

**PRESS RELEASE**

Former Pastor Sentenced To Five Years In Prison For Receipt Of Child Pornography

Tuesday, July 18, 2023

For Immediate Release

U.S. Attorney's Office, Southern District of New York

Damian Williams, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, announced today that FRANCIS HUGHES, a former pastor at a religious institution in Queens, New York, was sentenced to five years in prison by U.S. District Judge Philip M. Halpern for his receipt of images of child pornography from a 15-year-old minor in Westchester, New York, with whom HUGHES was engaging in sexually explicit text communications. HUGHES pled guilty on August 16, 2022, before Judge Halpern.

According to documents filed in this case and statements made in related court proceedings:

On February 16, 2020, HUGHES communicated by text messages with a 15-year-old boy ("Minor-1"). During the course of the text communications, among other things, Minor-1 sent HUGHES three images of Minor-1's penis. Upon receiving one of the images, HUGHES responded, among other things, "Yummmmm I will suck you so much" and "Make you cum." During the communications, HUGHES told Minor-1 that he was a part-time college professor and a counselor.

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In addition to the prison term, HUGHES, 68, of Glendale, New York, was sentenced to 10 years of supervised release.

Mr. Williams praised the efforts of the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Greenburgh Police Department in connection with this investigation.

The prosecution is being handled by the Office's White Plains Division. Assistant U.S. Attorney Marcia S. Cohen is in charge of the prosecution.

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