

27 February 2004

Girardin, Antonio DECEASED	XXX (10)	South Berwick	1953	Fr. Girardin touched her, manhandled her, and kissed her.
	XXX (10-11)	Millinocket	1968 or 1969- 1971	Open mouth kissing, fondling of genitals.
	XXX	Pittsfield	1960- 1967	Molested in upstairs of rectory.
	XXX	Pittsfield	1960- 1967	Unspecified sexual abuse.

000053

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Father Antonio Girardin:

XXX notified the diocese that she had been sexually abused by Father Antonio Girardin in 1943 in South Berwick while in the 5th grade, so approximately 10 years old. XXX and Father would corner her. Father Girardin would touch her. XXX said there was no actual intercourse but he would "manhandle" her, kissing her and doing everything and anything with his hands. This went on for a year. XXX was offered and provided counseling.

XXX reported that Father Antonio Girardin had sexually abused him around 1968 or 1969 in Millinocket. XXX was born in 1958 and he recalls being abused around age 10 or 11. The first incident happened in the sacristy after mass when Father "open mouth kissed" XXX and fondled his genitals. It generally began in church but would continue at the rectory. Mostly it was kissing and fondling. The abuse ended in 1971 when XXX's grandfather died and he stopped being an altar boy. XXX was offered counseling.

XXX told his pastor that Fr. Antonio Girardin molested him when he was an altar boy in Pittsfield. The pastor in turn reported the abuse to the diocese. The only description of the abuse in the file is that Father Girardin had taken XXX upstairs in the rectory and molested him. Father was rough. This would have happened sometime between 1960 and 1967. (The file has XXX on one memo and XXX on another but it appears that the reference is to the same person.)

A parishioner told her pastor that her son XXX told her, when he was an altar boy, that Father Antonio Girardin molested him. This was in Pittsfield. At the time the mother did not believe the son. The file contains no further information nor has there been any direct contact with the victim himself. This would have happened sometime between 1960 and 1967.

Father Antonio Girardin was born in 1910 and ordained a priest in 1937. He died while still in active ministry in 1974 at the age of 64. Father Girardin served in Stonington, Waterville, South Berwick, South Portland, Westbrook, Pittsfield, Millinocket and Winslow.

The Supreme Court stretched the definition of sexual harassment (which would include molestation) considerably, ruling that harassment that creates a "hostile and abusive" environment is illegal. "The time for strained legal arguments is over," said Marcia Greenberger of the National Women's Law Center in Washington, D.C.

Definitions of how sexual harassment affects people are:

<u>Psychological</u>	bizarre/emotional/mental/ruinous/catastrophic/disastrous
<u>Abusive</u>	disrespectful/insulting/contemptuous
<u>Hostile</u>	antagonistic/spiteful/adverse

It had taken me, from 1942/1943, until 1948/1949 (about six years) to finally wise up and stop fooling around, but that ~~does not give me back~~ my innocence that was robbed from me by Father Antonio Girardin. This ruined my late childhood and most of my teenage years.

When I was 11/12 before beginning my teens age years, Father Geradin molested me and said it was okay, everybody did it and just did not talk about it. The Catholic Religion taught you that, if you did not obey the priest, and went into another church, or associated with Protestants, you would go to hell, and be damned. In 1941/1942 and 1942/1943 this is what they taught kids. Fire, Hell and damnation if you don't do as they preached and taught. If he said it was okay, then it was okay and it was a way people showed you that they liked you and it was all right. So I let anybody who wanted to, as they were adults and I was just a kid and taught to mind and obey adults. When I was a Freshman in High School, I started in drinking as it made me relaxed so I did not think about what I was doing and just did it.

Several federal courts have ruled that lawsuits should show workplace harassment so bad that it caused "severe psychological injury", so if sexual harassment causes severe psychological injury, then sexual molestation to an 11/12-year-old child certainly does injure children.

The Catholic Church knew Priests were molesting children and they just moved them to another Church so they could molest more children. Now they should take the responsibility for their actions, and try to make amends to everyone they molested for the harm they did, whatever the cost.

Bruce

31 May 2002
These are copies of what I have and the sad tale of how well I learned what he taught me,

Church Records should show more of his evil
Darius

000055

Father Antonio Girardin and St. Michael's Catholic Church
Involvement in my Life and how I was affected

I was born [redacted] in [redacted], MA on [redacted]
[redacted] My father died [redacted]

My mother moved us back to Maine and put my sister and myself in Saint Joseph's Convent in South Berwick.

My grandmother [redacted] who was living on [redacted] in Sanford, Maine came down and took us out of the convent and took us up to Sanford to live with her and my grandfather, [redacted]. So, I started school and went to the Subprimary, First, Second and third grade in the Edison School on Oxford Street. My grandmother went to East Waterboro to help her daughter, [redacted], who's husband had just died and my mother put my sister and myself back in Saint Joseph's Convent in South Berwick, and I was in the Fourth Grade there.

My mother's and her sister, decided to rent a house [redacted] thus my mother took us out of Saint Joseph's Convent and took us to live with them and I went to Saint Michael's School for the Fifth Grade.

During this time period, my mother was working as a [redacted] for [redacted] and doing house cleaning for her, so after school I went there, so as not to be home alone. At this time in my life, I wanted to be a nun, so during this year, I was Baptized, made my First Communion and my Confirmation.

[redacted] was my Godfather and his housekeeper, [redacted] was my Godmother. [redacted] used to invite me over to the Rectory to visit with her at any time. I went over on some mornings before school and on weekends and helped her with some minor cleaning, etc.

First:

I was 11/12 and in the 5th grade when this happened to me in 1942/1943. See the following as an example of what he taught me.

Father Girardin was a priest who was transferred to South Berwick to [redacted] because he was in trouble where he was. This I do remember, but what trouble I did not know or question.

The Portland Diocese had evidence of his sexual escapades so they moved him from one parish to another, I do not know how many times they moved him, but it should be in their records. This is CRIMINAL NEGLIGENCE IN MAINE?

Father Girardin, who was assigned to [REDACTED] (held me) kissed me and put his hands all over my body. He kept telling me how SPECIAL I was and not to say anything to anybody as he could not do these things with everybody. The first time, he gave me \$1.00 and when I got to school, I gave it to my teacher, [REDACTED] to hold for me so I would not lose it. She asked me where I got it and I said Father Girardin gave it to me. I'll never forget what she said, which was; "My, My Isn't that nice". Father Girardin was a priest and I was a kid and was in no position to question his actions no matter whatever they were. The Catholic religion taught that if people went into another church or had anything to do with Protestants they would go to hell. Fear and damnation were taught us. When I was told to do something I did it with no questions asked. He was a priest and he was next to God, so he certainly would not do or say anything that was wrong. When I asked [REDACTED] for my money later in school, another girl in my class was with me, and asked me why I asked [REDACTED] for money.

I said it was my money and that I had no place to carry it and I did not want to lose it so I had given it to [REDACTED] to hold for me. She asked, "Why didn't I put it in my shoe?" Thereafter, that was the way I carried the money.

Second:

[REDACTED] was the next man to molest me and again he said I was SPECIAL. "THIS IS WHAT FATHER GIRARDIN TAUGHT ME THAT IF SOMEBODY LIKED ME, THIS WAS THE WAY THEY SHOWED IT." And it was okay. My mother was in the house when he did these things, he was an adult, [REDACTED] and was only showing me that he liked me. Again I was a kid and did not know enough to question this type of action.

Third:

Then there was [REDACTED] an old man who lived in our neighborhood, who also molested me and performed oral sex on me. Again, this was what Father Girardin taught me, it was okay to permit them to sexually manhandle me as long as they said they liked me.

000057

Fourth:

Well, on Sunday mornings I walked home from church and I got the Sunday paper [REDACTED] and brought it home. [REDACTED] worked there and he performed oral sex on me right behind the counter or in the back room and when a customer walked in, he'd stop and wait on them and then come back to perform more oral sex. He also told me I was SPECIAL.

I learned well what Father Antonio Girardin taught me, that men's sexually manhandling of kids was okay and you never talked about it. If anybody wanted to molest me, it was their way of showing me they liked me.

Now all these adult men (Father Girardin, [REDACTED] [REDACTED] were telling me I was SPECIAL and then sexually molesting me. They all told me how much they liked me which made it okay???? These men were working in places where they would come in contact with young girls and take advantage of them and molest them when they wanted to.

In summer of 1943, my grandmother asked to have me come back to Sanford, Maine and live with her and help her and grampa. I went back to live with her and went to the Longfellow School for the Sixth Grade and to the Emerson Junior High for the Seventh Grade. When I was in Sanford with my grandmother, I was not around any men at all, she did things with me and took me everywhere with her. This is what broke me and Father Antonio Girardin and the other sexual molesters up.

Fifth:

I went back to South Berwick, Maine to live with my mother and Aunt [REDACTED]. I attended South Berwick Central School for the Eighth Grade and graduated in 1946. Now, I was in the Eighth Grade at this time and I had to ride the early bus to school and was there real early, and was told to go downstairs to the girl's playroom to wait for school time. The school janitor, [REDACTED] was there early too and he molested me lots of mornings before school and had sex with me. I learned this way back when Father Girardin molested me that it was the thing to do if I wanted to be liked by people.

000058

Churches and Schools should be safe places for kids to be and not dangerous as they are now.

Sixth:

Then, I met a man, town, whose last name was [REDACTED] who picked me up and gave me a ride to town, would take me places and buy me lunches and have sex with me. I don't remember where he lived or anything about him. This was in my Freshman year in school. I quit school as I wanted to go to work to earn some money.

If it was all right for Father Antonio Girardin to molest me as he repeatedly did, than anybody else could as this was just their way of showing me how much they liked me. That was apparently what real life was all about and it was okay, whatever they did to me. I was in no position and did not know enough to question if what they were doing was okay or not. Anybody who thought I was special could do whatever he or she wanted with me, this showed that they really liked me or they would not molest me and I was special.

Over this period of my life I went with lots of older guys who said they thought I was really nice, but only wanted sex from me. This was what Father Antonio Girardin taught me and he would not teach me anything that was not right. A priest was next to GOD??

In my sophomore year in high school while talking with the other girls and listening where they went on dates, I realized that I really did not get taken anywhere; I was just being taken out and getting mauled, having sex and going nowhere while they were being taken to lots of nice places. I decided that I could get as much or as little as I wanted to out of every person I met and every day of my life. But I had to work for it, nobody was going to give it to me. It really hurt me, I had nightmares about these happenings and fought within myself = ever since to try and forget my wasted early teenage years.

During my Junior year I met the young man who later I would marry and who never asked anything of me. On many nights we would just drive downtown and set talking in his car and talking with and watching people walk by. I told him in detail about my sexual molestation by Father Girardin.

000059

I keep going over this mess in my mind to this day and get really angry that about the Catholic Church condoning the actions of their priests as they do. What did I do to make Father Antonio Girardin do those things to me? He was a priest. I have had to live with bad dreams, bad thoughts, confused feelings and awful memories of being abused by someone I was taught to trust.

I called on the Portland Diocese on 5 November 1993 and wrote on 21 January 1994 (letter attached) to [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] the Roman Catholic Diocese of Portland, 510 Ocean Avenue, P.O. Box 11559, Portland, ME 04104-7559. I did not know about contacting the diocese in Portland earlier in my life or publish and talk about this type of goings on to before I read it in the newspaper in the 1990's. This has raised hell with my life in that I have always felt that something must have been wrong with me when there was nothing wrong with me.

000060

THE CHANCERY

**ADMINISTRATIVE AND
MINISTERIAL SERVICES**

Administrative

- BISHOPS OFFICE
 - Archives
- CATHOLIC STEWARDSHIP
APPEAL OFFICE
- CENTRAL SERVICE OFFICE
 - Personnel
 - Plant Management
- DICON OFFICE
- FINANCE OFFICE
- OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS
 - Communication
 - Planning
 - Public Policy
 - Respect Life
- RESOURCE CENTER OFFICE

Ministerial

- OFFICE OF MINISTRY TO PRIESTS
- OFFICE OF PERMANENT DIACONATE
- OFFICE OF RELIGIOUS
VOCATION OFFICE

December 6, 1993

[REDACTED]

Dear Mrs. [REDACTED]

You have been in my thoughts many times since you called on November 5, 1993 regarding your experience with Fr. Antonio Girardin.

I am deeply saddened to know your experience of the Church has been so profoundly impacted by the memories of your experience as a young girl of 11 or 12. I wanted to re-state to you the office for help with counseling that I made orally on the phone. You did indicate to me that you didn't see the need for counseling at this time. Unfortunately, no one offered you that option at 10 years old and I realize that we cannot undo what was done in 1943, however, the Church can offer you the psychological, emotional, and spiritual support today. If you want help locating a counselor, or if you want help from a pastoral minister, please let me know.

Again, be assured of my concern and willingness to assist you find peace of mind. Don't hesitate to call me at 773-6471 if needed.

Sincerely,

Rita Mae Bissonnette, RSR

(Sr.) Rita-Mae Bissonnette, RSR
Chancellor

000061

Subj: **Sexual Molestation by Catholic Priests**
Date: 03/19/02 12:50:57 PM Eastern Standard Time
From: [REDACTED]
To: WMTW@wmtw.com

[REDACTED]

Dear Mr. Gook:

I have written to Senators Snowe, Collins, Reps John Baldacci and Tom Allen and Me Rep Ken Lemont on 3/17/02.

From 1993 to 1996, I was involved with [REDACTED] Roman Catholic Diocese of Portland, 510 Ocean Avenue, P.O. Box 11559, Portland, ME 04104-7559, Tel: (207) 773-5471, Fax: (207) 773-0182. I was sent me for counseling with [REDACTED] with the result that it was basically my mothers fault. Sister told me that Father Geradin died in 1974, but I still have to live with having lost my innocent childhood the rest of my life. **HOW CAN THIS BE RESTORED TO ME?**

The subject of all the molestation and child sexual activity by Catholic priests is one that has been going on for years covered up by the Church as when they found out about it, they just moved the priest from one parish to another.

I was molested by Father Geradin of the South Berwick St. Michael's church when I was attending Saint Michael's school in the 5th grade. At this time I wanted to be a nun myself.

Now I am sure I am not the only person who was sexually molested by him. He taught me that if people liked you they would do this with you in some manner but you could not talk about it as he could not be like this with everyone..

This is something there should be no "Statue of Limitations" on as when it happened to me you could not talk about it in the 1943 time era. When I did go to the diocese in Portland and they sent me for counseling, the end result was that it was my mothers fault. I know I am not the only person this happened to.

In the past I have written to the Foster's Daily Democrat and the Catholic Diocese in Portland with no results.

I am sending this to you today as I heard on the Channel 6 news that this was going to be turned over today to somebody.

[REDACTED]

000062

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-1904

April 23, 2002

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Dear Ms. [REDACTED]

Thank you for contacting me regarding sexual abuse allegations involving the Catholic Church, child pornography, and oil drilling on the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge's (ANWR) coastal plain. I appreciate hearing from you, and I apologize for the delay in my response.

The sexual abuse of children, whether by Catholic priests or others, is a crime. If you have not already done so, you may wish to contact the District Attorney and the Maine Attorney General. In Maine, the Office of the Attorney General is reviewing church records, which date back approximately 75 years, to conclude which allegations require further investigation.

I share your concerns about the problem of child pornography and other inappropriate matter on the Internet. I have enclosed for your information a report prepared by the Congressional Research Service discussing various laws enacted by Congress in recent years dealing with this issue. I hope that you find this report helpful.

I also noted your support for oil drilling on the ANWR coastal plain. I am very concerned about the United States' dependence on foreign oil and our vulnerability to changes in international production levels. Our vulnerability has been highlighted in recent years as the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) substantially reduced production of oil. The price per barrel of oil subsequently tripled, sending gasoline, diesel, and home heating oil prices skyrocketing.

I believe we need to create a balanced, bipartisan energy policy that both increases supply and decreases demand. In addition to increased conservation to reduce demand, I also support reducing the backlog of applications for development rights on federal lands already approved for oil and gas exploration, expanding incentives for exploration and drilling on federal lands already approved for oil and gas exploration, such as areas in the Rocky Mountains and the Gulf of Mexico; and constructing a new natural gas pipeline from Alaska to bring millions of cubic feet of natural gas to the lower 48 states.

I have, however, serious concerns about opening ANWR to oil drilling. Even under the most optimistic scenarios, production in the ANWR would not start for approximately 10 years and the U.S. would still depend on foreign oil for more than 50 percent of its petroleum needs.

Subj: Sexual Molestation by Catholic Priests of Innocent Children
Date: 05/29/02 7:07:28 PM Eastern Daylight Time
From: [REDACTED]
To: Olympia@Snowe.Senate.gov

[REDACTED]

Dear Senator Snowe,

Have not heard from you regarding subject happening to me?

=====

Subj: Sexual Molestation by Catholic Priests
Date: 03/23/02
To: Olympia@Snowe.Senate.gov

[REDACTED]

23 March 2002

Dear Senator Snowe:

Now what about this "Statue of Limitations" as people who were sexually molested and assaulted by priests before 1984 do not have a leg to stand on? You could not do anything then and now we can and should be able to. People who were molested have to live with this all their lives and are still living. Everybody up to now in time should be covered, as long as they are living anyway.

My case:

I expect something to be done to correct that as I told you I was sexually molested by a priest when I was in the 5th grade in Saint Michael's School in 1942/1943 when I was 11/12 years old was South Berwick, ME. My innocent childhood was affected and lost by this man of GOD who was actually the devil ruined it. I expect and should be compensated for this by the Catholic Church.

What are you willing to do to stand up for me?

The diocese knew about it and only moved him to South Berwick because he got in trouble elsewhere and when he got in trouble here, he was moved on.

[REDACTED]

=====

Subj: Children Sexually Molested by Catholic Priests/Status of Limitations
Date: 03/17/02
To: Olympia@Snowe.Senate.gov

[REDACTED]

Dear Senator Snowe:

The subject of all the molestation and child sexual activity by priests. The Catholic Church have known for years about this and they moved priests from one parish to another for years because of this. I believe I have written you in the past about myself being molested by Father Geradin in South Berwick when I was in the 5th grade at Saint Michael's School. Now I am sure I am not the only person who was sexually molested by him. He taught me that if people liked you they would do this with you in some manner.

I have contacted Channel 8 in Poland Springs before I went into the York Hospital to have my knee replaced and shall contact them again as soon as I am feeling better.

This is something there should be no "Statue of Limitations" on as when it happened to me you could not talk about it in the 1943 time era. When I did go to the diocese in Portland and they sent me for counselling, the end

29 May 2002

This Father Antonio Girardin created mess is deep rooted and will never go away. How does the Vatican condone priests acting like this as they do? How are they going to give me back my innocent childhood? To this day I think of it and shudder thinking a priest could do this to an innocent child.

Bishop Gerry now Bishop of Church? I would like his address and fax number. I would ask him to get me a copy of the Father Antonio Girardin's records, who Sister Rita-Mae Bissonnette told me had died in 1974??

The church has abided and abetted the molestation of children by moving the culprits from one parish to another when complained about. I did not know where to go to complain about this or I certainly would have gone.

The victims did not create these problems, the church created and condoned this problem for years and certainly should compensate victims. I have had to live with this since 1942/1943 and will the rest of my life. Now they say the priests have a sexual conduct problem and are sick, just what was my problem? What about the other victims? And the problems they created for me?

The media did not cause this episode = the diocese has covered it up for years. I have talked about it at various stages of my life to different people who most of them actually did not believe me or want to hear of it. I even wrote a "Letter to the Editor" Foster's Daily Democrat; who refused to print it because I named names.

The Church's actions are wrongful in the way they are handling and dealing with this situation of sexual molestation by their priests. Is this CRIMINAL NEGLIGENCE IN MAINE?

The church is responsible for their priests and all the victims should be compensated for the hell made of their lives by these actions. Again think of the hell they caused innocent children who believed everything told them by the priests when told that is was alright to let the priest sexually molest them.

The victims are the result of the Catholic Church's lack of morals and their cover-up. The Church has to answer to me for allowing the grievous actions Father Antonio Girardin's did and his sexual molestation of me.

000065

Victims: publicly apologized to and compensated for these outlandish actions. Apologize for blaming my mother?

I have complained and talked about this for years, but nobody I talked with knew what action I should take or who I should go to for resolution and compensation??

The VICTIMS, not the predators are being pushed aside and ignored?

Sue the diocese in Portland?

Roman Catholic Bishop of Portland
Chancery Office
Roman Catholic Diocese of Portland
Attn Sister Rita-Mae Bissonnette, Chancellor
510 Ocean Avenue
P.O. Box 11559
Portland, ME 04101-7559

My father dying has nothing to do with Father Antonio Girardin sexually molesting me and it certainly was not my mothers fault as was told to me by [REDACTED] that the diocese sent me to.

I used to think that something was wrong with me and:

I didn't/don't dress right,
I was/am not clean enough,
I didn't/don't look right,
I didn't/don't talk right,
I didn't/don't say the right things,
I did/do the wrong things,
I didn't/don't keep my room good,
I didn't/don't have the right job,
I didn't/don't let my boss molest me,
I didn't/don't know the right people,

I still held lots in and didn't set down and talk about things to clear the air at all. People talk now, which is the right way to handle these things, but? Father Girardin was supposed to be someone I could trust? He was in a position of power in the church.

000066

I had nobody close to me to talk to and I did not know who to tell to get some action taken and when I was told that I could contact the Diocese; I did contact them in November 1993 within weeks after I found out that something could be done. I had told my husband when I first met him about this garbage, but he did not know what I could do. The counseling I had did nothing for me and it was a waste of time all around.

This certainly affected my sex life in that I have not been able to relax and enjoy completely what I should have.

I have lived with this for 60 years, questioning myself for allowing these actions to happen to me!!

I am retired from work now, and am unable to do very much because of my physical limitations. I should be able to live comfortably, but mentally I am unable to; as I am still faced with the mess Father Antonio Girardin made of my life years ago that still affects me now. The Catholic Church is responsible and accountable for the actions of their priests. It was in 1942/1943 when I was 11/12 and in the 5th grade at Saint Michael's School in south Berwick, Maine when Father Antonio Girardin first sexually molested me. The church is responsible for this tragedy happening to me and God knows how many others.

000067