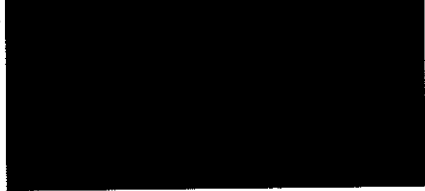


060284

O'Connor Victim 2



O'Connor Victim 2

O'Connor Victim 2, age 47, a monk of *location removed* stated that in 1967 – 1969, when he was 12-14 years of age (born 1955), he was abused by Rev. Donald O'Connor, a priest of the Diocese of Joliet, who was then an associate pastor at Assumption Parish in Coal City.

O'Connor Victim 2

O'Connor Victim 2 graduated from St. Charles Borromeo Seminary in 1973. Then Fr. Kaffer was rector during his freshman year; Fr. Stempora was the rector during the other years.

O'Connor Victim 2

O'Connor Victim 2 dad was in ICU at St. Joseph Hospital. Fr. Flynn, the pastor, recommended that he get away from the "death watch" and was taken to Chicago by Fr. O'Connor. **O'Connor Victim 2** stated that he was groomed. There were multiple incidents of abuse that occurred both in Cook and Grundy counties. He was unable to talk to anyone about his experiences.

O'Connor Victim 2

At the age of 16, in 1971 **O'Connor Victim 2** drove to a monastery in Iowa where he spoke to a Trappist priest about what happened to him. The priest told him that he admired him for his courage, for dealing with the matter and said he needed to tell someone.

O'Connor Victim 2

Upon his return home **O'Connor Victim 2** mother asked him what was wrong, so he told her. He had such shame. That same year, he confronted Fr. O'Connor at D'Amico's restaurant on Jefferson Street. Bishop Blanchette was the bishop at the time and some inference was made by Fr. O'Connor that the bishop would not believe **O'Connor Victim 2**. Fr. O'Connor is supposed to have said that "It's better than shacking up with a woman."

In 1989 his mother, who had been a teacher in Wilmington, died. In 1991, the brother of **O'Connor Victim 2** who lives in Plainfield, told him **O'Connor Victim 2** that the mother had related the story and asked for advice. **O'Connor Victim 2** brother pleaded with him to go to the Bishop but he said he couldn't because he was too ashamed.

DIOCESE OF JOLIET

000287

OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

MEMORANDUM
FOR THE FILE

May 17, 2002

RE: Reverend Donald O'Connor

I met with **O'Connor Victim 2** a monk of [REDACTED] on Tuesday, May 14th. Also with him was Father Duane, a Capuchin, who is on the staff at [REDACTED]. **O'Connor Victim 2** name prior to religious life was [REDACTED]

Between the years 1967 and 1969 when [REDACTED] was 12 - 14 years old, he was abused by Father Donald O'Connor, who was then an associate at Assumption parish in Coal City. He said that he was taken out of school, taken on trips to Chicago and given gifts by Father O'Connor. He said the abuse occurred at least twice in Chicago hotel rooms and on other occasions in Father O'Connor's car. He confronted Father O'Connor when he was 16 years old. [REDACTED] graduated from St. Charles Borromeo Seminary in 1973. Several years later, after being engaged to be married, [REDACTED] entered the Benedictine community at [REDACTED]

He said that he had told his mother about the abuse, but not his father. His mother said that if his father knew, he would kill Father O'Connor.

For a number of years [REDACTED] had drinking problems. He is now a recovering alcoholic. He said that he is very much at peace and does not feel that he has been damaged by his abuse. He has not spoken about it, but he saw the letter that I wrote to all of the people of the diocese asking anyone who had been abused to come forward and he decided that it was time for him to make this public.

He has informed Abbot Gregory about the abuse. He said that he wants his name to be used as the victim. I sent a copy of the letter which I am sending to the parishioners in Coal City to [REDACTED] in case he has any comments or suggestions. I asked him again if he was certain that he wanted to be named. He said today that he decided to have his name removed


Bishop Joseph L. Imesch

bc-Bishop Roger Kaffer
Bishop James Fitzgerald

000451

O'Connor Victim 7

DATE: MARCH, 2005

3/2/05 - 2:03 - 2:10 pm

Sister of O'Connor Victim 7 called from Coal City to talk about her brother who had been abused by Fr. O'Conner. Her brother **V1** is now 48 years old and is just now sharing his experience as a reason for his not attending church. **V1** had been badgering him to attend, not knowing why he didn't. After sharing some of his story with me, I suggested **V1** himself, call me to give me the information first hand, not second-party information. She agreed.

4:10 - 4:45 pm

O'Connor Victim 7 called me later that afternoon. **V1** had reported the abuse to the Chicago Archdiocese but received no response from them. They only recommended that he contact the Joliet Diocesan offices, but he didn't have a contact number at the time so he let it go. Now that his sister **V7** has discovered the information, she is encouraging him to report it.

At the time of his abuse, about 1966/68, he was an altar boy whom Fr. O'Conner took a liking to. Fr. O'Conner took him to the Museum of Science and Industry. They followed that by a stay at a hotel. When he awoke, he had no clothes on; he suspects he was given medications. There was shaving cream on his stomach with a smiley face on it. There was someone else in the room but he doesn't know who it was. He was still drowsy.

This event changed his life; there is no respect for priests or the church. He goes to church only for weddings or funerals. He knows that Fr. O'Conner is no longer an active priest, but lives in Braidwood.

I asked how I could help him. I offered help: talk to another priest, but it was soundly rejected; counseling, no, again. He had gone to a counselor in the past, but alone since his wife would not go with him. They continue to have relationship problems. He wanted a cash settlement but could give me no amount.

I told him I'd be meeting with Bishop Imesch on Monday, March 7th, and would discuss the information with him, although it would be the Review Board who would make any decision in his case. I asked him to put it in writing for me and I would submit it to Sr. Judith Davies.

On March 7th, I received a call from **V7** again saying **V7** did not have time to write the letter yet but would send it at a later date.

3/7/06

After one year **V7** called me again last night to talk about her brother. I did not have my records at home and it was late so we agreed to talk this morning. I called about

000452

9:45 on both her cell and home phone but there was no answer. I left a message for her to call me.

O'Connor Victim 7 did call me later in the morning and we talked about 20 minutes. She and her husband were on the speaker phone. [REDACTED] said it took place in 1967/70, not the dates as above. She will send the information to me by mail after I read what I had in the record. She agreed that it covered about everything but it was written up so she will send it.

Her husband [REDACTED] began to speak up during our conversation. He remembers a Fr. McDermott who was a wonderful man. He often took the kids to Chicago to see Our Lady of Fatima and other occasions but never touched them or acted inappropriately. He also admired Fr. Ted Burst and Fr. Jim Lennon who were "great guys." Fr. Rick Ruffalo was also in the Parish for weekend work and seemed a happy-go-lucky person but he never had anything to do with him.

At the end of the conversation I asked about **V7** and his wife who were having a strained marriage. According to [REDACTED] they are now separated and will be divorced.

Both again stated they do NOT want any publicity on this; no names in the paper or identification of any sort. I assured them that I would discuss this only with Bishop Imesch. They were satisfied.

Again, they did not state what they expected from me or the Diocese in spite of my asking.



Diocese of Joliet

Office of the Bishop

000288

425 Summit St.
Joliet, Illinois 60435

815-722-6606
Fax 815-722-6602

MEMORANDUM
FOR THE FILE

May 17, 2002

RE: Reverend Donald O'Connor


I met with Father **O'Connor Victim 2** a monk of *Location* in
on Tuesday, May 14th. Also with him was Father Duane, a Capuchin, who is on
the staff at *Location* **O'Connor Victim 2**; name prior to religious life was **deleted by Diocese**

Between the years 1967 and 1969 when **V2** was 12 - 14 years old, he was
abused by Father Donald O'Connor, who was then an associate at Assumption parish in
Coal City. He said that he was taken out of school, taken on trips to Chicago and given
gifts by Father O'Connor. He said the abuse occurred at least twice in Chicago hotel rooms
and on other occasions in Father O'Connor's car. He confronted Father O'Connor when
he was 16 years old **V2** graduated from St. Charles Borromeo Seminary in 1973. Several
years later, after being engaged to be married, **V2** entered the Benedictine community at

He said that he had told his mother about the abuse, but not his father. His
mother said that if his father knew, he would kill Father O'Connor.

For a number of years **V2** had drinking problems. He is now a recovering
alcoholic. He said that he is very much at peace and does not feel that he has been damaged
by his abuse. He has not spoken about it, but he saw the letter that I wrote to all of the
people of the diocese asking anyone who had been abused to come forward and he decided
that it was time for him to make this public.

He has informed Abbot Gregory about the abuse. He said that he wants his
name to be used as the victim. I sent a copy of the letter which I am sending to the
parishioners in Coal City to Father **V2** in case he has any comments or suggestions. I
asked him again if he was certain that he wanted to be named. He said today that he decided
to have his name removed


Bishop Joseph L. Inesch

P.S. I met with Father O'Connor on Thursday, May 16th. I told him of the allegation. He
admitted that it occurred. I told him that I was relieving him of his assignment as pastor at
Assumption in Coal City, effective Saturday, May 18th, after the morning Mass.

cc-Bishop Roger Kaffer
Bishop James Fitzgerald
Mr. James Byrne

000285

Before entering the Benedictines, he had been engaged and shared his experience with his fiancé. (About 2 years ago, she moved to the Coal City parish.) Sometime he also told Fr. Carroll Howlin his story as well.


O'Connor Victim 2 decided to fulfill his vocation not as a priest of Joliet, but by becoming a Benedictine monk. He suffered from alcohol abuse. In 1995 at the age of 40, he walked away from booze.

In April 2002, he read and re-read the letter written by Bishop Imesch to parishioners that month in which the Bishop told people who were abused to come forward. The Bishop's letter moved him to action.

O'Connor Victim 2 has anguished over bringing his story to light. His greatest fear is that the priest will deny it happened. **O'Connor Victim 2** has no evidence, but says it is true. **O'Connor Victim 2** has the support of his abbot, Abbot Gregory. He has told his therapist that he has nothing against the Joliet Diocese and that he loves the Diocese.

O'Connor Victim 2 is not seeking a settlement; he just wants Fr. O'Connor removed so that no one else will be hurt.

O'Connor Victim 2 has an appointment to see Bishop Imesch on May 14, 2002.


Sister Judith A. Davies, OSF
May 8, 2002

Mother of O'Connor Victim 5

000599

Plainfield, IL

H: [REDACTED]

W: [REDACTED]

May 29, 2002

This afternoon I received a call from **Mother of O'Connor Victim 5** [REDACTED] When she lived in Braidwood, her family was good friends with Fr. O'Connor. Both of her boys served as his altar boys.

Her older son [REDACTED] was molested by Fr. O'Connor while on a fishing trip in Wisconsin. At the time he would have been somewhere between the ages of 11-13.

Sometime within the past few years **V5** [REDACTED] approximately 34 years old, committed suicide.

Mrs. [REDACTED] couldn't bring herself to tell anyone about **V5** [REDACTED] abuse, but at the urging of her younger son called the Chancery. All she wanted to do was to report what happened to

000289

May 17, 2002

Reverend Donald O'Connor
Assumption Parish
245 S. Kankakee
Coal City, IL 60416-1697

Dear Don,

In view of our recent conversation I am removing you from your assignment as pastor at Assumption parish in Coal City, effective Saturday, May 18th. This action is being taken because of sexual abuse of a minor that took place between 1967 and 1969 when you were assigned as an associate at Assumption parish.

In removing you from your pastorate, I am also taking away your faculties to function publicly as a priest. You may, however, continue to say Mass privately.

Don, your age allows you to be eligible for retirement benefits. I will see that those benefits begin in the month of June. Your check will normally be sent at the end of each month. Since you are not yet 70, one-half of one percent of your retirement benefits is deducted for each month short of 70. Rather than provide you with a pension check that differs every month, your benefits will be figured on an annual basis and so you will receive the same amount in each check for a calendar year. When you have an address, I would appreciate receiving it so that your monthly benefits may be mailed to you.

Don, you have been a compassionate and caring pastor in all of your assignments. The sexual abuse of a minor, no matter when it occurs, is a terrible act. You have expressed your remorse to me and I have experienced the pain you are feeling. The Lord is a merciful loving Father and I know that He will care for you during this difficult time. I will

May 17, 2002

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remember you in my prayers and I ask you to remember me as well. Please stay in touch.

Sincerely in Christ,

Most Reverend Joseph L. Imesch
Bishop of Joliet

P.S. Don if you want to receive some professional assistance I would contact St. Luke's in Washington on your behalf. Please let me know.

bc-Bishop Roger Kaffer
Bishop James Fitzgerald

000457

April 5, 2005

Donald O'Connor
693 Anndon
Braidwood, IL 60408

Dear Don,

It is time to write another "thank you" to you! I really appreciate your kindness, but I feel somewhat uncomfortable in accepting your generous gifts throughout the year. You, more than anyone else, have repeatedly expressed your sorrow for your actions.

I enjoyed my brief visit with you in your home. Now that I know where you live it is easy for me to picture you in different rooms of your home. I am glad that is working out so well.

Would you be free for lunch at noon on Wednesday, April 13th? If so, let us plan to meet at Bob Evans on Larkin at 80 at noon. I will ask Sister Judith to join us. If that is not good, please call Natalie and we will find another date.

Thanks, again for your generosity. I do appreciate it. You are in my prayers and I ask you to remember me as well.

Prayers and best wishes to you.

Sincerely in Christ,

Most Reverend Joseph L. Imesch
Bishop of Joliet

000458

May 20, 2005

Dear Don,

Monday is the 41st anniversary of your ordination to the priesthood and I wanted you to know that you will be remembered in a special way on that day. I know that it will be a difficult day for you, but I hope you are comforted by the opportunity to celebrate Mass privately in your home.

As painful as all of this has been, I am glad that you still have the opportunity to celebrate Eucharist. You certainly seem to be adjusting well, though I know it must be a constant struggle.

Don't forget that we have to schedule a luncheon date for the one that we could not make. I will wait to hear from you.

You are in my prayers each day and I ask you to remember me as well.

Sincerely in Christ,

Most Reverend Joseph L. Imesch
Bishop of Joliet