

NEWS

For Immediate release
Thursday, May 24, 2018
Contact: jim@faluszczak.com
716/424-5417

Former Erie Priest Anticipates the Release of the Report of the 40th Pennsylvania Investigating Grand Jury.

James Faluszczak, himself a victim of abuse by a priest, and himself still feeling called to the priesthood, left ministry because the Church ignored his claims.



BUFFALO, N.Y., Thursday, May 24, 2018 – “Even as Fr. Martin was molesting me, I maintained my devotions and felt close to God. Out of my experience of prayer and helping others as a teenager, I felt God was calling me to be a priest. I gradually realized that what Martin was doing to me was sick and I was able to break out of it. After I was ordained a priest in 1996, I had a clear sense that I was helping people as a teacher, chaplain, campus minister, school administrator and pastor. Ministry was fulfilling a lot of the time. It was an honor to stand with God’s people and offer their prayers to God, and to speak words of consolation and challenge to them. But it became obvious that I couldn’t speak for an institution which I now regard as corrupt. The constant reminders of the abuse I experienced drove me to cope by using substances as a form of triage. The constant presence of bishops and diocesan officials who engaged in the coverup, and the presence of other dysfunctional priests in my life, made it impossible for me to be healthy in that environment. It is a source of enormous pain that I had to leave ministry.”

Statement of James Faluszczak: “I understand criminals have rights, so I take no exception to PA AG Shapiro releasing the Grand Jury Report to the bishops he investigated. But this was done today without comment from his office, and many of us are hurt and baffled because we don't understand the law.

Victims like myself do not have the same legal representation as the bishops, access to lobbyists and PR firms, or the blind goodwill offered by most people in the pews. We only have each other, so we dig and we talk to media people who are familiar and we educate ourselves. Unlike other criminal proceedings where victims come

forward, we don't have DAs and prosecutors advocating for our needs, communicating with us and protecting us as proceedings unfold.

Most victims, and especially victim advocates, know people who have taken their own lives over this. Many of us have resorted to unhealthy means of triage to be able to carry our burdens. Today's public knowledge that those who engaged in coverup now sit with our material, perhaps for the next month, is jarring on every level. It may have tragic consequences for those who don't have the supports they require.

If the bishops, who are now reading this report with their lawyers and PR advisors, really care about the healing of victims, they will call for its immediate release. They are already on the record saying they will not block it, but they who presided over the coverup don't deserve the report as much as the vulnerable they still claim to protect.”

Contacts

Rev. Thomas Doyle, OP. After working in the Vatican Embassy in Washington, DC, Tom is familiar with the historical dynamics the Church has used under protection of diplomatic immunity to process cases of clergy sexual abuse. He has been an expert witness in countless investigations by various courts in the US and internationally. He is a founding member of the group <http://www.catholicwhistleblowers.com>. He may be reached for comment at doyle45@verizon.net.

Terry McKiernan. Terry is the director of Bishop-Accountability.org, the international database which tracks data, perpetrators, investigations, and individual dioceses related to clergy sex abuse. He can be reached at (508) 479-9304 or mckiernan1@comcast.net.

Robert Hoatson. Bob is a founder and executive director of the victims advocacy group <http://www.road-to-recovery.org> which assists victims as they seek connections to counseling, financial assistance, and legal representation. Bob is also a member of <http://www.catholicwhistleblowers.com>. He can be reached at (862) 368-2800 or roberthoatson@gmail.com.

Mitchell Garabedian. Attorney Mitchell Garabedian is a dogged victim attorney in Boston, MA who was featured in the Academy Award winning film Spotlight. He can be reached at (888) 995-2214.

Patrick Wall. Patrick is an attorney in the law firm of Jeff Anderson Associates and is legal counsel for many victims. Additionally, he is a former priest, canon lawyer, and collaborator with Richard Sipe and Tom Doyle who compiles and presents extensive historical and present

data on the abuse of children by Catholic clergy. He may be reached at 888/920-9258 or PatrickJWall@andersonadvocates.com.

Judy Block-Jones. Judy is a victims advocate representing SNAP in Pennsylvania, the Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests http://www.snapnetwork.org/judy_block_jones. She can be reached at (314) 776-9277.

Richard Sipe. Richard is one of the foremost chroniclers of clergy sex abuse in the United States and in the larger Church. A former priest involved in the work of treating clergy abusers, he has a wealth of knowledge related to the historical and clinical dimensions of this tragedy. He may be reached at info@awrsipe.com.