

***** Media Advisory - Immediate Release *****

Former Priest-Whistleblower Calls for Real Transparency, and the Resignation of Bishops in Buffalo and Erie.

James Faluszczyk, himself a victim of abuse by a priest, and still feeling called to the priesthood, left active ministry because the Church ignored his claims. He testified before the 40th Pennsylvania Grand Jury as it investigated six dioceses in Pennsylvania.

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WHAT: Comment and response to breaking news that today impacts the Catholic community in western New York.

WHEN: Friday, June 21, 2019 at 11:30am.

WHERE: Across from the Buffalo Chancery at 795 Main Street Buffalo, NY.

WHO: Victim advocate James Faluszczyk, Paul Barr alleged victim of Fr. Freeman, courageous whistleblower Siobhan O'Connor, and Judith Burns-Quinn, local coordinator of the Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests (SNAP).

BUFFALO, NY. Thursday, June 20, 2019 – In his sworn testimony before the 40th Pennsylvania Grand Jury, Faluszczyk provided the names of 117 individuals who were either directly involved in the sexual abuse of children or vulnerable adults, provided cover for such activities, or could speak to such as witnesses.

A Buffalo priest, Fr. Michael Freeman, brandished a gun to compel at least one victim into an abusive relationship with a child. This is a tragedy which could have been prevented if the Buffalo chancery had acknowledged the prior claims of victims.

A former priest-bishop in Buffalo knew about that perpetrator's tendencies, still allowed him to function, and was promoted to my home diocese of Erie where he ordained me a priest. Trautman allegedly allowed Freeman to function within the boundaries of the Diocese of Erie, according to the PA Grand Jury Report.

My vocation grew up in the midst of these perpetrators and enablers. After my own abuse, these men sought to initiate me into their company, and when I brought



claims to the Church my claims were ignored over the span of decades.

Now Bishop Trautman is apparently in hiding: Foregoing the annual Erie priest convocation which he never missed, disabling his cell phone, and dodging a safety check by his own diocesan employees in Erie. He is just as likely benefiting from sanctuary with his priest friends in Buffalo at this moment.

It is time to sweep the deck. If the Church and the US bishops are serious about applying sanctions against those who hide these crimes, Bishop Persico of Erie would immediately suspend Bishop Trautman, and Bishop Malone would prevent him from operating within the Diocese of Buffalo. In lieu of these actions, these bishops must resign, if for no other reason than conflicts of interest.

Bishop Malone was recently featured with Trautman at the anniversary mass of the priest class of 1969 at Our Lady of Victory Basilica within the Diocese of Buffalo. In response to these recent claims about Trautman and Freeman, Malone's communications office has stated they are unable to comment because they turned over the relevant files to the NY Attorney General. That does not mean they cannot still take a stand on a rogue bishop functioning within the Diocese of Buffalo.

Bishop Persico of Erie has received multiple sets of allegations against Trautman for over a year, continues to allow Trautman to function publicly among my family, friends, and former parishioners in the Diocese of Erie and the Diocese of Buffalo. Persico has known about allegations against Trautman from his own secret archives, reporting in Erie and Buffalo, my sworn testimony, and the findings of a statewide grand jury report in Pennsylvania. To date, Persico has imposed no sanctions against Trautman, nor begun any investigation of him.

While Malone's public statements this week have been to the contrary, he has known about these allegations for years and has done nothing. Malone appears to be incapable of providing ethical leadership in these matters and must resign.

This is what zero-tolerance looks like in the diocese of Buffalo, the Diocese of Erie, and in the Catholic Church under Pope Francis.

As long as these wolves in shepherds clothing continue to "lead", their congregations will suffer under their duplicity and corruption.

LINKS TO HISTORIC COVERAGE:

[DuBois \(PA, USA\) Courier-Express](#)

Ex-priest names former ECC headmaster as alleged abuser.
March 25, 2018.

[CBC Radio](#)

Ex-priest who was called 'lucky' to have 'only' been abused 15 times reacts to Pope's letter. August 20, 2018.

[NPR/ Fresh Air WHYY Philadelphia](#)

Former priest with insider view among the 1,000 victims in Pa. clergy abuse report. August 20, 2018.

[Nederlands Dagblad](#)

Look What the Bishops Have Done to All of Us. February 23, 2019.

