

THE CHANCERY

MEMORANDUM IN RE: REVEREND FRANCIS P. ROGERS, ordained May 30, 1946.

Father Rogers has been assistant rector at Saint Francis of Assisi Church, Norristown, since May 22, 1959. The pastor of Saint Francis of Assisi Church is the Reverend Charles J. McGovern (ordained May 25, 1929), who was incarcerated briefly in Atlantic City during the past winter. The second assistant at Saint Francis is the Reverend Charles V. Devlin, ordained May 19, 1955.

Some information about the bizarre conduct on the part of Father Rogers reached the Chancery during Holy Week.

Last week Doctor Hoffman, psychiatrist, came to the Chancery to report that Father McGovern, whom he had been treating, consulted with him concerning the complaints he was receiving about Father Rogers's familiarity with boys from the eighth grade and first year high school.

After listening to the doctor's story and after two sessions with Father Devlin, the first of which was in the presence of Monsignor McNally, I sent for Father Rogers. He has taken boys out of school for trips to the seashore, occasionally overnight ones; frequently takes boys in his automobile and to drive-ins. He provides opportunities for them to smoke in his car or the parish garage; has allowed them to drink; taken obscene pictures of them, and showed them indecent magazines.

Complaints made are from some of the boys' mothers, one who quotes her son, "I never want to go with Father Rogers again"; wrestling with the boys in public, lifting them above his head--this he also has done with adult women; an offhand way of speech that is sometimes vulgar and startling.

Father is not in any way contumacious. He very abjectly revealed the history of his weakness: victimized by a boarder in his own home from the time of his earliest recollection until this man died when he was in the sixth grade; habit of masturbation; weak character, inferiority complex; victimized during seminary career by older student who has since left the priesthood.

Familiar with boys in at least two other assignments: St. Rose of Lima, Eddystone (1953-1959); St. Patrick, Pottsville (first assignment, 1946-1949).

Respectfully submitted,

John J. Noon

May 5, 1961

May 5-61 - Fr. Rogers - seen & advised -
1 - 2 week retreat
2 - change -
3. Caution! must avoid slightest suspicion - any
greater complaint, will provoke effective action
* include scandal - un. civil

1) Immediate retreat, with
2) Some warning, that any further
complaint will result for summary
destruction!
Transfer to another post

A memo to Cardinal Krol from Chancellor John Noone recording reports of Fr. Rogers' "familiarity" with boys and his admission to "his weakness." Cardinal Krol's handwritten note at the bottom directs, among other things: "Transfer to another post." GJ-544