

[Note: Father George A. Berthiaume, named in this complaint, died on 12/3/85.]

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

HAMPDEN, SS

SUPERIOR COURT DEPARTMENT
C. A. No. 05-0331 (B)

WILLIAM E. BURNETT,
Plaintiff

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)
)

v.

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)

JURY TRIAL DEMANDED

THE ROMAN CATHOLIC BISHOP OF
SPRINGFIELD, A CORPORATION SOLE,
ROMAN CATHOLIC BISHOP OF
WORCESTER, A CORPORATION SOLE,
and MICHAEL MOE Nos. 1 - 10,
Defendants

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COMPLAINT

PARTIES

1. Plaintiff WILLIAM E. BURNETT is an individual residing in Tennessee Colony, Texas, where he is an inmate serving a sentence of 60 years for the crime of murder.
2. Defendant THE ROMAN CATHOLIC BISHOP OF SPRINGFIELD, A CORPORATION SOLE ("SPRINGFIELD BISHOP"), is a corporation duly organized under Chapter 368 of the Acts of 1898 of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, with an usual place of business at 65 Elliott Street, Springfield, Hampden County, Massachusetts.

3. Defendant ROMAN CATHOLIC BISHOP OF WORCESTER, A CORPORATION SOLE ("WORCESTER BISHOP"), is a corporation duly organized under Chapter 197 of the Acts of 1950, with an usual place of business at 49 Elm Street, Worcester, Worcester County, Massachusetts.
4. Defendants MICHAEL MOE Nos. 1 - 10 are individuals who took part in the conspiracy to hide the instances of abuse alleged, whose names are presently unknown to the plaintiff.

FACTS COMMON TO ALL COUNTS

5. At all times relevant to this action, defendant SPRINGFIELD BISHOP controlled and directed the hiring, training, supervision and retention of the clergy in the Diocese of Springfield.
6. At all times relevant to this action, defendant WORCESTER BISHOP controlled and directed the hiring, training, supervision and retention of the clergy in the Diocese of Worcester. [Note: Father George A. Berthiaume, named in this complaint, died on 12/3/85.]
7. At all times relevant to this action, Bernard L. Doheny, Raymond J. Page, Christopher Weldon, George Berthiaume, Oscar Gatineau, James Walsh, and Timothy J. Harrington were duly ordained Roman Catholic Priests (referred to hereafter as "PERPETRATORS"), assigned by defendant SPRINGFIELD BISHOP and defendant WORCESTER BISHOP (referred to jointly hereafter as "defendant BISHOPS") to various parishes in their respective Dioceses, for the purpose of performing the functions of clergymen.
8. For many years, and continuing to the present time, defendant BISHOPS, along with the PERPETRATORS and others, have engaged in a conspiracy to conceal

criminal acts of sexual abuse which were committed by individuals whom it recruited, hired, trained, supervised and retained as clergymen in their respective Dioceses.

9. At times relevant to this action, defendants MICHAEL MOE Nos. 1 - 10, engaged in said conspiracy with defendant BISHOPS.
10. For at least the past fifty years, and continuing to the present time, the Plaintiff, as well as many other persons, both known and unknown to him, were sexually abused, assaulted and raped, by the PERPETRATORS, and other priests who are not named in this action, because of said conspiracy.
11. Plaintiff was born in Springfield, Massachusetts in 1941. He grew up in a faithful Catholic family, was an altar boy at St. Michael's Cathedral, and also took care of the altar at St. Michael's during the summer months.
12. Plaintiff attended Cathedral grammar and high schools in Springfield, and graduated from high school in 1959.
13. Plaintiff's father died in 1949 when he was 9 years old, and his mother remarried in 1952. From 1949 to 1952, Plaintiff's mother worked full time to support him and his older brother.
14. From 1949 to 1952, Plaintiff spent the summers with his maternal grandmother at his uncle's cabin in Holland, Massachusetts.
15. Plaintiff's uncle, Raymond J. Page, was a Roman Catholic priest.
16. Plaintiff's uncle was a childhood friend of Timothy J. Harrington, and attended the seminary with him.
17. From 1946 to 1950, Plaintiff's uncle was a priest in the Springfield Diocese.

18. In 1950, the Springfield Diocese was divided into two parts. The eastern part of the Springfield Diocese became the Worcester Diocese.
19. Plaintiff's uncle was originally stationed at Notre Dame parish in Southbridge. Later, he was assigned to St. Anne's Shrine in Fiskdale.
20. From 1950 through 1959, Plaintiff was subjected to physical and sexual abuse by several individuals. All of the individuals who abused him were priests and bishops who were under the supervision of the defendant BISHOPS.
21. Plaintiff was sexually abused by Bernard L. Doheny, a priest of the Springfield Diocese.
22. Plaintiff was sexually abused by his uncle, Raymond J. Page, a priest of both the Springfield and Worcester dioceses.
23. Plaintiff was sexually abused by Christopher Weldon, Bishop of the Springfield Diocese.
24. Plaintiff was sexually abused by George Berthiaume, a priest of the Springfield Diocese. [Note: Father George A. Berthiaume, named in this complaint, died on 12/3/85.]
25. Plaintiff was sexually abused by Oscar Gatineau, a priest of the Worcester Diocese.
26. Plaintiff was sexually abused by James Walsh, a priest of the Springfield Diocese.
27. Plaintiff was sexually abused by Bishop Timothy J. Harrington, while he was a priest of the Worcester Diocese.
28. At about age 10, Plaintiff was first abused by Bernard L. Doheny.
29. The abuse by Bernard L. Doheny continued until Plaintiff was about 14 years old.
30. The abuse of Plaintiff by Bernard L. Doheny consisted of oral copulation and anal penetration of the Plaintiff.

31. The abuse by Bernard L. Doheny occurred at St. Michael's Cathedral, Springfield.
32. The abuse by Bernard L. Doheny occurred in the church and in the rectory.
33. The abuse by Bernard L. Doheny occurred approximately 10 times.
34. The abuse by Bernard L. Doheny was witnessed by George Berthiaume.
[Note: Father George A. Berthiaume, named in this complaint, died on 12/3/85.]
35. The abuse by Bernard L. Doheny was also witnessed by Bishop Christopher Weldon.
36. Plaintiff told his uncle, Raymond J. Page, about the abuse by Bernard L. Doheny.
37. Starting at about age 10, Plaintiff was abused by his uncle, Raymond J. Page.
38. The abuse by Raymond J. Page continued until Plaintiff was about 16 years old.
39. When Plaintiff told his uncle about the abuse by Bernard L. Doheny, his uncle told him to demonstrate what Bernard L. Doheny had done to him.
40. The abuse of Plaintiff by Raymond J. Page consisted of fondling his genitals, oral copulation and anal penetration of Plaintiff, and oral copulation of him by Plaintiff.
41. The abuse by Plaintiff's uncle occurred at his cabin at Holland, MA.
42. The abuse by Plaintiff's uncle occurred also at the rectory of St. Anne's Shrine in Fiskdale.
43. The abuse by Plaintiff's uncle occurred approximately 30 times.
44. The abuse by Plaintiff's uncle was witnessed by Oscar Gatineau.
45. Between the ages of 10 and 16, Plaintiff was abused by Bishop Christopher Weldon.
46. The abuse of Plaintiff by Bishop Weldon consisted of fondling his genitals, oral copulation and anal penetration of Plaintiff, and oral copulation of him by Plaintiff.
47. The abuse by Bishop Weldon occurred at St. Michael's Cathedral, Springfield.

48. The abuse by Bishop Weldon occurred approximately three times.
49. The abuse by Bishop Weldon was witnessed by George Berthiaume.
[Note: Father George A. Berthiaume, named in this complaint, died on 12/3/85.]
50. The abuse by Bishop Weldon was also witnessed by Bernard L. Doheny.
51. Plaintiff told Raymond J. Page about the abuse by Bishop Weldon.
52. Between the ages of 10 and 14, Plaintiff was abused by George Berthiaume.
[Note: Father George A. Berthiaume, named in this complaint, died on 12/3/85.]
53. The abuse of Plaintiff by George Berthiaume consisted of oral copulation and anal penetration of Plaintiff.
54. The abuse by George Berthiaume occurred at St. Michael's Cathedral, Springfield.
55. The abuse by George Berthiaume occurred approximately 4 to 5 times.
56. The abuse by George Berthiaume was witnessed by Bernard L. Doheny.
[Note: Father George A. Berthiaume, named in this complaint, died on 12/3/85.]
57. Plaintiff told Raymond J. Page about the abuse by George Berthiaume.
58. Between the ages of 12 and 13, Plaintiff was abused by Oscar Gatineau.
59. The abuse of Plaintiff by Oscar Gatineau consisted of fondling his genitals, oral copulation of Plaintiff, and oral copulation of him by Plaintiff.
60. The abuse by Oscar Gatineau occurred at Plaintiff's uncle's cabin at Holland.
61. The abuse by Oscar Gatineau occurred also at the rectory of St. Anne's Shrine in Fiskdale.
62. The abuse by Oscar Gatineau occurred approximately 5 times.
63. The abuse by Oscar Gatineau was witnessed by Plaintiff's uncle, Raymond J. Page.
64. At about age 15, Plaintiff was abused by James Walsh.
65. The abuse of Plaintiff by James Walsh consisted of anal penetration of the Plaintiff.
66. The abuse by James Walsh occurred at Mercy Hospital, Springfield.
67. The abuse by James Walsh occurred one time.

68. At about age 11 to 15, Plaintiff was abused by Bishop Timothy J. Harrington.
69. The abuse of Plaintiff by Bishop Timothy J. Harrington consisted of fondling his genitals and anal penetration, and oral copulation of him by Plaintiff.
70. The abuse by Bishop Timothy J. Harrington occurred at Plaintiff's uncle's cabin at Holland.
71. The abuse by Bishop Timothy J. Harrington occurred also at the rectory of St. Anne's Shrine in Fiskdale.
72. The abuse by Bishop Timothy J. Harrington occurred approximately 3 times.
73. The abuse by Bishop Timothy J. Harrington was witnessed by Raymond J. Page.
74. During the same time period, plaintiff is reliably informed and believes that other individuals have been sexually abused by Roman Catholic Priests, including the PERPETRATORS, and other priests who are not named in this action, all of whom were assigned to the Dioceses of Springfield and Worcester, and under the supervision of defendant BISHOPS, and defendants MICHAEL MOE Nos. 1 - 10.
75. Defendants, by their respective acts, both negligent and intentional, have inflicted severe emotional distress upon the Plaintiff.
76. The Plaintiff, until recently, has been unable to remember and/or to understand the damage which the several defendants have inflicted upon him.
77. As a result of the acts of the several defendants, Plaintiff requires psychological treatment and therapy, and will continue to require this treatment and therapy in the future.
78. Plaintiff is informed and believes that the PERPETRATORS, and other priests who are not named in this action, committed numerous sexual assaults on members of

the parishes in the respective Dioceses, under their care and supervision, and they were open and notorious pedophiles.

79. Defendant BISHOPS, and MICHAEL MOE Nos. 1 - 10 all knew, or in the exercise of reasonable care should have known, of the prior and on-going sexual assaults by the PERPETRATORS, and other priests who are not named in this action.
80. Defendant BISHOPS, and MICHAEL MOE Nos. 1 - 10 all knew, or in the exercise of reasonable care should have known, that the PERPETRATORS, and other priests who are not named in this action, were not fit persons to be placed in charge of the supervision of young males.
81. Defendant BISHOPS, and MICHAEL MOE Nos. 1 - 10 all knew, or in the exercise of reasonable care should have known, that the PERPETRATORS, and other priests who are not named in this action, were not fit persons to be retained in a position in which they would have access to young males.
82. Defendant BISHOPS, and MICHAEL MOE Nos. 1 - 10 all knew, or in the exercise of reasonable care should have discovered, that the PERPETRATORS, and other priests who are not named in this action, were engaged in illegal and inappropriate sexual conduct with young males under their supervision.
83. Defendant BISHOPS, and MICHAEL MOE Nos. 1 - 10 failed to train the PERPETRATORS, and other priests who are not named in this action, to perform their duties as supervisors of young males properly.
84. Defendant BISHOPS, and MICHAEL MOE Nos. 1 - 10 all knew, at various times during the past fifty years, that the aforesaid acts of sexual abuse were occurring, but conspired to keep this information from becoming public knowledge, which

conspiracy made it possible for the PERPETRATORS, and other priests who are not named in this action, to commit, and to continue to commit, sexual abuses, assaults and rapes upon the Plaintiff and others.

85. As a result of the assaults upon him by the PERPETRATORS, and the negligence of the defendant BISHOPS, and MICHAEL MOE Nos. 1 - 10, the Plaintiff has been seriously and permanently injured, and continues to suffer at present from psychological disease, which impairs and affects all aspects of his life.

COUNT 1

86. Plaintiff realleges paragraphs 1 through 85.
87. As a direct and proximate result of defendant BISHOPS and MICHAEL MOE Nos. 1 - 10's breach of their duty, plaintiff was sexually assaulted by the PERPETRATORS. He suffered bodily harm, humiliation, severe emotional distress, and permanent psychological damages. He has incurred expenses and/or will likely incur future expenses for medical and psychological treatment, and has suffered loss of income.

COUNT 2

88. Plaintiff realleges paragraphs 1 through 85.
89. Defendant BISHOPS are vicariously liable for the negligent acts by which the PERPETRATORS injured the Plaintiff.

COUNT 3

90. Plaintiff realleges paragraphs 1 through 85.
91. Defendant BISHOPS are vicariously liable for the negligence of defendants MICHAEL MOE Nos. 1 - 10, which resulted in the PERPETRATORS sexually

abusing the Plaintiff.

COUNT 4

92. Plaintiff realleges paragraphs 1 through 85.
93. Defendant BISHOPS and MICHAEL MOE Nos. 1 - 10's breach of their duty to the Plaintiff was the result of wilful or wanton misconduct, acts or omissions intentionally designed to harm, and grossly negligent acts or omissions.

COUNT 5

94. Plaintiff realleges paragraphs 1 through 85.
95. Defendant BISHOPS and MICHAEL MOE Nos. 1 - 10 negligently inflicted emotional distress upon the Plaintiff.

COUNT 6

96. Plaintiff realleges paragraphs 1 through 95.
97. Defendant BISHOPS, and MICHAEL MOE Nos. 1 - 10 each, at various times during the past fifty years, intentionally and fraudulently hid the existence of the aforesaid acts of sexual abuse, conspired to keep this information from becoming public knowledge, and protected the offending priests from criminal prosecution.
98. By virtue of said conspiracy, the defendant BISHOPS, and MICHAEL MOE Nos. 1 - 10 are jointly and severally liable to the Plaintiff for the injuries which he has suffered because of the acts of the PERPETRATORS, who were able, thereby, to commit, and to continue to commit, sexual abuses, assaults and rapes upon the Plaintiff.

DEMAND

The Plaintiff demands judgment against the defendants on each of the Counts stated, in an amount which is fair, just and adequate for the injuries and damages sustained, and the pain and suffering endured, plus interest and costs

PLAINTIFF DEMANDS A TRIAL BY JURY ON ALL COUNTS.

By his Attorney,

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March 29, 2005