

Priest K

This priest abused his first child during his first parish assignment. (Grand Jury Exhibit 26). The priest had once gone on a retreat with the victim's father and was a frequent visitor in their home. When *Priest K* invited the boy to travel with him to the home of a relative, his parents readily agreed. The ruse, again, was that this priest was going to help the boy learn to wrestle. As they were wrestling the boy noticed the priest had an erection. He was surprised when *Priest K* suggested they shower afterwards. As the boy was showering, he was shocked when *Priest K* joined him and pinned him to the wall. Nothing else happened and *Priest K* left the shower quickly; the boy did not tell anyone what *Priest K* had done.

*Priest K* continued to invite the boy places and their sexual conduct escalated to include oral sex. During this time *Priest K* was transferred to another parish, the abuse continued. *Priest K* repeatedly told the boy not to tell anyone, both, because of the trouble it would cause for *Priest K*, and because of the "stigma" of homosexuality that would attach to the boy. The priest told the boy that he would go to jail if he were caught.

Ultimately, when the boy was about fifteen, they had anal sex in his bedroom. Soon after, the sexual contact ended at the victim's insistence. The first person that the victim told about his relationship with *Priest K* was a high school girlfriend. He never told his parents or called the police. He told his wife after they were married. In 1998, he contacted an attorney, because he knew *Priest K* was still in parish ministry and he wanted to make sure that he was removed. First, he went to see *Priest K*. He had a small tape recorder concealed on his body and recorded their conversation. The meeting lasted one hour and was recorded in its entirety. *Priest K* acknowledged and apologized for his actions. (Grand Jury Exhibit 116). A lawsuit was subsequently filed that was later settled for \$160,000. The victim signed a confidentiality

agreement. No priest from the Diocese ever called the victim about his abuse at the hands of *Priest K*.<sup>52</sup>

In *Priest K's* second assignment he tried to develop new abusive relationships with young boys. He was a likable, athletic, young priest who was especially popular with the altar boys. One hot summer day one of the altar boys asked his mom if *Priest K* could come over for a swim. In the pool *Priest K* swam up behind the boy and grabbed his genitals. The boy “freaked out” and told *Priest K* he didn’t like what he had done. *Priest K* replied, “Don’t worry about it your friend (name omitted) lets me do this.” The boy knew the other kid *Priest K* referred to, he was also an altar boy.<sup>53</sup> After *Priest K's* remark the boy jumped out of the pool. He immediately told his mother who chased *Priest K* from their home.

The boy’s father was summoned home from work and after speaking with his son went to the parish to confront *Priest K*. He was very angry and spoke with the pastor and *Priest K* who denied everything. Prior to going down to the parish, the boy’s father had called an old family friend who was a priest in another diocese. This friend, who was actually a Monsignor in the Diocese of Brooklyn, put him in touch with a Diocesan official in Rockville Centre.<sup>54</sup> He was assured by this official that the matter would be taken care of. Despite this, *Priest K* remained at

<sup>52</sup> The victim told the Grand Jury that he learned the Diocese was especially unhappy with *Priest K*. Apparently, he had been previously treated and never disclosed his abuse of this victim during treatment. This will be discussed further in this report.

<sup>53</sup> In fact, this boy had several experiences that made him feel uncomfortable around *Priest K*. Once, during wrestling *Priest K* was grinding his pelvis and humping the boy. Another time *Priest K* asked the boy whether he masturbated and what he thought about when he did it. The boy thought this was a very strange conversation to be having with a priest and avoided him after this. Years later, at the request of the victim who was fondled in his backyard pool, he provided this information to the Diocese.

<sup>54</sup> This witness still had the pages of his personal telephone directory with the numbers of the priest friend he called and the number of the priest in the Diocese of Rockville Centre who he was referred to. (Grand Jury Exhibits 81,82).

the parish. Their son did not want to attend church and they did not make him go. They never told anyone in the parish about the incident because their son was so young.

The victim did not see *Priest K* after the incident because he stopped going to church. He was aware that *Priest K* remained in the parish for two to three years. Once, when he was in college he saw *Priest K* at a wedding. *Priest K* approached him and tried to shake hands. The victim told him to leave him alone.

During the religious preparation for his own wedding the victim saw *Priest K* in the parish where his fiancée lived. He immediately told the pastor that he did not want *Priest K* anywhere near him or his bride to be. He related what *Priest K* had done to him as a child and how his father had contacted the Diocese to complain many years before. The pastor was very upset and arranged a meeting with Diocesan administrative officials. (Grand Jury Exhibit 11P) These men, who were also priests later arranged a meeting with *Priest K*. (Grand Jury Exhibit 11Q).

At the meeting *Priest K* was there with an attorney. Diocesan lawyers were also present. They asked the victim to tell *Priest K* why he was still upset with what he had done. After the victim explained that *Priest K* had caused him great pain, because he could no longer attend church, *Priest K's* lawyer offered his version. That is, that the entire incident was an accident during rough housing that the victim had misconstrued. As the victim recounted it to the grand jury, he responded, “ If I were to get out of this chair and grab you by the balls would you go home and tell your wife that it was an accident” The meeting ended and *Priest K* was sent for a psychiatric evaluation. Two weeks later he had returned to the parish and offered the children’s mass.

The pastor of this parish testified that *Priest K* was returned to his ministry at the parish without any restrictions that the pastor was aware of. The pastor felt that he had no support from the Diocese and he was furious about the return of this priest to his parish. Approximately one year later, the pastor received a call from a Diocesan official advising him that an additional allegation against *Priest K* had been made, and was of similar vintage as the earlier one. *Priest K* admitted to sexual conduct and was sent for another evaluation. The pastor believed that *Priest K* never should have been assigned to a parish with a school. The pastor testified very clearly that the Diocese of Rockville Centre told him nothing about the priest and treated clergy sexual offenses as if they were a sin but not a crime. Still, high-ranking officials in the Diocese, who were attorneys, knew that these acts were criminal.

Unfortunately, this pastor's experience mirrors that of many others. Fellow priests, pastors assigned to care for parishes and parishioners of the Diocese, were not advised by the Diocese of important information about priests in their charge, again putting parishioners, especially children, in harm's way.