

TIMELINE OF DOCUMENTS REGARDING SIEGFRIED WIDERA¹

5/21/67 – Ordained

6/16/67 Appointed Curate at St. John de Nepomuc Parish in Milwaukee, WI effective July 14, 1967. (23277)

6/16/67 – Curate, St. John De Nepomuc Parish, Milwaukee, WI

9/11/68 Appointed part-time instructor of religion on St. John Cathedral High School in Milwaukee, WI. (23278)

9/11/68 – Part-time Instructor of Religion, St. John Cathedral High School, Milwaukee, WI

1969 Widera states that his main interests lie in youth and emotionally disturbed children and youth and adults in an informal climate. (48501)

5/16/72 Appointed Associate Pastor at St. Mary Parish in Port Washington, WI effective June 13, 1972. (23279)

6/13/72 – Associate Pastor, St. Mary Parish, Port Washington, WI

9/23/72 Appointed to act as District CYO Director in Ozaukee County. (23281)

7/1/73 Unknown woman complains to Port police that her son was being forced to “commit indecent acts” with Widera. Written statement was provided to Ozaukee County Sheriff’s Dept. Widera admits to fondling a number of boys’ privates and allowing at least 2-3 boys to commit sodomy on him. Ex 102

7/2/73 Criminal complaint against Widera. He’s charged with sexual perversion/an act of sexual gratification involving a minor. Ex 103a

7/13/73 Letter from psychologist after consulting with Widera after Widera’s arrest on 7/2/73. Widera has been to the psychologist 7 times since his arrest. The letter details Widera’s family, school, and assignment histories. Psychologist did intelligence testing and psychological testing on Widera. He notes that Widera is an extremely good risk for psychotherapeutic intervention and he has already profited and understood greatly from the initial therapy sessions. Psychologist does not see Widera as a constant threat to young people. (23312-23317)

8/13/73 Summary of criminal case against Widera. He pled guilty to sexual perversion

¹ This timeline was principally prepared by Jeff Anderson & Associates PA; Whyte Hirschboeck Dudek S.C. provided limited corrections to certain entries and assisted with redactions of abuse survivor information that could potentially have identified individual abuse survivors.

and court placed him on probation for 3 years. Ex 103

- 8/13/73 Widera's guilty plea, sentencing, and conviction. Sentenced to continue his psychiatric therapy and probation for 3 years. Ex 103b
- 8/14/73 Communication from Cousins to J. Theisen, priest personnel board - Widera arrested for sexual perversion with young boys and sentenced to 3 years probation. The judge said Widera may not return to Port Washington area. Widera is currently in therapy twice a week. (23424)
- 9/3/73 Memo from Fr. Esser about his conversation with Fr. Glass. Glass says Widera spent a lot of time with young boys, a male grade school teacher saw Widera fooling around with boys. Widera coached the boys' basketball team. He would shower with the boys nude. Parishioners came forward after the fact and indicated incidents that they had noticed and warnings that they had given their children not to let Widera touch them. Widera had boys sleep overnight in the rectory. Fr. Glass did confront Widera. (23423)
- 2/12/74 Letter from, Vice President of St. Andrews School, to Fr. Theisen informing him they are pleased with Widera at St. Andrew's Parish. The children follow Widera around. (23422)
- 2/19/74 Response from Theisen stating that he is happy to hear that Widera is doing well in the school and shows so much interest in the children. (23417)
- 2/20/74 Letter from parishioner of St. Andrew's Parish to Theisen. She hopes Widera is able to stay permanently. Says he is so good with the school children, he visits the sick and elderly and is so understanding that they all look for his visits. (23416)
- 2/25/74 Response from Theisen to parishioner thanking her for the kind words about Widera. (23413)
- 2/28/74 Letter from parishioner to Theisen asking for Widera to stay at her church. She says the children are so happy with him, he's gentle, courteous, considerate, and the children adore him. (23420)
- 2/28/74 Letter from parishioner to Theisen saying everyone loves Widera and the children are very happy with him. (23421)
- 3/18/74 Response from Theisen to parishioner thanking her for the kind words towards Widera. He writes that the entire board is happy he is doing so well at St. Andrews. (23411)

5/27/75 Appointed Associate Pastor at St. Andrew's Parish in Delavan, WI effective June 17, 1975. (23410)

6/17/75 – Associate Pastor, St. Andrew's Parish, Delavan, WI

1/29/76 Letter from psychologist to Rev. Sampon. Psychologist writes that he is Widera's de facto probation officer. He says the sentencing was unusually harsh and they haven't been successful reducing the probation to two years. He meets with Widera weekly since the publicity around incarceration would bring incalculable harm to Widera and extreme embarrassment to the Archdiocese. (48459-48460)

6/29/76 Notes on Widera. A woman reported to a therapist that her son was sexually molested by Widera while on a weekend fishing trip. (23318)

7/1/76 Summary from a discussion with Widera. He admitted he made a slip while fishing with a boy. Author of the note says he will try to put a lid on it so that no police record would be made. Notes say Widera will likely be put in in-patient treatment. Woman's counselor/advocate will contact the woman and convince her not to act with the police, if the Church agrees to remove Widera from the parish and see that he gets help. (23318)

7/7/76 Notes from conversation with Widera's psychologist, who thinks that one slip in three years is not a bad track record. (23319)

7/8/76 Notes from conversation with Widera's psychologist. Widera's actual probation officer attends his masses and would ask questions if Widera was moved out of state before his probation is over. Author met with woman, woman's counselor, and son. Woman was not seeking hospitalization, only that Widera be removed from the parish. (23319-23320)

7/9/76 Notes about reporting Widera's conduct to the Archbishop, who agreed that Widera should continue with psychologist and not be moved out of state for hospitalization until his probation period is over. (23320)

8/13/76 Widera discharged from Division of Corrections in Wisconsin. Ex 115-116

8/20/76 Notes from conversation with psychologist. He says there is no permanent damage to the son who was abused by Widera. Author of notes agreed with Henke and Widera that Widera could go "on vacation" and should tell people only that he is going on vacation. (23321)

9/27/76 Notes about the author's conversation with Esser about Widera's situation. The personnel board has not heard about it from the Archbishop or anyone else. Esser would have a problem "in conscience" if he re-assigned Widera. (23321)

- 10/8/76 Letter from Rev. Waldbauer to Dr. Graham about Widera's "tenuous status." There are rumors that Widera had an incident at St. Andrews that forced him to leave under the guise of taking a vacation. (23408-23409)
- 10/21/76 Letter from psychologist to Waldbauer (Priests' Personnel Board) saying he is aware of the rumors which relate to an alleged incident said to have occurred at St. Andrew's Parish in Delavan. Widera went on vacation in California so as not to stimulate the gossip. If the rumors were true along with his previous criminal conviction, it would be hard to reassign him in the Archdiocese. Widera and the Archdiocese would be better if Widera was not in active ministry. (23405-23406)
- 10/29/76 Letter from Rev. Waldbauer, priest personnel board, to Widera giving him options. He can go through treatment with House of Affirmation and then be considered for an appointment in the Archdiocese or they will release Widera to another diocese after Widera requests work elsewhere. Widera's present status with the Archdiocese is delicate. (23303-23304)
- 12/20/76 Letter from Cousins to Bishop Johnston of Diocese of Orange requesting that Widera be assigned in the Diocese of Orange. Says that there was a moral problem with a boy. This seemed adequately confronted through treatment and an intense desire on Widera's part to avoid a repetition. There was a repetition, and further psychiatric treatment is mandated and there is a strong recommendation that no immediate assignment be made in the environs of the Archdiocese. Widera is presently under treatment. Arrangements have been made for counseling in California if Widera moves. (23334-23335)
- 1/10/77 Appointed to Hospitality at St. Pius V in Buena Park, California effective January 12, 1977. The assignment carries with it faculties of an associate pastor. (23298)
- 1/12/77 – Hospitality, St. Pius V, Buena Park, CA
- 1/25/77 Letter from Cousins to Bishop Johnston thanking him for considering Widera, a priest who had done good work and is absent from the diocese because of a "local situation." (23296)
- 2/2/77 Letter from Don to Widera explaining that "in hospitality" indicates that a priest may serve in residence in a diocese for an indefinite period of time. He also says he's sure Widera is seeking psychological help while he is in California since "a change in geography isn't going to change the person." (23295)
- 3/22/77 Appointed Associate Pastor at St. Justin Martyr Church in Anaheim, California effective April 11, 1977. (23293)

3/27/77 Newsletter in St. Pius V Church bulletin says that Widera will lead a Youth Mass and ask all youth to attend and bring a friend. (23322-23324)

4/11/77 – Associate Pastor, St. Justin Martyr, Anaheim, CA

7/21/78 Letter from St. Michael's Priest Fund to Widera saying that the fund will begin to cover psychological rehabilitation of priest-members both at residential treatment centers or an outpatient basis. (23388)

8/26/81 Vicar Log Entry No. 1165. The Bishop of Orange has invited Widera to be incarnated into that Diocese. It has been five years since some psychological problems. Widera has not sought out treatment in California. Widera states he has had no personal problems since he's been in California. Ex 126

9/1/81 Vicar Log Entry No. 1179. Widera was recommended to be released to Diocese of Orange. Ex 126

10/27/81 Letter from Msgr. Driscoll to Weakland stating Widera was sent to the Diocese of Orange for medical reasons. Widera requested incardination into the Diocese of Orange and was unanimously accepted. He is now requesting that Widera be excardinated from Milwaukee. (23342-23343)

1981 Note to Fr. Sampson by the request of the Archbishop to write a letter that would be canonically correct for the transfer of Fr. Widera (incardination) to the Diocese of Orange. (23344)

11/23/81 Decree from Weakland stating that Widera is excardinated from the Archdiocese of Milwaukee. (23347)

11/23/81 – Excardinated from the Archdiocese of Milwaukee

11/23/81 Letter from Johnston to Widera acknowledging that he was excardinated from the Archdiocese of Milwaukee in good character. Asks that Widera declare that he wishes to be incardinated into the Diocese of Orange. (23348)

11/23/81 – Incardinated into Diocese of Orange

12/16/81 Dated notes about conversations with Widera from his sentencing in 1973 to his excardination from Milwaukee and incardination into the Diocese of Orange. Ex. 100

11/24/92 Vicar Log Entry No. 893. Cusack sent the Widera file to the Chancery after receiving a call regarding an allegation against Widera in Delavan. Ex 131

- 2002 Summary of background information on Widera. He was arrested in 1973 and reoffended at St. Andrew's Parish in Delavan, WI but the parents did not want it reported to authorities and wanted him gone. Widera announced his intention to move out of the territory of the Archdiocese. He wanted to go to Florida to visit his parents and then go to California where his brother lived. Says that the Archdiocese of Milwaukee did not send Widera to California on its own initiative. Cousins told Bishop Johnston of the Diocese of Orange that Widera had a problem with young boys and Johnston should not assign him until "pertinent and important questions have been answered." Told that Widera would need to find a doctor in California to continue therapy. The Diocese of Orange removed Widera in 1985 after he was suspected of abusing minors there. Widera was sent for therapy for one year in New Mexico. A warrant was issued for his arrest in 2002 and he fell/jumped to his death in Mexico. (29849-29850)
- 3/26/02 Email from Widera survivor reporting abuse by Widera when he was assigned in Delavan, WI. (23466)
- 5/16/02 Letter from a person reporting abuse by Widera from 1968-1973 at St. John de Nepomuc. (31075-31077)
- 8/1/02 Letter from a person reporting abuse by Widera. (35448-35450)
- 10/3/02 Sexual abuse intake report reporting abuse by Widera at St. Mary's and various locations around Wisconsin from 1969-1976 when the survivor was 9-16 years old. (123899)
- 6/3/02 Entry to the sexual abuse log by Barbara Reinke says that she met with the Hispanic outreach coordinator who heard from a woman whose husband was abused, possibly by Widera, when he was a boy. (55435)
- 6/8/03 West Allis Incident report detailing investigation into Widera and his abuse of a number of individuals. Includes notes that the father of an individual spoke with Fr. James Vojtik, who served with Widera at St. Andrew's. Fr. Vojtik told the father that the Archdiocese told him that Widera had a problem with young boys and had to be watched. Vojtik reported Widera to Eugene Henke. Vojtik also received reports from two women who witnessed Widera performing sex acts with boys. Vojtik contacted the Priest Personnel Board or the Chancery to report the incident (8/22/76) and Widera was removed the next day. (23589-23667) (select pages were already produced)
- 7/31/03 Sexual abuse intake report reporting abuse by Widera at St. Mary in 1971-1972 when the survivor was 11-12 years old. (123899)
- 12/22/03 Sexual abuse intake report reporting abuse by Widera at St. Mary in 1969-1970

when the survivor was 8-9 years old. (123899)

- 4/8/04 Letter of understanding signed by Barbara Cusack from the Archdiocese providing \$5,000 for a sustenance fund for an individual abused by Widera while the individual awaits participating in the independent mediation system. (23474)
- 4/29/04 Sexual abuse intake report reporting abuse by Widera in 1973. Says there were other boys in his neighborhood who were molested by Widera. Archdiocese will provide financial assistance with therapy and the individual will proceed with mediation. (123899)
- 8/3/04 Settlement agreement for Widera survivor for \$50,000 with \$15,000 for counseling. (56927-56930)
- 8/16/04 Settlement agreement for Widera survivor for \$50,000. (57241-57243)
- 9/3/04 Settlement agreement for Widera survivor for \$40,000. (56656-56658)
- 12/28/04 Settlement agreement for Widera survivor for \$56,000. (57091-57093)
- 3/15/05 Settlement agreement for Widera survivor for \$100,000. Individual was represented by counsel who signed the settlement agreement. (57101-57103)
- 7/7/05 Sexual abuse intake report reporting abuse by Widera while he was at St. Mary's in Port Washington, WI in 1971-1973 when the survivor was approximately 11-13 years old. (123899)
- 9/05 Confidential Sexual Abuse Investigation report. Includes interviews with Widera survivors and background information on Widera. (57387-57417)
- 12/2/05 Settlement agreement for Widera survivor for \$88,000. (56547-56549)
- 7/16/08 Sexual abuse intake report reporting abuse by Widera in 1979-1981. (35546-35547)