

TIMELINE

NOVEMBER 2018 – Diocese first notified of alleged sexual harassment by Fr. Nowak.

JANUARY 2019 – Seminarian Matthew Bojanowski sends detailed letter to Bishop Malone about alleged harassment.

MARCH 13 & 19 – In taped conversations, Bishop Malone says Nowak is “a sick puppy” and should be sent for treatment because there is “plenty of evidence” he made a seminarian his sexual “target”.

His advisers worry he could be “preying on” other parishioners using the confessional, and Bishop Malone says “anything could happen” if he is left in the parish.

But they acknowledge Nowak may try to use blackmail as a weapon if he is disciplined, and parishioners say they are never informed of the allegations.

APRIL 11 – Christ the King controversy: Allegations that Nowak has sexually harassed current and past seminarians surface in letter sent to bishop by seminarians.

APRIL 30 – Bishop Malone appears to deceive his senior staff, writing in an email that the seminarians’ letter “mentioned things that I’d never heard before” about Nowak despite the discussion a month earlier.

MAY 8 – Six months after Bishop Malone received allegations, Nowak is contacted by 7 Eyewitness News and writes to the bishop: “I have not received any correspondence or even verbal word regarding any of this from Diocesan Officials.”

7 Eyewitness News contacts the diocese about the allegations.

MAY 9 – 7 Eyewitness News publishes story about Nowak allegations. Diocese acknowledges “a preliminary inquiry has been initiated concerning allegations of inappropriate behavior/unwanted contact.”

Unlike other priests, Bishop Malone allows Nowak to remain in ministry during the investigation.

JUNE 17 – Marie Bojanowski, seminarian's mother, sends a letter to Bishop Malone asking why he has allowed Nowak to remain in ministry despite her son's allegations seven months earlier.

AUG. 2 – In a taped conversation, Bishop Malone discourages Fr. Ryszard from telling the media about Fr. Nowak, saying the story would blow up "like an atom bomb."

"Jeff is dangerous," the bishop says. "Jeff's out to get us all."

AUG. 6 – 7 Eyewitness News I-Team publishes investigative report revealing Bishop Malone allowed Nowak to remain in ministry for months despite allegations of inappropriate contact with children, harassment of a seminarian and violating seal of the confessional.

AUG. 7 – Malone announces Nowak "has been temporarily removed from ministry" and has been asked to "a behavioral assessment."

AUG. 20 – Citing sexual harassment by Nowak and lack of response by Bishop Malone, Matthew resigns from the seminary, giving up his dream of becoming a Catholic priest.

In response, the diocese disputes Matthew's claim (contradicting the bishop's own recorded words) and says that Nowak "is on leave from his parish assignment."

Bishop places Fr. Ryszard Biernat on personal leave.

AUG. 28 – As 7 Eyewitness News prepares this story, the diocese announces Fr. Nowak has finally been placed on administrative leave – nine months after the seminarian reported sexual harassment to Bishop Malone.