

## **Robert Mayer**

### **Another member of the “Vatican 400”**

#### **Convicted of abuse, protected by the Archdiocese**

By the time Robert Mayer was convicted of felony child sex abuse in 1992, the Archdiocese had a record of problems with the priest that was a decade or more long, including complaints from nuns, parents and parishioners that Mayer was sexually abusing children. Letters, memo and witnesses said that Mayer was giving children alcohol, taking pictures of the kids “passed out,” and openly talking with children about sex and masturbation.

In a 2007 deposition, Bishop Raymond Goedert testified that he was personally contacted by a parent in 1986, who said that Mayer had abused boys at St. Edna’s.

Instead of removing Mayer and calling the police when the first allegations were known, the Archdiocese told Mayer to resign from his parish “for other reasons” and was assigned elsewhere. Mayer was finally removed from ministry in 1991, after a local television station received an anonymous tip and six years after a civil sex abuse settlement involving one of Mayer’s victims. At his conviction in 1992, Mayer was sentenced to three years in prison.

Mayer was laicized in 2010 (one of 400 priests that the Vatican announced were laicized between 2010 and 2012 for child sexual abuse).

#### **TIMELINE OF DOCUMENTS - ROBERT MAYER**

4/30/64 – Ordained

1964 – Associate Pastor, St. Catherine of Siena

1969 – Associate Pastor, St. Barnabas

1974- 1975 According to a 2007 Report, Mayer sexually abused a minor at the rectory. The abuse consisted of fondling, masturbation, back massages, viewing pornography and watching group masturbation in Mayer’s quarters. (AOC 001489)

6/11/75 –Associate Pastor, St. Mary’s

**1977 Report of problems with Bob Mayer to the Clergy Personnel Board. AOC 003838**

1978 According to 2005 Report, Mayer sexually abused a minor approximately 4 to 6 times in 1978. The abuse consisted of oral sex and masturbation. (AOC 001480)

1978 – 1981 According to a 2006 Report, Mayer sexually abused a minor approximately 100 times at the parish rectory at St. Mary’s, St. Edna’s, the minor’s home and

Mayer's cottage. The abuse consisted of kissing, fondling, oral sex, masturbation and showing the minor pornography. (AOC 001289, AOC 001290)

According to a 2006 Report, Mayer sexually abused a minor in the rectory at St. Mary's parish. The abuse consisted of group masturbation, exposure to pornography and access to alcohol. (AOC 001043)

According to a 2009 Report, Mayer sexually abused a minor at the St. Mary rectory and school while the minor was in the eighth and ninth grade. The abuse consisted of showing the minor pornography, fondling, Mayer walking around nude, and showering with the altar boys on at least 20 occasions. (AOC 001446)

According to a 2011 Report, Mayer sexually abused a minor at St. Mary's parish when the minor was between seven and nine years old. The abuse consisted of Mayer exposing and masturbating in front of the minor, fondling and putting the minor on his lap on approximately 60 instances. (AOC 001458)

According to a 2011 Report, Mayer sexually abused a minor at St. Mary's parish while the minor was approximately 8 years old and an altar boy. The abuse consisted of fondling, rubbing, oral sex and masturbation about 11 times. (AOC 001460)

According to a 2007 Report, Mayer sexually abused a minor at St. Mary's parish while the minor was an altar boy and throughout his teenage years. The abuse consisted of providing the minor with pornography, fondling, masturbation and sexual massages. (AOC 001461)

According to a 2011 Report, Mayer sexually abused a minor in the late 1970s when the minor was in the third and fourth grade. The abuse consisted of Mayer exposing himself and masturbating in the church and in the confessional and fondling. (AOC 001469, AOC 001470)

According to a 2011 Report, Mayer sexually abused a minor in the late 1970s while the minor was about 8 years old. The abuse consisted of mutual fondling, oral sex and rubbing his genitals against the minor's back. (AOC 001471)

According to a 2005 Report, Mayer sexually abused a minor from approximately 1977 to 1979. The abuse consisted of wrestling, attempted anal sex and exposing himself to the minor. (AOC 001473)

According to a 2004 Report, Mayer sexually abused a minor beginning when the minor was 13 years old and continuing until he was 24. The abuse consisted of masturbation, group masturbation, kissing, oral sex, and digital penetration. (AOC 001479)

According to a 2006 Report, Mayer sexually abused a minor in his quarters at St. Mary's rectory. The abuse consisted of group masturbation, pornography, naked backrubs and oral sex and continued at Mayer's next assignment. (AOC 001481)

1979-1980 According to a 2009 Report, Mayer sexually abused a minor on approximately 20 occasions. The abuse consisted of grabbing the minor's buttocks and genitals, and Mayer walking around naked. (AOC 001490)

2010 Investigative Report of Mayer prepared by Hillard Heintze. Interview with Fr. Conroy who was pastor with Mayer at St. Mary's stated "I was troubled by Fr. Mayer's behavior ... he would sit out on the patio in ... "Speedos" with about an inch of pubic hair showing above the waist-line. (AOC 001492, AOC 001526)

#### 6/81 – Associate Pastor, St. Edna

9/1981 Sister Jane Schlosser received reports that Mayer was removing his clothes while socializing with the children. (AOC 001201) Sister Jane reported this to Fr. Keating in October 1981. (AOC 001202)

4/7/1982 Letter from St. Edna's staff to Cardinal Cody regarding 12 instances of Mayer's inappropriate behavior at St. Edna's and 9 instances of inappropriate behavior at St. Mary's and asking for the Cardinal's guidance. (AOC 001243)

6/18/1982 Report to the Clergy Personnel Board that Fr. Somerville has formally requested that Mayer be transferred. (AOC 003856)

7/23/1982 Fr. Somerville reports accusations being directed against Mayer to Clergy Personnel Board. (AOC 003839)

**9/28/82 Memo to file stating that "the evidence is insufficient to warrant a forced removal of Fr. Mayer from his position" and that if "Mayer is transferred in the near future, it must be construed that he personally requested the transfer." (AOC 001120)**

9/29/82 Staff at parish wrote letter to Archbishop Bernadin asking for Mayer to be removed. (AOC 001205)

11/17/82 Letter to Archbishop Bernadin re: conversations with Mayer in which the writer encouraged Mayer to "leave the assignment" and recommended that he "not have any adolescents in his quarters or the cottage." (AOC 003750)

**10/5/82 Letter from Archbishop Bernadin to Father Keating stating that a transfer of Mayer is needed on grounds other than the abuse allegations and asking Keating whether there should be an evaluation, stating that "it will not be long for a crisis to develop elsewhere." (AOC 001247)**

5/25/1983 Clergy Personnel Board decides that Fr. Somerville's resignation will not be announced until legal problems are settled and when Fr. Somerville goes so will Mayer. (AOC 003863)

7/8/1983 Report that the Cardinal and Ventura saw Mayer on 7/1/1983 and he will be transferring from St. Edna's effective 8/1/1983. (AOC 003843)

8/1/83 – Administrator, St. Stephen's Parish

8/1/83 Memo from Vicar for Priests to Cardinal Bernadin stating that Mayer's farewell went well and that Mayer will stay at his parents' home, his cottage or another rectory until his next assignment. (AOC 001256)

8/9/83 Memo from Vicar for Priests to Cardinal Bernadin regarding petition by parishioners of St. Edna and their concerns about Mayer's removal from the parish. Ventura recommends to the Cardinal that Mayer be placed before a meeting with parishioners. (AOC 001259, AOC 001260)

9/23/83 Fr. Finnegan reports to the Clergy Personnel Board that Mayer's appointment to St. Stephen's is opposed by several priests. (AOC 003865)

11/2/83 Letter of Appointment of Mayer as Associate Pastor of St. Stephen effective immediately, by Cardinal Bernadin. (AOC 003797)

12/20/83 Private letter from Fr. Hurley to Vicar for Priests regarding sexual abuse allegation and requesting a meeting between Cardinal Bernadin and the mother of the child who was abused by Mayer. (AOC 001177)

1983 – Associate Pastor, St. Stephen's Parish

1/1/84 Letter from Vicar for Priests to Cardinal Bernadin summarizing the requests of parents of abuse survivor who are in suit with the Archdiocese and want to resolve the matter amicably. (AOC 001180 – AOC 001185)

3/14/84 Letter from Vicar for Priests to Fr. Hurley stating that the lawsuit was settled and that the Cardinal would be meeting with the parents of the minor abused. (AOC 001186)

10/17/84 Memo from Fr. Kiley to Fr. Velo and Fr. Ventura and copying Cardinal Bernadin, stating that a parishioner from St. Mary's had a bizarre encounter with Mayer at St. Stephens, that Mayer was taking pictures of children passed out, having conversations about masturbation, and that Mayer had a private VCR library of a pornographic nature. (AOC 001232, AOC 001233)

- 10/30/84 Memo from Vicar for Priests to Cardinal Bernadin re: meeting with Mayer about allegations made by Fr. Kiley. (AOC 001239)
- 12/11/84 Report from parent at St. Stephens to Fr. Mezyldo stating that Mayer has been telling her 13 year old dirty jokes. (AOC 001240)
- 5/11/87 Call from Fr. Smyth to the Vicar for Priests stating that the Police Chief is concerned that Mayer is serving liquor to minors and other inappropriate activities. (AOC 001114)
- 5/12/87 Vicar for Priests called Police Chief and was told that there is a police investigation of Mayer based on reports of serving liquor to minors and sexual abuse of a minor. (AOC 001114)
- 5/12/87 Vicar for Priests informs Mayer of the investigation. Mayer was instructed to take a leave of absence. (AOC 001114)
- 5/13/87 Letter to Cardinal Bernadin from Jim Roach proposing an alternate scenario for Mayer based on the “softness of data.” (AOC 001138)**
- 6/2/87 Memo of Vicar for Priests regarding police interest in Mayer and teenagers. (AOC 001108)
- 6/2/87 Agreement between Cardinal Bernadin and Mayer that Mayer avoid all unsupervised contact with children under the age of 21. AOC 001104
- 6/87 Handwritten report stating the steps taken by Fr. Mezyldo to supervise Mayer. (AOC 001140, AOC 001141)
- 3/21/88 Letter to Mayer from Vicar for Priests stating that Mayer avoid unsupervised contact with minors and wishing him luck in pursuit of his next assignment. (AOC 001081, AOC 001082)
- 8/25/88 Memo memorializing meeting between Geodert, Fr. Mangan, Mayer and Fr. Velo regarding assignment and stating that “Bob left the meeting understanding that it is an up-hill battle and that his reputation is somewhat problematic.” (AOC 001112)
- 11/28/88 Letter of Appointment of Mayer as Administrator of St. Dionysius, effective 12/1/1988 by Cardinal Bernadin. (AOC 003796)
- 4/27/89 Mayer moved from Immaculate Conception to St. Dionysius. (AOC 001111)

1990 - Administrator, St. Dionysius

- 6/19/90 Letter from Fr. Jakubowski to Clergy Personnel Board recommending that Mayer apply for the pastorate of St. Odilo Parish where he serves as Vicar. (AOC 001109)
- 6/23/90 Letter from Goedert to Cardinal Bernadin regarding whether to appoint Mayer a pastor at St. Odilo. Despite his sexual abuse allegations, Goedert states “I think the time has come to decide whether or not Bob will ever be a pastor. In fairness to him, we cannot let him dangle indefinitely.” (AOC 001174- AOC 001175)
- 9/1/90 – Pastor, St. Odilia
- 9/7/90 Letter of Appointment of Mayer as Pastor of St. Odilo by Cardinal Bernadin, effective 9/1/1990. (AOC 003795)
- 7/1/91 Draft of message to be given by Cardinal Bernadin to Mayer states “over the years, you have repeatedly been the subject of allegations of sexual impropriety and yet you have refused to modify your behavior.” (AOC 001104)**
- 7/3/91 Letter from Cardinal Bernadin to Mayer withdrawing Mayer’s priestly faculties. (AOC 003793)
- 7/5/91 Talking notes for media inquires stressing that prior allegations were never substantiated. (AOC 001099)
- 7/9/91 Memo to Fr. Hurley from Geodert warning him of the allegations coming forward about Mayer’s behavior at St. Odilo. (AOC 01097)
- 7/6/91 Draft statement of Cardinal Bernadin to be read to parishioners at St. Odilo following Mayer allegations notes in handwriting “Cardinal feels he has to say the new evidence is what prompted the action.” (AOC 001092)**
- 10/22/91 Minutes from meeting at St. Odilo with 25 children and their families who were affected Mayer’s abuse. (AOC 001072)
- 10/23/91 Minutes from meeting with parish leadership at St. Odilo parish.
- 11/24/91 According to a 1991 Report to Fr. Kealy, Mayer sexually abused a minor at Mayer’s cabin when the minor was in the eighth and ninth grade. The abuse consisted of inappropriate sexual comments, exposing his buttocks and Mayer touching his genitals while the minor and other boys swam. (AOC 003749)
- 12/4/91 Grand jury indictment of Mayer for Aggravated Criminal Sexual Abuse. (AOC 001065 –AOC 001069)

- 1/28/92 Letter from Chancellor Kealy to Mayer stating that Mayer is “currently restricted from all exercise of the sacred ministry” and telling Mayer where he is to reside. (AOC 003733)
- 2/5/92 Letter from DCFS to Fr. O’Malley stating that a formal investigation is underway regarding Mayer’s fondling minors at St. Odilo. (AOC 001441- AOC 001442)
- 12/30/92 Meeting between Chancellor, Mayer, the Vicar for Priests and the Director of Legal Services to discuss contingency plan in light of Mayer’s sentencing and appeal. (AOC 003734)
- 2/12/93 Memo to file stating that Cardinal Bernadin and Fr. O’Malley visited Mayer at his residence, extended sympathies and promised prayers. (AOC 001054)
- 2/24/93 Memo of the Chancellor regarding meeting with Fr. O’Malley and Mayer stating that the Archdiocese will be moving Mayer from current residence to a residence near St. Louis, Missouri. (AOC 003731)
- 2/28/93 Payroll Authorization reducing Mayer’s salary from \$16,600.08 per year to \$6,600.00 per year. (AOC 003730)
- 4/29/93 Decree of Cardinal Bernadin ordering that “a cautious investigation be undertaken ... to determine whether it is necessary to take further action.” (AOC 003728)

1993 - Patient, St. Luke’s Institute

- 1/10/94 Letter from Cardinal Bernadin to Mayer accepting his resignation from active ministry, effective immediately. (AOC 003722)
- 10/17/94 Memo to Vicar for Priests on Mayer’s criminal case. (AOC 001053)
- 5/28/05 Declaration of Cardinal George that Mayer is no longer a Roman Catholic priest in the Archdiocese of Chicago. (AOC 003792)
- 4/13/06 Results of investigation of sexual abuse by Mayer as requested by the Office of Professional Responsibility concluding that allegations in 2005 of sexual abuse while a man was an altar boy at St. Mary’s are inconclusive. (AOC 001436 – AOC 001440)
- 11/9/11 According to a 2011 Report, Mayer sexually abused a minor at St. Edna’s parish, St. Mary’s Parish and his cottage in Fox Lake. The abuse consisted of kissing, fondling, Mayer showing the minor how to masturbate and taking pictures of him and other boys in bikini style underwear. (AOC 001444)