

Victor Stewart

Had a boy living in the rectory for years

Only put on restriction after Cook County began investigation and parish funds disappeared

Less than three years out of seminary, Victor Stewart had a boy living with him in the rectory, where the boy stayed for five years. When Cardinal Bernardin found out, Stewart said he was trying to be nurturing and wanted to adopt the child. Bernardin did nothing to remove the child from the rectory.

One of Stewart's victims recalled that Bishops Gregory, Goedert, and Cardinal Bernardin knew Stewart was harboring the boy. Another victim testified that when he went to another priest for help, the priest did not help, instead saying that he "would pray for the victim."

By the 1990s, the Archdiocese became aware of other allegations, but Bishop Raymond Goedert simply "didn't know who to believe" until parishioners came forward and complained that \$22,000 was missing and that Stewart had boys upstairs in the rectory.

When Cook County began an investigation in 1992, Stewart was put on restriction and sent to live in Mercy Rehab Center, even though teens worked at the facility from 4-8 pm.

Stewart died in 1994.

TIMELINE OF DOCUMENTS – VICTOR STEWART

5/10/78 - Ordained

6/12/78 – Associate Pastor, St. Catherine of Genoa

1981 According to a 2002 report to the Archdiocese, Stewart sexually abused a minor from approximately 1981-1986 at St. Charles Lwanga parish. The survivor moved into the rectory in 1982 and lived there until 1987. (AOC 005175)

9/23/82 – Pastor, St. Charles Lwanga

5/7/85 Letter from Stewart to parishioners of St. Charles Lwanga offering his resignation. He acknowledges there are rumors and stories about him and says he has tried to love and nurture everyone. (AOC 005268)

5/26/85 Letter from Stewart to Cardinal Bernardin addressing his resignation and the "situation" he is in. He says that his situation requires reflection and "perhaps, unique action." He discusses his decision to adopt a child and says he read of the success of George Clements, Kenny Brigham, and Mike Pflager, who all adopted

children. He says he was asked to take in a child to live in the rectory (AOC 005384- AOC 005391)

Late 80's According to a 2007 sexual abuse report Stewart abused a boy in the rectory at St. Charles Lwanga parish, where the survivor lived for a period of time. (AOC 005332)

7/1/90 – Pastor, St. Ailbe

2/2/91 Report of sexual abuse by Stewart when he was at St. Catherine of Genoa parish and the survivor was in high school. The abuse consisted of oral sex on the survivor and occurred about once per month in high school. (AOC 005257- AOC 005259)

2/7/91 Memo from Bishop Goedert regarding Stewart and speaking with a woman whose son was abused by Stewart. Stewart denied abusing the woman's son. The woman believes that something happened and Bishop Goedert told the woman that he believes her son. Goedert is conflicted because "two people have testified in opposite directions and I have no reason for not believing either." (AOC 005254)

6/5/91 Memo from Bishop Goedert regarding Stewart stating that there is a case of malfeasance against Stewart pertaining to the financial situation at St. Ailbe's. There is about \$22,000 in missing funds. In addition, the parish council is upset because they see boys coming and going from the rectory at all hours. A woman who used to be in the rectory a lot is no longer allowed on the second floor. (AOC 005250)

6/30/91 Report on procedures related to St. Ailbe Parish related to its financial situation and allegations that Stewart embezzled money. (AOC 005309 – AOC 005330)

10/5/91 Memo to Stewart's file saying that Stewart fears that the latest accusations against him are well-founded and that someone is pushing for boys to come forward. Rumors are that police are "rounding up the 'supposed victims'" (AOC 005288)

1/31/92 Letter from the Sex Crimes Division chief of the Cook County attorney's office saying that the unit has concluded its investigation into an allegation against Stewart and there will be no charges. (AOC 005286)

4/29/92 Memo to Stewart's file about him working at Mercy Rehab Center. Notes that teenagers work at the center from 4-8 and Stewart could not be alone with them without another adult "to protect himself." (AOC 005283)

6/22/92 Memo to Stewart's file notes that Stewart should not be alone with a minor without another adult present. "He was one of the six mentioned in the

Commission's report." Stewart will have to get therapy and be under monitoring for a long time. (AOC 005282)

10/8/92 – Chaplain, Mercy Health and Rehabilitation Center

6/10/94 - Deceased

- 9/26/94** **Memo discussing another survivor of sexual abuse by Stewart who is coming forward. Also states that in the past there were allegations of sexual abuse of minors against Stewart but the matter did not come before the Review Board. (AOC 005352- AOC 005353)**
- 10/15/94 Minutes from the Review Board discuss an allegation of abuse by Stewart. Notes indicate that Stewart "had been one of the 'old' matters involving alleged sexual misconduct with minors." The Cook County Attorneys' Office was aware of the old allegations but declined charges. Notes that Stewart had been removed from parish ministry and was working at Mercy Health care center when he passed away. (AOC 005177- AOC 005180)
- 6/10/04 Memo from McCluskey, Professional Responsibility Administrator, to the file detailing a report of abuse from a mother whose son was abused by Stewart. (AOC 005154)
- 7/14/05 Memo to Stewart's file summarizing a conversation with a woman who called after seeing media coverage about Stewart abusing boys. She says she went to St. Charles Lwanga grammar school and remembers Stewart hanging out with the boys, buying them clothes and, in some cases, cars. She says boys were always in the rectory, where girls were not allowed there. (AOC 005218- AOC 005219)
- 11/22/06 Letter from an attorney for a survivor of abuse by Stewart to the attorneys for the Archdiocese. The letter says that Stewart told the survivor that Stewart and another priest were part of a club that participated in pedophilia and another priest witnessed Stewart abuse the survivor. (AOC 005342)
- 12/19/06 Letter from (redacted) to Archdiocese attorney Jim Serritella saying that when (redacted) was being abused by Stewart he went to another priest to try to get help. This priest did not help, preferring instead to pray about it. (AOC 005151)
- 1/17/07 Letter from an attorney of a survivor of sexual abuse by Stewart to attorneys for the Archdiocese saying that the survivor remembers that Bishop Gregory, Cardinal Bernardin, and Fr. Clement visited the rectory and knew that he was living with Stewart as a boy. He also says that he told Bishop Goedert about being abused by Stewart. (AOC 005340)

6/24/10

Report of sexual abuse against Stewart when he was at St. Ailbe's parish. The survivor knew Stewart from St. Charles Lwanga and visited him at St. Ailbe's. During the visit Stewart kissed the survivor with an open mouth. (AOC 005333)