

Scandal in the Church

Father Ilarraz was sentenced to 25 years in prison for abuse and corruption of minors

The sentence against the priest accused of the sexual abuse of 7 children in the Paraná seminary was known. They gave him house arrest until the sentence is final.



The priest Justo Ilarraz, accused of abusing 7 children. (José Almeida)

ERICO VEGA, CLARÍN

05/21/2018 - 12:46

Priest Justo José Ilarraz (59) was sentenced to 25 years in prison for **abuse and corruption of minors** against seven minors during

his time as prefect of discipline and spiritual guidance at the seminary Our Lady of the Oracle of Paraná, between 1985 and 1993.



Cure Justo Ilarraz accused of abuse and corruption of minors. (José Almeida)

During the trial that began on April 16, the actions of the priest accused of abuse and corruption of minors were judged while serving as prefect of discipline and spiritual guidance in the seminary Our Lady of the Oracle of Paraná, between 1985 and 1993. For the seven victims who denounced the priest and for the other protagonists of the cause **is the end of a very long and very hard emotional process .**



The priest Illarraz spoke and said that he is the victim of a "plan orchestrated by a jealous one"

During the reading, the Paraná court also decided to revoke the release of the priest and enjoyed the effective enforcement of the sentence. However, as the ruling is not final, they ordered preventive detention in the form of house arrest.



The priest Justo Ibarraz is accused of abusing 7 children. (José Almeida)

"The evidence, the testimonies were so strong that there is no other alternative (than a conviction)," a source in the case had said before the ruling.



A victim of the priest Justo Ilarraz speaks: "At night a gurí cried and you thought he missed, but he had been abused"

The trial began on April 16 and ended on the 10th of this month.



The victims of Ilarraz returned to tour the seminar: "It was very hard, we all cried"

The defense had requested **the dismissal** of the priest and he, in his extension of declaration, said that everything was "**a conspiracy to tarnish his image**", denied the facts and said that the complainants had acted like this "out of jealousy and envy".

Throughout the trial, the heartrending testimonies of the victims were repeated, emotionally breaking when they relived those episodes. "He would get angry when you delayed reaching orgasm while masturbating," a source in the case said of the heartrending testimony of a victim during the trial. Another victim spoke directly about penetration and exits to the Ilarraz department where there was another seminarian, also a victim of abuse, but not among the complainants.



The Paran  seminar, the place where the reported abuses were committed. (Jos  Almeida)

The seven former seminarians who denounce being abused by Justo José Ilarraz testified during the trial. In all these testimonies there was a kind of pattern, a coinciding scheme among them that combines being descendants of Germans of Catholic origins, humble and rural, alcoholic parents, violent or strict and lack of affection; with the representative power for these families of a priest who also has the ability of empathy, able to occupy the land that the biological father could not or did not know how to fulfill. "We have to go back to the late eighties, hyperinflation and its problems in the local economies: in some cases we went once every two months with luck to our homes and, sometimes, those days Ilarraz was there too," he told this half a whistleblower.

The court composed of Alicia Vivian, Carolina Castagno and Gustavo Pimentel, will give their only public hearing in the whole process and will be broadcast live on the YouTube Channel of the Information and Communication Service of the Superior Court of Justice of Entre Ríos.



Ilarraz case: "The archbishopric of Paraná asks for forgiveness, today it would be handled differently"

Ilarraz was suspended by the Church in 2012 to officiate mass in public, but before, in 1993, the then Archbishop of Paraná, Monsignor Estanislao Esteban Karlic, authorized him to travel to Rome.

Among the evidence against the priest there is a Vatican letter that reveals that in a confession made in 1997, the priest acknowledged the abuses and showed repentance before the Ecclesiastical Court.

Ilarraz confessed before the Holy See to have had "amorous and abusive relationships with minor seminarians," said court spokesmen who detailed that the letter is a copy of a letter of January 18, 1997.