

AFFIDAVIT

STATE OF Nebraska,  
COUNTY OF Douglas ss:

I met Father James Janssen during the early summer of 1961. I had my 14<sup>th</sup> birthday in May, graduated from Saint Joseph Grade School, and met him in June when he was transferred to the Parish.

I was an altar boy at the time. One morning I went to church to serve mass and Janssen was the celebrant. After mass, he talked to several boys and other people as well as me. He told me later that I was the first person he ever met in Fort Madison other than Father Leonard Boyle, the Pastor.

The first time Janssen had touched me inappropriately was within the next few days after serving one of the morning weekday masses. We were talking after mass on the concrete steps leading up to the front of the church when the conversation turned to how strong of a boy I was (we had already had some discussion about whether I liked sports, which sports, did I play any sports at the grade school etc., etc., etc.). He asked to feel my biceps and we ended up somewhat wrestling. I ended up on his lap. As I was being wrestled around, his arm and hand brushed my crotch and genitalia area and I knew he had felt me. I had no reason to believe that it was done on purpose or that Janssen was even aware that it had happened for that matter. This happened after several masses, and it soon became apparent he was aware of his touching when he made comments about what he felt under my clothes.

Over the course of the next several weeks Janssen had invited several boys to come to the gym at the grade school to lift weights. Sometimes we would work out in the gym and sometimes in front of the school in the yard, so we could work on our sun tans as well. He often would wear nothing but a pair of street shorts and encouraged all of the boys to do the same. Many times he would "test our strength" by wrestling with us.

He started taking several boys to the YMCA in Burlington, IA on Friday nights so we could go swimming. The pool at the Y could be locked from the inside and after it was obvious that there was no one else around but Janssen and the boys he brought with him, he would tell all the boys we had to remove our suits. We were told nude swimming was better for us and that is why the Y had segregated swimming. He often had himself in a position where he could touch us while in the pool and he could be touched.



There were times I would react to the physical stimulation and he would say something like "that is perfectly normal", then he would guide my hand to his penis so I could obviously see just how normal my reaction was. These Friday night sessions almost always ended up with a stop at a restaurant (I can not remember the name of it) in Burlington that specialized in serving shrimp (at that time Catholics were not supposed to eat meat on Fridays). He was always certain to remind the boys that they should abstain from eating meat on Fridays.

After several times of swimming at the YMCA, Janssen added a routine of stopping at a book store in Burlington before we got to the Y. He showed the boys nudist books such as "Sun and Health" and "Sunshine". It never occurred to me until many years later that probably the reason these were among his favorite magazines was because there were always pictures of naked boys and young family members. Many of the boys would gravitate towards magazines such as Playboy, Sir, Gent, Cavalier, or other similar ones but Janssen would always be interested in the nudist magazines.

There was a place along the Mississippi River North of Fort Madison called Green Bay Bottoms. It was very isolated and it was a place we went to often because we could all "skinny dip" without concern of being caught. He sometimes would take as many as 4 or 5 boys at a time to go swimming.

One theme that developed over the summer was that boys could be trusted and that girls could not. Girls talked too much and told each other everything. The boys that Janssen developed a friendship with and that he felt he could trust were called "rod knockers". It was like a club and Janssen was the leader. It was all built on secrecy and trust. As we did things together, Janssen encouraged the boys to call him FJ instead of Father Janssen.

He also loved movies. During that summer he would take several other boys and me to either one of the two movie theaters in Fort Madison or the drive-in. One night, he took me to see Elmer Gantry. There was one scene in which Elmer Gantry was apparently going to have sex with one of the other women in the movie. Of course in the early sixties, more was left to the imagination than is the case now so when the scene faded, Janssen grabbed my penis and asked me what I thought they were going to do now. I felt sheepish when I reacted but replied I wasn't sure (or something to that effect). He unzipped his shorts and exposed his erect penis and immediately started stroking it. He said it was a perfectly normal reaction and said there was nothing to be embarrassed about. He then guided my hand to his penis and asked if I would "finish me off" and he showed me that he wanted me to stroke him. He soon ejaculated at which time he asked me to reach around to the back seat of his car to get a box of Puffs. I realized after that I had never seen his car without a box of Kleenex in it.

There were times during the summer when Janssen took me to Davenport, IA when he would go to visit his mother on Wednesdays. On the way back from the second or third trip (while driving down the highway) he grabbed my penis and started manipulating it. He asked if I was every going to "make it come". I started stroking until I did reach an orgasm and ejaculated. It was my first time. Janssen made a comment that he was glad I was entering into manhood.

There were other trips to Davenport after that and during those trips, I met several boys he knew when he was assigned to a parish in Davenport. They were introduced as rod knockers. He later told me that "rod knockers" was the code word he used that meant they masturbated. One of the boys I met was Jimmy Wells, a nephew of Janssen's.

He also took me to a cabin along the Mississippi River near Blue Grass, IA. Several of the boys he had introduced me to were the rod knockers I had met before but there were others. There was a lot of skinny dipping and card playing as well as a game called spoons at the cabin. That was where I met Father Francis E Bass.

Bass was short and small in stature but he was very surprising in that he was incredibly strong. He often referred to himself as "Iron man" Bass which was in reference to his strength and his initials F. E. which was the chemical symbol Fe -- for iron. The day I met him he took a shower with me and asked that I "finish him off" in the shower.

I do not remember exactly when, but at some point I met Father Tony Geerts who was stationed as Saint Boniface Church in Farmington, IA. Janssen liked to take boys to Geerts' because he had a large sitting room adjacent to his bedroom with a nice card table and he had a pool table in the basement of the rectory. Cards and pool became a popular past time for Janssen, Geerts, and the boys or "Rod Knockers".

Geerts had 8 and 16 MM movie projectors and movies (Pornographic in case there is any doubt), hundreds of magazines and pictures, as well as a well-stocked alcohol supply (beer, wine, and many hard liquors). He would often have boys over and they stayed all night. On top of everything else, there did not have to be any concern if one of the boys drank too much. They could sleep it off before they had to go back home the next day.

Janssen had access to a cabin just south of Montrose, IA that was owned by Kenneth Lampe a Pharmacist from Fort Madison. This cabin was located along the Mississippi River and Mr. Lampe gave Janssen use of the cabin when he wanted to take the boys somewhere where they could play cards and watch TV and cook out along the river. The cabin was also equipped with an exercise bicycle and dumb bells so the boys could workout. I remember going to the cabin once and one of the boys that went along ended up playing with an air gun. When I asked to see it he started running to the door (I was chasing him) and when he got outside the door he turned and shot the gun. A BB shattered the glass in the front door of the cabin and I was hit near my eye with fragments of glass. I have never before or since seen Janssen get as angry as he did over that incident.

There were at least two occasions when I met a priest by the name of Father Murphy (I think). He was from Murfreesboro, TN. One of the occasions I met him was at the cabin in Blue Grass, IA the other in Fort Madison, IA and Farmington, IA. On both occasions, I was with Janssen and several other boys and on the occasion in Farmington Geerts was also present. Both times resulted in several of the boys and priests masturbating and ejaculating.

Over the next several years I saw Janssen interact with many boys between 13 and 18 years of age. I witnessed boys in sexual situations with Janssen, Bass, Geerts and Murphy. I also observed Janssen shoplifting either directly or creating a diversion while someone else did the shoplifting (many coins at coin shows and auctions but there were other things as well). All of this was to build a bond between Janssen and the boys because at that impressionable age they all thought it (he) was cool. It took me many years to figure out that in reality Janssen was a pedophile and all of his actions were only to gain the trust of the boys for his own perverted pleasures.

In Fort Madison alone between 1961 and 1965, I was aware of Janssen having a sexual relationship with at least 9 different boys (one of which was me). Three of those boys are now deceased. I will not use their names because I do not believe it is up to me to decide if they want to come forward at this time or not. They will decide and I could verify their story. Although I did not witness more than the eight that I can remember for sure, I am certain there were more based upon the behavioral pattern that was going on at the time but I did not actually see myself.

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Subscribed and sworn to before me this  
15 day of December 2003.

Roger A. Reising  
Notary Public in and for the  
State of Nebraska

