

Reverend Dennis A. Rigney

Biographical Information

YEAR OF BIRTH:	1940
YEAR OF DEATH:	N/A
ORDINATION:	May 21, 1966

Employment/Assignment History

5/21/1966-6/01/1966	Ordained in Cathedral of St. Cathedral of Siena, Allentown, PA. by Bishop McShea
6/1/1966 – 6/1/1966	St. Peter, Reading, PA
6/1/1966 – 3/27/1969	Secretary Tribunal, Diocese of Allentown
3/27/1969 – 7/9/1969	Spanish Apostolate
7/9/1969 – 7/9/1969	Diocesan Tribunal
7/9/1969 – 11/1/1969	Regional Director, Spanish Apostolate, Berks County, PA
11/1/1969 – 1/1/1970	Council of Priests-Diocesan Consultors
1/1/1970 – 10/12/1971	Executive Dire. And Moderator, Social Action Bureau
10/12/1971 – 6/14/1974	Council of Priests-Diocesan Consultors
6/14/1974 – 6/14/1974	Executive Secretary and Coordinator Council of Social Services
6/14/1974 – 6/14/1974	Director, Family Life Bureau
6/14/1974 – 6/14/1974	Director, Catholic Charities & Catholic Social Agency
6/14/1974 – 6/14/1974	St. Peter, Reading, PA
6/14/1974 – 8/19/1975	Pastoral Council, Diocese of Allentown
8/19/1975 – 9/26/1975	Our Lady Help of Christians, Allentown, PA
9/26/1975 – 11/1/1975	Director of Marriage Encounter, Allentown, PA
11/1/1975 – 8/1/1977	Council of Priests-Diocesan Consultors
8/1/1977 – 11/1/1978	St. Paul, Allentown, PA
11/1/1978 – 6/1/1981	Council of Priests-Diocesan Consultors
6/1/1981 – 11/1/1981	Diocesan Consultor
11/1/1981 – 1/26/1982	Council of Priests
1/26/1982 – 9/26/1983	St. Vincent de Paul Society
9/26/1983 – 9/26/1983	Holy Family Manor, Bethlehem, PA
9/26/1983 – 11/15/1983	Holy Family Villa, Bethlehem, PA
11/15/1983 – 11/15/1983	Diocesan director, Holy Family Health Care Agency, Schuylkill County, PA
11/15/1983 – 1/1/1984	Diocesan Director; Project H.E.A.D.
1/1/1984 – 12/31/1985	PCC Administrative Board
6/16/1987 – 6/16/1987	St. Francis of Assisi, Allentown, PA
6/16/1987 – 6/8/1995	Bethlehem Priest Director, Holy Family Manor, (President and CEO)
6/8/1995 – 10/29/1997	Board of Directors Catholic Social Agency
10/29/1997 – 12/3/2000	Board of Seton Manor, Inc.
12/3/2000 – 5/1/2002	Board of Covenant Home Care, Inc.

Summary

On August 9, 1989, a former employee of Holy Family Manor wrote a letter to Bishop Welsh with a complaint against Rigney, who had pressured the employee to resign her position as a nurse's aide. The employee continued by asserting that she refused to resign and was subsequently fired. The employee stated, "*Monsignor Rigney regards himself as a ladies man and he's crazy about women,*" and "*if you don't give him certain rights . . . i.e . . . to hug, grab, or kiss, he gets 'even' with you.*" The employee said he got "*even*" with her because she wanted no part of his physical advances. The Diocese later learned that this was not Rigney's first incident and that the abusive conduct began much earlier.

On April 6, 1987, Father Thomas Kuhn of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati wrote a letter to Archbishop Daniel E. Pilarczyk of Cincinnati regarding a parishioner claiming she was "*fondled in the area of the vagina 'when she was about 12 or 13'*" by Rigney. Kuhn's letter was forwarded to the Allentown Diocese.

On April 4, 1988, Rigney wrote a 23 page document to Welsh after allegations were made that Rigney "*digitally stroked a female minor's vagina.*" The letter denied any inappropriate touching or actions and painted both the victim and her family as highly dysfunctional and not credible, trying to convince the bishop of the same. Rigney's letter was in response to a letter sent to the Allentown Diocese from a relative of the victim.

On April 9, 2002, a woman telephoned the Chancery stating she had been touched inappropriately by a priest when she was about age nine or 10. The touching occurred over a one-year period in 1966-1967. Fifteen to twenty years later, the victim's sister told her that she too was touched by the same priest. The victim identified the offending priest as Rigney. The victim stated that she and her sister attended St. Peter's School in Reading and were members of St. Peter's Church, where Rigney was stationed. The victim stated Rigney had a house "*at the river,*" where he took them water skiing at the "*beach on the river.*" According to the victim, Rigney "*digitally stroked her vagina and caressed the rest of her body, kissed her on the lips, and 'petted' her on various parts of her body, including her breasts, buttocks, shoulder, neck, back, legs, stomach, and vagina.*"

On April 18, 2002, Rigney requested early retirement citing medical reasons. On April 29, 2002, Rigney was granted early retirement by the Diocese, for medical reasons. On July 31, 2003, Monsignor Schlert, the Vicar General, sent a letter to Monsignor Gobitas indicating that Rigney was apprehensive about attending a "*special retreat*" he was encouraged to attend by the Diocese, because "*he retired without Scandal, if he goes to the retreat with the other 'known' offenders, it will implicate him.*"