

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** To File  
**FROM:** Abbot Timothy Kelly, O.S.B.  
**RE:** Father Thomas Gillespie, O.S.B.  
**DATE:** March 2, 1996

On February 23, 1996, I received a letter from Jeffrey R. Anderson of Reinhardt & Anderson law firm dated February 21, 1996, advising that [redacted] was reporting sexual molestation by Father Thomas Gillespie 18 years earlier when [redacted] was 14 years old. He is now 32 years old. I immediately asked Father Rene McGraw to come to my office so that we could contact our lawyer about the case. Father Rene is the one who handles such cases for the abbot with the attorneys.

I then called Father Thomas Gillespie at the parish in St Joseph, Minnesota where he was pastor, and asked him to come to see me right away. He came within about 20 minutes. I showed him the attorney's letter. I asked him to choose some other person, another monk if possible, to be his support person and when he had done so to tell me who that person was. He named Father Dan Ward.

Father Thomas remained at the monastery until we could reach Father Dan and when he arrived at my office I showed him the letter as well. (A letter had arrived at the parish in the mail that morning as well but he had not as yet received his mail.) Father Dan Ward is an attorney. Until such time as we could contact the bishop of the Diocese of St Cloud and learn of his wishes I asked Father Dan if he would be willing to stay with Father Thomas and he agreed to do so. This was also agreeable to Father Thomas.

I called the chancery office of the diocese to speak with Bishop John Kinney but he was away that morning. I then talked with the Vicar General of the diocese, Msgr. Daniel Taufen. He said he would talk with the bishop when he returned later that morning and would get back to me. He called around 12:20 or 12:30 P.M. to inform me that he and the bishop would call me that afternoon at 2:30.

When we talked at 2:30 P.M. on the telephone it was the bishop's decision that Father Thomas be relieved of pastoral responsibilities immediately and be placed on administrative leave. I informed Father Dan Ward of this since he was at the rectory with Father Thomas at St Joseph. Father Thomas was not immediately available for a conversation but I did repeat the message to him some minutes later. Father Dan remained with Father Thomas at the rectory over-

night and after packing necessary belongings Father Thomas returned to the monastery Saturday afternoon.

On Saturday morning I called Msgr. Taufen and asked if he could contact the bishop and tell him I was nominating Father Dan Ward as temporary administrator of the parish and asking if the bishop would appoint my nominee. Shortly thereafter Bishop Kinney called me and agreed to the appointment.

The following week I made arrangements with St Luke Institute in Suitland, Maryland, to do an evaluation of Father Thomas. They have accepted him for evaluation and he will leave for the Institute on March 16, 1996; the evaluation will begin on March 18 and will end on March 22.

Since then Father Thomas has been living in the monastery.

Friday, February 23, 1996, was the first I had ever heard of any allegations of sexual misconduct against Father Thomas Gillespie. It came as a total surprise to me. I did a thorough investigation of his files and found nothing that would suggest any prior knowledge or hint of misconduct on his part.