

Kenneth Ruge

Ruge abused, then pimped boys to Fr. Joseph Becker

One victim told: “Get drunk. Get laid. Pick a fight. You are too uptight.”

Fr. Kenneth Ruge’s personnel file shows the great lengths Archdiocese went in order to ensure that sex abuse by priests was kept secret from parishioners, victims, and most importantly, the press. According to the files and victims’ accounts, Ruge molested boys with Fr Robert Becker, a high-ranking priest and former president of the Canon Law Society of America. Ruge would abuse the boys, then “pimp” them to Becker at Ruge’s privately owned trailer.

In 1986, when the Archdiocese and Vicar for Priests received a definitive report that Ruge had raped a boy, the police are not called. Instead, internal memos show that that Vicar for Clergy instead questioned the victim’s meaning of the term “rape.” When that same victim reported to a priest at Quigley High School, the victim was told he is too “uptight.” Despite this and other accusations, Ruge was promoted to pastor at Divine Savior in 1987. In 1991, reporters had begun to ask the Archdiocese about Ruge, so Cardinal Bernardin removed Ruge from the parish and told parishioners that Ruge was being sent to a hospital for “personal issues.” Parishioners were also told there was only one accusation against Ruge from decades earlier. Ruge was put under “monitoring.” Other pastors were told to keep a watch for victims, but no announcement was made to parishioners at other churches where Ruge worked.

In 1992, the Archdiocese was served a Grand Jury subpoena about Ruge, and the priest was immediately sent to treatment. Documents show that the Archdiocese gave the state’s attorney some records. By 1994, Ruge was working at Catholic Charities somewhat unsupervised, even though the Archdiocese was aware that he abused numerous kids.

In a November 2007 deposition, Bishop Raymond Goedert spoke about many of the allegations against Ruge, including allegations made by another priest. Goedert conceded that Ruge was only removed after there was possibility of a public scandal.

TIMELINE OF DOCUMENTS - KENNETH RUGE

5/1/63 – Ordained

1963 – Associate Pastor, St. Rosalie

1967 – Associate Pastor, Holy Redeemer

1973 According to a 2008 report to the Archdiocese, Ruge abused three minors between 1973 and 1975 on camping trips and at Ruge’s parents’ home. (AOC 004690; AOC 004701- AOC 004702; AOC 004706)

1974 According to a 2008 report to the Archdiocese, Ruge and Becker abused a child at our Lady of the Snows. (AOC 004697)

1975- Associate Pastor, Divine Infant

1979 According to a 1994 report, Ruge and Fr. Robert Becker abused a child. The abuse consisted of fondling, sleeping in the same bed, and partial penetration. (AOC 004675; AOC 004679)

1981-Associate Pastor, St. Leonard

1980 Ruge abuses two minors according to Archdiocese records. (AOC 004679, AOC 004710- AOC 004711)

1983 According to a 2007 report to the Archdiocese, Ruge abused a minor. The abuse consisted of fondling, masturbation, nude saunas, and nude sleeping with Ruge and Becker at their Woodhaven trailer. (AOC 004676)

1983 Ruge and Becker masturbated and slept naked with three survivors between 1983 and 1986 at Woodhaven trailer, which is owned by Ruge and Becker. (AOC 004651; AOC 004653- AOC 004654; AOC 004692)

9/20/85 Archdiocese reports indicate that Ruge sexually abused a minor on this date. (AOC 004679)

10/12/85 According to notes from 1986 by Fr. Tom Ventura, Vicar for Clergy, Ruge rapes 16-year-old boy. Police are not called. "Between Romano at school (Quigley South) and Ruge at the parish the boy became very confused and sick and depressed". (AOC 004469- AOC 004670; AOC 004679)

11/14/86 Vicar for Clergy notes ask: "What does 'he raped me' mean, Nakedness, sleeping in the same bed, Penetration in the anus? Happened just one time." (AOC 004672)

11/15/86 According to a report by the Vicar for Clergy, a parent and survivor meet with Ventura, say they don't want their experience to happen to another family. Ruge provided the survivor scotch, fondled his genitals and later anally raped him. (AOC 004663- AOC 004665)

11/15/86 Ruge survivor reports to Fr. Romano at Quigley. Romano's advice is: "1) Get drunk 2) Get laid 3) Pick a fight. You are too uptight." (AOC 004664)

1/14/87 Spiritual evaluation of Ruge. (AOC 004685)

4/3/87 Vicar for Clergy notes say there have been more calls from other boys saying they were at the Cottage. Ruge denies the allegations. (AOC 004686)

1987- Associate Pastor, Divine Savior

- 1/1/91 Interview of Fr. Henkel at Divine Infant, woman says her sons know boys abused by Ruge and Becker. Vicar for Clergy notes, "Young men never came forward". (AOC 004686)
- 11/14/91 Cardinal Bernadin removes Ruge from Divine Savior. (AOC 004662)
- 11/15/91 At a parish meeting Fr. Steve Tebes states, "several years back an accusation of sexual abuse of a young person" was brought against Ruge. (AOC 004661)
- 11/18/91 Bishop Goedert, Fr. Pat O'Malley, Fr. Andy McDonagh meet with Ruge to inform him he must leave Divine Savior. (AOC 004684)
- 3/9/92 Mayer, Brown and Platt inform redacted recipient that Vicar For Clergy and Archdiocese were served with a Grand Jury Subpoena regarding Ruge. (AOC 004681- AOC 004682)

11/92 – Saint Luke Institute

- 6/11/94 "Ruge has admitted to sexually abusing more than one minor, Number of total victims remains unclear/unspecified at this time." (AOC 004631)
- 7/14/94 Ruge protocol updated. He is to call in every four hours. He is currently working at Catholic Charities unsupervised. (AOC 004632; AOC 004657)**
- 7/16/94 Review Board aware of nine Ruge survivors. (AOC 004638)
- 11/13/07 In a sworn deposition required as a part of a nonmonetary agreement with victims of Chicago Archdiocese priests, Bishop Raymond Geodert concedes that he had knowledge of allegations against Ruge, but the that priest was not removed until there was the chance of scandal.