

Reverend Walter Emala

Biographical Information

YEAR OF BIRTH:	1927
YEAR OF DEATH:	2008
ORDINATION:	1952

Employment/Assignment History

1981-1985	Part-time (functioned without faculties); St. Peter, Mount Carmel, PA
1981-1985	St. John, New Freedom, PA

Summary

In May 1979, the Diocese of Memphis wrote to the Diocese of Harrisburg and stated that Father Walter Emala was *“once accused of sexually handling some of the children where he was an associate, but this does not seem to have been proven definitely.”* On May 31, 1979, then Chancellor William Keeler responded to the Diocese of Memphis, in writing and stated, *“in light of the information which you provide, this diocese certainly would not refrain from the granting of the faculties to Emala for occasional, weekend help.”*

In December 1985, a memorandum was written by Keeler that reported that Emala had been *“accused of being overly and overtly familiar with certain boys”* by parents in St. Peter’s parish. The memorandum noted the parents made reports to the parish priest, Father Frederick Farace. There was no abuse reported. The parents stated Emala gave boys wine and the parents were concerned about over familiarity. One parent was *“a state policeman”* who spoke to Farace at length. Keeler noted Emala was informed he no longer had faculties in the Diocese of Harrisburg.

In a letter dated March 8, 1986, Farace wrote to Keeler regarding Emala. The letter stated that the parents of three boys ages 12, 13, and 13, reported to Father DiChico *“about what they termed undue familiarity between Father Emala and their boys.”* Some person or persons contacted Children and Youth Services concerning the incident involving Emala from December 1985. The parents complained to the Diocese that they were disturbed that their children were questioned regarding the incident.

On April 29, 1986, Monsignor Overbaugh wrote a letter to the Chancellor of the Diocese of Memphis. The letter stated that in 1979 the Diocese of Harrisburg did not accept Emala and he was not granted faculties to minister. Overbaugh stated, *“unbeknown to the Chancery,”* Emala was invited to assist a priest in a parish. Keeler was going to withhold the granting of faculties to Emala should he have sought pastoral ministry in the Diocese of Harrisburg. However, as described above, then Keeler in 1979 stated the Diocese would grant faculties to Emala for occasional, weekend help, which contradicts the statement in Overbaugh’s letter.

Summary

In December 2002, a woman called the Diocese of Harrisburg and spoke with Father William King. She reported that she heard that a woman in Mount Carmel saw Emala kissing an altar boy on the lips in 1985. In January 2003, the woman who actually witnessed Emala kiss the altar boy reported the kissing incident to the Diocese. King contacted Father Thomas Kujovsky and asked if he had any recollections of Emala. Kujovsky recalled Father Farace telling him that he once walked into Emala's room at the rectory and found a "*shoe-box full of photographs of adolescent males, all undressed from the waist up.*"

In 2004, the Diocese of Harrisburg wrote to "Rev. Walter Emala." The Diocese told Emala the statute of limitations for criminal prosecution is suspended when an accused leaves Pennsylvania. The Diocese informed Emala, "*In order to avoid scandal and to avoid exposing you to continued accusation and possible criminal investigation, it is important that you not be present at any time within the territory of the Diocese of Harrisburg.*"