant to share anything with Father Cox but later stated that he would share that allegations had been brought but did not involve Saint Clement parish.

TFS asked about staying at his mother's home tonight. WJL said that he could while arrangements are made at Immaculate Conception with the pastor. TFS wondered aloud why now, after twenty years. WJL indicated that sometimes it is for money but

Reverend Thomas F. Shea

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that the Archdiocese does not settle with claimants; although, the Archdiocese does pay for therapy for claimants if the priest has been guilty. He stated that usually claimants come into the office, but this one went to the lawyer. He indicated that Mr. O'Dea did not think, this was going to be a lawsuit.

TFS asked how long does treatment at Downingtown take. WJL explained anywhere from three months to one year. TFS inquired of the treatment offered. WJL explained that it involved group and individual therapy, going over the situations of life in order to help resolve issues, to see if risks are still present. The need for treatment right away rather than a leave of absence is to show responsibility by Father Shea and by the Church in this situation.

TFS continued by saying what will he tell his mother concerning Downingtown. WJL said that if he told her now that he was taking time off for personal problems such as depression then it would not be unreasonable to his mother to hear that he was going to Downingtown. WJL again stated that we were here to help and to affirm to TFS that he is supported. TFS said that he understood that. WJL told TFS not to do anything foolish, to which TFS replied that he doesn't have the guts to do something like that. TFS asked if he could take some things out of the rectory later in the evening and talk with Father Cox. WJL agreed and told him that Father Cox could call WJL if he had concerns.

TFS asked regarding the statute of limitations which is past and then about a civil suit which is still a possibility. TFS said that he has no money that they could get out of a civil suit. WJL told TFS that the Archdiocese does not make cash settlements but does pay for therapy, especially when the priest has admitted guilt as TFS has. He continued by saying that sometimes the claimant only wants an opportunity to meet with the priest and talk; although others do sue.

TFS asked when will he would know a course of action and WJL said that he would inform Cardinal Bevilacqua today. TFS was concerned about saying Mass, finances, directions to Front and Allen, how he was to get to Downingtown, and representation by an attorney if needed. WJL offered explanations to his questions and affirmed for TFS again that we are here to help and support him through this. In regards to other persons to help take care of his mother, TFS did say there were a few nephews besides his sister.

TFS wondered who within the Office for Clergy sees this information. He was told that within the Office for Clergy only the priests see it. He asked if he had a good record otherwise and was told yes. He stated that when he was changed from Saint Helena

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this situation stopped and that was it. He did not seek any help, he did not need it. He stated that was fooling around with other kids his own age and that TFS did not start him into anything like this. WJL said that it is possible TFS was seduced into it.

TFS said that he is not very outgoing, not a great conversationalist, and that he never had money to travel like many of his contemporaries in the priesthood. The kids were fun to be with, they looked up to you. TFS said that he kept a lot of things to himself, and has been taking care of his mother. When his father was dying he told TFS to take care of his mother and for ten years he has been doing that on his days off. He said that his sister has her problems, that she does visit, but the burden is on him. He said that at Saint Clement he was the priest who did most of the work and filled in for Father Cox. When at Saint Helena he was also always busy, taking on whatever needed to be done, not really knowing how to say no.

WJL said that maybe these are some of the issues to be addressed in treatment. WJL said that we would call TFS tomorrow with further direction.