

Reverend Monsignor Robert Maher

Biographical Information

YEAR OF BIRTH:	1911
YEAR OF DEATH:	1990
ORDINATION:	May 22, 1937

Employment/Assignment History

6/03/1937-6/09/1939	St. Rose of Lima, York, PA
6/09/1939-12/1939	St. Mary's, Kulpmont, PA (left due to health)
1/06/1940-4/04/1941	St. Peter, Columbia, PA
4/1941	Chaplain to Boy Scouts
1/1946-10/1961	Superintendent of schools
4/04/1941-7/10/1946	St. Mary Assumption, Lebanon, PA
7/10/1946-5/24/1960	St. Peter, Columbia, PA
5/24/1960-12/14/1961	St. Patrick's Cathedral, Harrisburg, PA
12/14/1961-8/1974	St. Vincent, Hanover, PA
4/23/1975	Resignation accepted; faculties not revoked; Villa Vianney Retirement home
1979 to 1986	Archivist for the Diocese of Harrisburg

Summary

An undated, unsigned, handwritten chronology for Monsignor Robert Maher was found in his restricted file in the Diocese of Harrisburg. This chronology noted that in April of 1975 Maher submitted his resignation to St. Vincent in Hanover. A quote from Maher is documented as: *"I cannot pretend, nor do you, that this whole experience is without pain. But like surgery it must be endured trusting no metastasis will overtake our spiritual therapy."* Maher further stated, *"most important is that Father Christie has a rather complete knowledge of my personal history."*

The following entry in the chronology reads: *"Bishop [Joseph] Daley accepts resignation and grants approval for residence at Villa Vianney. Faculties not revoked."*

There were no documents in the file that discussed the reason for the resignation and/or why faculties were not revoked.

In 1994, Father Paul Helwig wrote to Bishop Nicholas Dattilo regarding a man's allegation that Maher committed sexual abuse. Dattilo wrote:

Is there anything in his file? Monsignor is dead and can't defend himself. Are we in the situation of having to treat and/or support everyone who makes an allegation? To what extent? +NCD

Summary

The man who made the report in 1994 stated Maher kissed him, touched him in an “*immodest*” way, and performed oral sex on him to the point of ejaculation. The then-boy was in sixth or seventh grade. This abuse occurred sometime during Maher’s assignment at St. Vincent (1961-1975).

This same man made the same reports to the Diocese in 1997, 2002 and 2007.

In 1997, a Secular Franciscan Brother reported to the Diocese via a letter that as an adult he had sought Maher for counseling. During counseling, Maher hugged him, kissed him on the lips, and “*stuck his tongue*” in the victim’s mouth.

In 2012, another man reported to the Diocese that Maher had sexually abused him when he was a boy. This was documented in a summary interview written by Father Paul Clark. The then-boy’s mother took him to Maher because she found her son to be “*intractably bad.*” This boy had to sit on Maher’s lap and he was kissed when he was nine years old.

In 2015, another man’s statement was summarized in an interview report by Diocese of Harrisburg officials. When this boy was 10 years old, he broke his collarbone. Maher commented on the boy’s broken bone and leaned in as to kiss him on the mouth. The boy backed away. During confession, Maher asked this boy if he masturbated, got a “*hard on,*” and how big was his penis.

A parishioner of St. Vincent wrote a letter in 2015 describing that 15 boys were sexually abused by Maher during his assignment at the parish from 1961 to 1975. The reporting parishioner was interviewed by Diocesan officials. The parishioner was a student at the time of the alleged abuse, essentially the same age of the other boys. The parishioner did not disclose the names of the 15 boys; he stated they had the right to privacy and the right to come forward on their own.

In 2016, another man’s statement was summarized in an interview report by the Diocese. The man reported that Maher touched the genitals of a seven year old boy; Maher also reportedly performed oral sex on the boy.