

Reverend Richard Deakin

Biographical Information

YEAR OF BIRTH:	1955
YEAR OF DEATH:	N/A
ORDINATION:	April 13, 1985

Employment/Assignment History

3/1984-6/1987	Deacon until ordained; Assistant Pastor after ordination, St. Martin, Baltimore, MD
6/1987-8/1988	Parochial Vicar, St. Cecilia Church and Friary, Rochester, PA
1988	St. Francis Friary, Brookline, PA (in residence only)
8/15/1989	Leave of Absence
12/29/1992	Dismissed from clerical state

Summary

Documents subpoenaed from the Diocese of Pittsburgh reflected that in May 1990, Father Richard Deakin was contacted by the Baltimore City Police Department about allegations that he had sexually abused a 13-year-old girl for more than a two year-period while his was the assistant pastor of St. Martin in Baltimore, Maryland. At the time police contacted him, Deakin was on a leave of absence from his Order and the priesthood.

Deakin was arrested on June 25, 1990. He was charged with and, in October 1990, pled guilty to charges of second degree rape and sexual abuse of a child, who was identified in court filings as “Jane Doe.” He was sentenced to a 15-year suspended prison sentence and five years of probation.

Correspondence from the victim’s attorneys which was included in subpoenaed Diocesan files reflected that when the victim was 13 years old, she underwent serious surgery to remove a tumor from her chest. During this vulnerable period, Deakin assumed a prominent role in her life, being both her friend and confidant. He would visit her in the hospital regularly and they became very close. “*In the winter of 1985-86,*” Deakin began sexually abusing her. “*The sexual relationship intensified and sex occurred in St. Martin’s Church, the rectory, Father Rich’s car, (redacted) home, and various other locations.*”

In an undated letter by Deakin which was addressed to “*Most Holy Father,*” he described in his own words, details of his inappropriate relationship with this young girl. He stated:

During my last year to sixteen months at St. Martins’ I became progressively more sexually involved with a teenage girl in the parish. I had become friends with her and her family. Our relationship started by this girl and her brother accompanying me when I went out shopping or to the movies or to the park. Our

Summary

physical contact progressed from occasional playful contact to kissing and petting to sexual intercourse.

Deakin wrote that he “[had] never forced [redacted] to have any sexual contact without her consent” and that she “[had] initiated the sexual behavior between us as often as I did.” “We both knew that this behavior was inappropriate and wrong.” He went on to say that he believed that he and the victim “were both so emotionally needy that we overlooked what was right and wrong” and that he “was using this teenage girl to gain a sense of power, as well as, to feel needed by someone not as a priest but as a man.”

Deakin admitted that “[i]t was a very sick relationship,” and added that “[n]o one was aware of the sexual behavior between myself and this teenage girl.” Deakin also admitted that he never told his psychiatrist about his relationship with the victim because he “knew there were legal consequences.” Deakin’s abuse of this girl which lasted over a year and a half, continued after he was transferred to St. Cecelia in Rochester, PA. Deakin returned to Baltimore on several occasions, however, and would meet the victim at a motel. The relationship was finally terminated when Deakin told the victim that he was in love with another woman whom he intended to marry.

Shortly after Deakin ended the relationship, she became a troubled child, acting out in school and eventually failing tenth grade. In December, 1989, she began to have nightmares about the sexual abuse she endured. She entered counseling and revealed her relationship with Deakin to her mother and to her psychiatrist. She became despondent and suicidal and she had to be hospitalized.

In October 1990, she was hospitalized again and was not released until January, 1991. She reentered the hospital again in March of 1991 for a short stay. She underwent psychotherapy on an outpatient basis. She was eventually diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder and major depression, all the result of the sexual abuse.

This victim and her mother subsequently filed a civil lawsuit.

On November 17, 1992, Father Robert F. Guay of the Diocese of Pittsburgh testified in a deposition taken in connection with the litigation. Guay had served as the Director of the Department of Clergy Personnel for the Diocese during the time that Deakin was transferred to St. Cecilia. During his testimony, he stated that after the Diocese found out about the ongoing sexual abuse of this victim, it did not investigate or inquire of anyone at St. Cecilia to learn if Deakin had engaged in sexual misconduct with any of the children in that parish. Guay also testified that he only learned that Deakin had been formally charged for sexual abuse of a minor through a newspaper article. Guay said that he was not aware if anyone from the Diocese of Pittsburgh had contacted the Archdiocese of Baltimore to find out more information regarding the charges.

The lawsuit was settled on October 11, 1993 for \$2,705,000.