

Patrick J. Wall

MAY 20, 2013 · 5:52 PM

Correction: The Courage of One

Please note this correction from Jim Fitzpatrick:

“Please note there is one error in the article and it is on Bishop Carlson. I did not ever say he threatened me, but that the threat was made to two Franciscan sister whom we know. They were working at St. Williams in Fridley in the Gil deSutter era and when they pleaded with Bishop Carlson, to remove deSutter, Carlson threatened them with what would happen if they went to the press. He used the terms that are in the article. So, when Bishop Carlson took me to lunch and said if I had something on him relative to Tom Adamson (which he knew I did from the Guardian Angels parish experience) and if I felt I needed to go to the authorities or the press, I should do so. I saw this as a veiled threat or a set up so I could face termination and blackballing in the church employment scene. So, the threat was indirect.”

Former Minnesota priest [Jim Fitzpatrick is courageously speaking about the child sexual abuse crimes by Father Thomas Adamson and the cover-up by the Bishops of Winona.](#)

Almost 50 years ago, Fitzpatrick broke the silence about what distraught parents from Caledonia told him about the priest and notified Winona Bishop Edward A. Fitzgerald about Adamson the very next day.

Fr. Jim Fitzpatrick served the Church as a pastor and teacher from 1963-1973. Fitz left active ministry in 1973, married and continued serving the Church as a parish administrator in the Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis. And he would remain in the dark about Adamson.

After Fitz’ report in 1965, Adamson was cycled from parish to parish, treatment center to treatment center and diocese to diocese.

Unknown to Fitz, Bishop Loras Watters, successor to Bishop Fitzgerald, had reports from four experts about Fr. Adamson—the Institute for Living (a well-known Catholic treatment facility), a local priest therapist, the Bishop’s own priest personnel board and the Servants of the Paraclete. All said that Adamson was fixated on boys.

Finally, Bishop Watters, under the Hierarchy’s policy of omertà, applied the “geographic solution” and ordered Adamson to Saint Paul, where the “scandal” could be better controlled.

By this time, Fitz was working as a church administrator. He received a call that Auxiliary Bishop Robert J. Carlson had assigned Fr. Thomas Adamson to his parish. Fitz immediately called Winona and asked Vicar General Father Donald Schmitz if Adamson was still sexually abusing boys. Schmitz—according to Fitz—said yes. Fitz threatened to resign. Carlson instead transferred Adamson to another parish.

Follow

This story is informative on several levels. First, many Roman Catholic priests have one first-hand story about a fellow

