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Summons & Complaints and all public documents subsequently completed and filed by Phillips & Paolicelli LLP. Address: 747 3rd Ave 6th floor, New York, NY 10017. Phone: (212) 388-5100.

Summons & Complaints relying on the research of James G. Faluszczyk:

<b>NYS UCS Case Number</b>	<b>Alleged Perpetrator</b>	<b>Defendant #</b>	<b>Defendants</b>	<b>Plaintiff</b>
803702/2021	Doe CSSF, Sr. Jane	2	Felician Sisters of North America IHM Province & Order of Felician Sisters of St. Francis.	PB-10 Doe
817200/2019	Doe CSSF, Sr. Jane	3	Diocese of Buffalo, St. Adalbert Church & School.	PB-10 DOE



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TO:

FELICIAN SISTERS OF NORTH AMERICA a/k/a CONGREGATION OF SISTERS OF ST.  
FELIX OF CANTALICE THIRD ORDER REGULAR OF ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI a/k/a  
OUR LADY OF HOPE PROVINCE f/k/a IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY PROVINCE  
871 Mercer Road  
Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania 15010

and

1333 New Hampshire Ave, NW  
Washington D.C. 20036

THE ORDER OF THE FELICIAN SISTERS OF ST. FRANCIS

STATE OF NEW YORK  
SUPREME COURT: COUNTY OF ERIE

<p>PB-10 DOE,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Plaintiff,</p> <p>vs.</p> <p>FELICIAN SISTERS OF NORTH AMERICA a/k/a CONGREGATION OF SISTERS OF ST. FELIX OF CANTALICE THIRD ORDER REGULAR OF ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI a/k/a OUR LADY OF HOPE PROVINCE f/k/a IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY PROVINCE, and THE ORDER OF THE FELICIAN SISTERS OF ST. FRANCIS,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Defendants.</p>
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**COMPLAINT**

Index No.:

Plaintiff PB-10 Doe, by and through his undersigned attorneys, as and for his Complaint, alleges as follows:

**NATURE OF THE ACTION**

1. This action is brought pursuant to the Child Victims Act, codified at CPLR 214-g.
2. Plaintiff PB-10 Doe was repeatedly sexually abused and assaulted by a nun who was hired, retained, supervised, placed, directed and otherwise authorized to act by Defendants Felician Sisters of North America a/k/a Congregation Of Sisters Of St. Felix Of Cantalice Third Order Regular Of St. Francis Of Assisi a/k/a Our Lady of Hope Province f/k/a Immaculate Heart of Mary Province and The Order Of The Felician Sisters Of St. Francis (collectively “Defendants”).<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Plaintiff has previously filed a separate complaint relating to the same abuse by Sister Jane Doe against The Diocese of Buffalo, Saint Adalberti Roman Catholic Church Society Of Buffalo, N.Y., and Saint Adalbert’s Catholic School. See PB-10 Doe v. The Diocese of Buffalo, et al., Index No. 817200/2019 (Sup. Ct. Erie County).

3. Plaintiff was about eight to ten years old at the time of his abuse.

4. Despite years of refusal to publically address rampant child abuse by priests and nuns, The Diocese of Buffalo recently published a long list clergy in their employ who were credibly accused of molesting children.

5. In fact, the Roman Catholic Church and Defendants have long known that substantial numbers of priests and nuns throughout history, and up to and including the present day, violate their vows or promises of celibacy and otherwise misbehave by soliciting sexual contact with parishioners and others, in particular with children like Plaintiff, who are entrusted to their spiritual care and guidance. Official Church documents dealing with this unspeakable misconduct span the centuries, many of which were and are well known to Defendants.

6. Notwithstanding this knowledge, and the fiduciary duty and relationship of trust owed to parishioners and their children, Defendants negligently, recklessly, and willfully failed to protect Plaintiff from sexual abuse by Sister Jane Doe, permitted the abuse to occur, failed to supervise Sister Jane Doe, failed to timely investigate her misconduct, acted to protect their own self-interest to the detriment of innocent children, and are otherwise responsible for Sister Jane Doe's sexual assault of Plaintiff, and Plaintiff's consequential injuries and damages.

#### **PARTIES**

7. Plaintiff is an individual residing in Erie County, New York.

8. Plaintiff was born in 1945.

9. At all relevant times, Felician Sisters of North America, Inc. a/k/a Congregation Of Sisters Of St. Felix Of Cantalice Third Order Regular Of St. Francis Of Assisi a/k/a Our Lady of Hope Province f/k/a Immaculate Heart of Mary Province is a not-for-profit corporation, organized pursuant to the laws of Delaware and registered in the State of New York, and which

operated at all relevant times in Erie County, New York. Its principal place of business is located at 871 Mercer Road, Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania 15010 and 1333 New Hampshire Ave, NW, Washington D.C. 20036.

10. In 2009, eight provinces of the Felician Sisters of North America, including the Immaculate Heart of Mary Province of Buffalo, New York, merged into one province called Our Lady of Hope Province.

11. Upon information and belief, Our Lady of Hope Province accepted all liabilities of the Immaculate Heart of Mary Province of Buffalo, New York and any other predecessor thereto.

12. At all relevant times, Defendant The Order of the Felician Sisters of St. Francis is a non-profit corporation organized pursuant to the laws of New York and registered in the State of New York, and which operated at all relevant times in Erie County, New York.

13. At all relevant times, Felician Sisters of North America, Inc. vetted, hired, and assigned, and supervised nuns, including Sister Jane Doe, in the province of Buffalo, New York.

14. At all relevant times, Saint Adalbert's Catholic School was and still is under the direct authority, control and province of the Defendants.

15. At all relevant times, the Defendants owned the premises where Saint Adalbert's Catholic School was located.

16. At all relevant times, Defendants oversaw, managed controlled, directed and operated Saint Adalbert's Catholic School.

17. At all relevant times, Defendants oversaw, managed, controlled, directed and assigned nuns and other clergy to work at Saint Adalbert's Catholic School.

18. At all relevant times, Defendants assigned Sister Jane Doe to St. Adalbert Church and Saint Adalbert's Catholic School.

### FACTUAL ALLEGATIONS

19. Plaintiff repeats and re-alleges all preceding paragraphs of this Complaint.

20. Plaintiff attended Saint Adalbert's Catholic School.

21. At all relevant times, Plaintiff's teacher (herein "Sister Jane Doe"), was a Felician Sister and Roman Catholic nun, employed by the Defendants.

22. At all relevant times, the Sister Jane Doe was under the direct supervision, employ, and control of the Defendants.

23. During the time that Plaintiff was a student attending Saint Adalbert's Catholic School, Defendants assigned Sister Jane Doe to be a teacher at Saint Adalbert's Catholic School.

24. By assigning Sister Jane Doe to the role of nun and teacher, Defendants gave Sister Jane Doe complete access to minors, including Plaintiff, and empowered her to discipline, punish, reprimand, chastise, expel and otherwise exercise complete authority over minors.

25. Sister Jane Doe's duties and responsibilities included supervising, interacting with, mentoring and counseling minors.

26. In the performance of their duties, Defendants authorized Sister Jane Doe to be alone with minors, including Plaintiff, and to have unfettered and unsupervised access to them on Defendants' property.

27. Defendants also authorized Sister Jane Doe to have physical contact with minors, in a manner consistent with providing discipline, counseling, educational and spiritual guidance, and leadership.

28. Defendants required students, like Plaintiff, to accept discipline and instruction from nuns and other clergy and teachers, and to obey their instruction.

29. Plaintiff was raised as a Catholic, and at all relevant times had developed a reverence, respect and/or fear for the Catholic Church and its clergy, including Sister Jane Doe.

30. From approximately Plaintiff's third to fifth grade years at Saint Adalbert's Catholic School (approximately 1953 - 1956), Sister Jane Doe, acting in her capacity as nun and teacher, and in furtherance of the business of Defendants, brought Plaintiff into empty classrooms in order to "punish" him.

31. There, on multiple occasions, Sister Jane Doe engaged in unlawful, unpermitted, forcible and harmful sexual contact with an intimate part of Plaintiff's body.

32. The acts forced upon Plaintiff by Sister Jane Doe were aggressive and violent and were done for the purpose of degrading or abusing Plaintiff, and/or gratifying her own sexual desire.

33. Given the aggressive and violent nature of the acts, Plaintiff was threatened both physically and verbally not to come forward about the abuse he suffered by Sister Jane Doe.

34. Further, in addition to these direct threats, Plaintiff's relationship to Defendants as a vulnerable child and student, and the culture of the Catholic Church which Defendants endorsed, put pressure on Plaintiff not to report Sister Jane Doe's abuse.

35. Defendants knew or should have known that Sister Jane Doe was a danger to minors like Plaintiff before she sexually abused Plaintiff.

36. The Vatican and other church authorities addressed the problem of clergy sex abuse on countless occasions prior to Sister Jane Doe's abuse of Plaintiff, and communicated as much with all levels of Church hierarchy including bishops and other Diocesan leaders. As such,



at all relevant times, Defendants were well aware that errant sexual behavior by some priests, nuns, and other clergy members was not only widespread but predictable.

37. Upon information and belief, not only was the Diocese aware of sexual abuse of children, but it participated in covering up such heinous acts by moving errant priests, nuns, and clergy members from assignment to assignment, thereby putting children in harm's way.

38. Defendants owed Plaintiff a duty of reasonable care because they had superior knowledge about the risks their facilities posed to minor children, the risk of abuse in general, and the risks that Sister Jane Doe posed to Plaintiff.

39. Prior to the time of Plaintiff's abuse by Sister Jane Doe, Defendants knew or should have known of numerous acts of sexual assault committed by clergy members within the Diocese and elsewhere in the Roman Catholic Church, and knew that there was a specific danger of child sex abuse for children in their institutions and programs.

40. The sexual abuse of Plaintiff by Sister Jane Doe was foreseeable.

41. Prior to the time of Plaintiff's abuse by Sister Jane Doe, Defendants knew or should have known of Sister Jane Doe's acts of child sexual abuse on other minors.

42. Defendants owed Plaintiff a reasonable duty of care because they affirmatively solicited children and parents to send their children to Saint Adalbert's Catholic School; they undertook custody of minor children, including Plaintiff; they promoted their facilities and programs as being safe for children, they held out their agents, including Sister Jane Doe, as safe to work with and around minors, they encouraged parents and children to spend time with their agents; and/or authorized their agents, including Sister Jane Doe, to spend time with, interact with, and recruit children.

43. Defendants owed Plaintiff a heightened, fiduciary duty of care because they held themselves out as being able to provide a safe and secure environment for children, including Plaintiff; Plaintiff's parents entrusted Plaintiff to Defendants' care, and expected that Plaintiff would be safe and properly supervised in an environment free from harm and abuse; Plaintiff was a vulnerable minor, and unable to protect himself; and Defendants affirmatively assumed a position of empowerment over Plaintiff.

44. Defendants owed Plaintiff a duty to protect him from harm because Defendants' acts and omissions created a foreseeable risk of harm to Plaintiff.

45. As a result of the foregoing, Plaintiff has suffered and continues to suffer great physical and mental pain and anguish, severe and permanent emotional distress, psychological injuries, fear and anxiety; was prevented and will continue to be prevented from performing his normal daily activities; was and will continue to be deprived of the enjoyment of life's pleasures; has suffered and continues to suffer loss of spirituality; has suffered and will continue to suffer loss of earnings and earning capacity; has incurred and will in the future incur expenses for medical and psychological treatment, and was otherwise damaged in an amount that exceeds the jurisdictional limit of the lower court of this State.

46. To the extent that any Defendants plead, or otherwise seek to rely upon Article 16 of the New York Civil Practice Law and Rules (CPLR) to have fault apportioned to another allegedly culpable party, Plaintiff expressly states that Defendants' conduct falls within one or more of the subdivisions of CPLR 1602.

**FIRST CAUSE OF ACTION**

**NEGLIGENT HIRING, RETENTION, SUPERVISION, AND DIRECTION**

47. Plaintiff repeats and re-alleges each and every allegation set forth above as if fully set forth herein.

48. At all relevant times Defendants had a duty to exercise due care in hiring, appointing, assigning, retention, supervision and direction of Sister Jane Doe, so as to protect minor children, including Plaintiff, who were likely to come into contact with her, and/or under her influence or supervision, and to ensure that Sister Jane Doe did not use this assigned position to injure minors by sexual assault, contact, or abuse.

49. Defendants were negligent and failed to use reasonable care in hiring, appointing, assigning, and retention, of Sister Jane Doe, failed to properly investigate his background and employment history, and/or hired, appointed and/or assigned him to Defendant Saint Adalbert's Catholic School, when Defendants knew or should have known of facts that would make her a danger to children; and Defendants were otherwise negligent.

50. Defendants were negligent and did not use reasonable care in their supervision and direction of Sister Jane Doe, failed to monitor her activities, failed to oversee the manner in which she carried out the duties to which Defendants assigned her, even though they knew or should have known that she posed a threat of sexual abuse to minors; allowed the misconduct describe above to occur and continue; failed to investigate her dangerous activities and remove her from their premises; and Defendants were otherwise negligent.

51. Sister Jane Doe would not have been in a position to sexually abuse Plaintiff had Defendants not been negligent in the hiring, retention, supervision, and direction of Sister Jane Doe.

52. At all relevant times, Sister Jane Doe acted in the course and scope of her employment with Defendants.

53. Defendants' aforesaid actions were willful, wanton, malicious, reckless, and/or outrageous in their disregard for the rights and safety of Plaintiff.

54. Plaintiff suffered grave injury as a result of Sister Jane Doe's sexual abuse and misconduct, including physical, psychological and emotional injury as described above.

55. By the reason of the foregoing, Defendants are liable to Plaintiff for compensatory and punitive damages, in an amount to be determined at trial, together with interest and costs in an amount that exceeds the jurisdictional limit of the lower court of this State.

### **SECOND CAUSE OF ACTION**

#### **NEGLIGENT, RECKLESS, AND WILLFUL MISCONDUCT**

56. Plaintiff repeats and re-alleges each and every allegation set forth above as if fully set forth herein.

57. Defendants were negligent and did not use reasonable care in their training, if any, of minor students and/or about the risk of sexual abuse in their institution and facilities, to identify signs of sexual abuse, grooming behaviors, or sexual predators, and to report any suspicion that a minor may be getting abused, maltreated, groomed, or otherwise sexually abused.

58. Defendants were negligent and did not use reasonable care in their training, if any, of clergy members and/or adult staff about the risk of sexual abuse in their institution and facilities, to identify signs of sexual abuse, grooming behaviors, or sexual predators, and their statutory duty to report any suspicion that a minor may be getting abused, maltreated, groomed, or otherwise sexually abused.

59. At all relevant times, Defendants affirmatively and/or impliedly represented to minor children, their families and the general public that clergy working in the Diocese, including Sister Jane Doe, did not pose a risk and/or that they did not have a history of sexually abusing children, and that children, including Plaintiff, would be safe in their care.

60. Defendants knew or should have known this representation was false and that employing Sister Jane Doe and giving her unfettered access to children, including Plaintiff, posed an unacceptable risk of harm to children.

61. Defendants maintained a policy and practice of covering up criminal activity committed by clergy members within the Diocese.

62. Over the decades, this “cover-up” policy and practice of the Defendants resulted in the sexual assault of untold numbers of children, and put numerous other children at risk of sexual assault.

63. Defendants failed to report multiple allegations of sexual abuse by its employees, agents and representatives, to the proper authorities, thereby putting children at risk of sexual assault.

64. Upon information and belief, Defendants covered up acts of abuse by Sister Jane Doe, and concealed facts concerning Sister Jane Doe’s sexual misconduct from Plaintiff and his family.

65. By failing to disclose the identities, histories and information about sexually abusive clergy in their employ, including Sister Jane Doe, Defendants unreasonably deprived the families of children entrusted to their care, including Plaintiff, of the ability to protect their children.

66. Defendants failed to warn Plaintiff and his parents that Sister Jane Doe posed a risk of child sexual assault.

67. The conduct of Defendants as described herein was done with utter disregard as to the potential profound injuries which would ensue, and with depraved indifference to the health and well-being of children, and to the fact that Defendants were knowingly subjecting children in their charge, including Plaintiff, to sexual crimes.

68. Defendants' aforesaid actions were negligent, reckless, willful and wonton in their disregard for the rights and safety of children, including Plaintiff.

69. As a direct and proximate result of Defendants' misconduct, Plaintiff suffered grave injury, including the physical, psychological and emotional injury and damages as described above.

70. By the reason of the foregoing, Defendants are liable to Plaintiff for compensatory and punitive damages, in an amount to be determined at trial, together with interest and cost in an amount that exceeds the jurisdictional limit of the lower court of this State.

### **THIRD CAUSE OF ACTION**

#### **NEGLIGENT INFLICTION OF EMOTIONAL DISTRESS**

71. Plaintiff repeats and re-alleges each and every allegation set forth above as if fully set forth herein.

72. The sexual abuse of Plaintiff was extreme and outrageous conduct, beyond all possible bounds of decency, atrocious and intolerable in a civilized world.

73. Defendants' aforesaid negligent, grossly negligent and reckless misconduct, endangered Plaintiff's safety and caused him to fear for his own safety.

74. Defendants knew or disregarded the substantial probability that Sister Jane Doe would cause severe emotional distress to Plaintiff.

75. As a direct and proximate result of Defendants' foregoing misconduct, Plaintiff suffered severe emotional distress including psychological and emotional injury as described above.

76. By the reason of the foregoing, Defendants are liable to Plaintiff for compensatory and punitive damages in an amount to be determined at trial, plus interest and costs in an amount that exceeds the jurisdictional limit of the lower court of this State.

#### **FOURTH CAUSE OF ACTION**

##### **PREMISES LIABILITY**

77. Plaintiff repeats and re-alleges each and every allegation set forth above as if fully set forth herein.

78. At all relevant times, Defendants owned, operated, and /or controlled the premises known as Saint Adalbert's Catholic School, including the areas where the sexual abuse of Plaintiff occurred.

79. At all relevant times, Plaintiff was rightfully present at the aforementioned premises.

80. Defendants had a duty to see that the premises at which Plaintiff was rightfully present were in a reasonably safe condition for the intended use by students, like Plaintiff, whose presence was reasonably anticipated.

81. Defendants willfully, recklessly, and negligently failed to provide a reasonably safe premise that was free from the presence of sexual predators and/or the assault by the

occupants of the premises, including Sister Jane Doe. Defendants thereby breached their duty of care of Plaintiff.

82. As a direct and proximate result of Defendants' misconduct, Plaintiff suffered grave injury, including the physical, psychological, and emotional injury and damages as described above.

83. By reason of the foregoing, Defendants are liable to Plaintiff for compensatory and punitive damages in an amount to be determined at trial, plus interest and costs in an amount that exceeds the jurisdictional limit of the lower court of this State.

#### **FIFTH CAUSE OF ACTION**

#### **BREACH OF FIDUCIARY DUTY**

84. Plaintiff repeats and re-alleges each and every allegation set forth above as if fully set forth herein.

85. At all relevant times, there existed a fiduciary relationship of trust, confidence and reliance between Plaintiff and each Defendant. The entrustment of Plaintiff to the care and supervision of the Defendants while Plaintiff was a vulnerable child, imposed upon Defendants fiduciary duty to act in the best interests of Plaintiff.

86. Defendants were entrusted with the well-being, care, and safety of Plaintiff, which Defendants had a fiduciary duty to protect.

87. By reason of the foregoing, Defendants breached their fiduciary duties to Plaintiff.

88. As a direct and proximate result of Defendants' foregoing breach, Plaintiff suffered grave injury, including the physical, psychological and emotional injury and damages as described above.



89. By reason of the foregoing, Defendants are liable to Plaintiff for compensatory and punitive damages in an amount to be determined at trial, plus interest and costs in an amount that exceeds the jurisdictional limit of the lower court of this State.

**SIXTH CAUSE OF ACTION**

**BREACH OF DUTY IN LOCO PARENTIS**

90. Plaintiff repeats and re-alleges each and every allegation set forth above as if fully set forth herein.

91. At all relevant times, Plaintiff was a vulnerable child entrusted to Defendants care, and was under the supervision and control of Defendants, such that Defendants owed him a duty to act *in loco parentis* and to prevent foreseeable injuries.

92. By reason of the foregoing, Defendants breached their duties to act *in loco parentis*.

93. As a direct and proximate result of Defendants' foregoing breach, Plaintiff suffered grave injury, including the physical, psychological and emotional injury and damages as described above.

94. By reason of the foregoing, Defendants are liable to Plaintiff for compensatory and punitive damages in an amount to be determined at trial, plus interest and costs in an amount that exceeds the jurisdictional limit of the lower court of this State.

**SEVENTH CAUSE OF ACTION**

**BREACH OF STATUTORY DUTIES TO REPORT**

95. Plaintiff repeats and re-alleges each and every allegation set forth above as if fully set forth herein.

96. Pursuant to N.Y. Soc. Serv. Law §§ 413 and 420 and New York Education Law Art. 23-B, Defendants had a statutory duty to report reasonable suspicion of abuse of children in their care.

97. Defendants breached their statutory duty by failing to report reasonable suspicion of abuse by Sister Jane Doe of children in their care.

98. As a direct and proximate result of Defendants' foregoing breaches, Plaintiff suffered grave injury, including the physical, psychological and emotional injury and damages as described above.

99. By reason of the foregoing, Defendants are liable to Plaintiff for compensatory and punitive damages in an amount to be determined at trial, plus interest and costs in an amount that exceeds the jurisdictional limit of the lower court of this State.

**WHEREFORE**, Plaintiff prays for judgment as follows:

- a. Awarding Plaintiff compensatory damages for his injuries, in an amount to be determined at trial;
- b. Awarding Plaintiff punitive damages for his injuries, in an amount to be determined at trial;
- c. Awarding Plaintiff prejudgment interest, to the extent available by law;
- d. Awarding Plaintiffs costs and disbursements and attorneys' fees to the extent available by law; and
- e. Awarding such other and further relief as this Court may deem just and proper.

**JURY TRIAL DEMANDED**

100. Plaintiff demands a trial by jury of all issues triable by jury in this action.

Dated: March 19, 2021

Yours, etc.

**PHILLIPS & PAOLICELLI, LLP**

*/s/ Michael DeRuve*

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*Attorneys for Plaintiff*

STATE OF NEW YORK  
SUPREME COURT: COUNTY OF ERIE

<p>PB-10 DOE,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Plaintiff,</p> <p>vs.</p> <p>THE DIOCESE OF BUFFALO, N.Y., SAINT ADALBERTI ROM. CATH. CHURCH SOCIETY OF BUFFALO, N.Y., and SAINT ADALBERT'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Defendants.</p>
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**SUMMONS**

Index No.:

**TO THE ABOVE NAMED DEFENDANTS :**

**YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED** to answer the complaint in this action and to serve a copy of your answer, or, if the complaint is not served with this summons, to serve a notice of appearance, on the plaintiffs' attorney within 20 days after the service of this summons, exclusive of the day of service (or within 30 days after the service is complete if this summons is not personally delivered to you within the State of New York); and in case of your failure to appear or answer, judgment will be taken against you by default for the relief demanded in the complaint.

DATED: New York, New York  
December 24, 2019

Phillips & Paolicelli, LLP  
*Attorneys for Plaintiffs*



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{00048747}

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TO:

THE DIOCESE OF BUFFALO  
795 Main St.  
Buffalo, NY 14206

ST. ADALBERTI ROM. CATH. CHURCH  
SOCIETY OF BUFFALO, NY  
212 Stanislaus St.  
Buffalo, NY 14212

ST. ADALBERT'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL  
212 Stanislaus St.  
Buffalo, NY 14212

STATE OF NEW YORK  
SUPREME COURT: COUNTY OF ERIE

<p>PB-10 DOE,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Plaintiff,</p> <p>vs.</p> <p>THE DIOCESE OF BUFFALO, N.Y., SAINT ADALBERTI ROM. CATH. CHURCH SOCIETY OF BUFFALO, N.Y., and SAINT ADALBERT'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL,</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Defendants.</p>
--

**COMPLAINT**

Index No.:

Plaintiff PB-10 Doe, by and through his undersigned attorneys, as and for his Complaint, alleges as follows:

**NATURE OF THE ACTION**

1. This action is brought pursuant to the Child Victims Act, codified at CPLR 214-g.
2. Plaintiff PB-10 Doe was repeatedly sexually abused and assaulted by a nun who was hired, retained, supervised, placed, directed and otherwise authorized to act by Defendants, The Diocese of Buffalo, Saint Adalberti Rom. Cath. Church Society Of Buffalo, N.Y., and Saint Adalbert's Catholic School (collectively "Defendants").
3. Plaintiff was about eight to ten years old at the time of his abuse.
4. Despite years of refusal to publically address rampant child abuse by priests and nuns, The Diocese of Buffalo recently published a long list clergy in their employ who were credibly accused of molesting children.
5. In fact, the Roman Catholic Church and Defendants have long known that substantial numbers of priests and nuns throughout history, and up to and including the present

day, violate their vows or promises of celibacy and otherwise misbehave by soliciting sexual contact with parishioners and others, in particular with children like Plaintiff, who are entrusted to their spiritual care and guidance. Official Church documents dealing with this unspeakable misconduct span the centuries, many of which were and are well known to Defendants.

6. Notwithstanding this knowledge, and the fiduciary duty and relationship of trust owed to parishioners and their children, Defendants negligently, recklessly, and willfully failed to protect Plaintiff from sexual abuse by Sister Jane Doe, permitted the abuse to occur, failed to supervise Sister Jane Doe, failed to timely investigate her misconduct, acted to protect their own self-interest to the detriment of innocent children, and are otherwise responsible for Sister Jane Doe's sexual assault of Plaintiff, and Plaintiff's consequential injuries and damages.

#### **PARTIES**

7. Plaintiff is an individual residing in Erie County, New York.

8. Plaintiff was born in 1945.

9. The Diocese of Buffalo, N.Y. ("Diocese") is a New York not-for-profit corporation, organized pursuant to the laws of the State of New York, and which operated at all relevant times in Niagara County, New York, with its principal place of business at 795 Main Street, Buffalo, New York 14206.

10. At all relevant times, the Diocese oversaw, managed, controlled, directed and operated parishes, churches and schools within the Diocese.

11. At all relevant times, Defendant Saint Adalberti Rom. Cath. Church Society Of Buffalo, N.Y. (herein "St. Adalbert Church") is a Roman Catholic Church, organized pursuant to the laws of the State of New York, and which operates at all relevant times in Erie County, New York, with its principal place of business at 212 Stanislaus St, Buffalo, NY 14212.

12. At all relevant times, Defendant Saint Adalberti Rom. Cath. Church Society Of Buffalo, N.Y. was and still is under the direct authority, control and province of the Diocese.

13. At all relevant times, Defendant Saint Adalbert's Catholic School was a Roman Catholic School, organized pursuant to the laws of the State of New York and located at 212 Stanislaus St, Buffalo, NY 14212.

14. At all relevant times, Defendant Saint Adalbert's Catholic School was and still is under the direct authority, control and province of the Diocese and St. Adalbert Church.

15. At all relevant times, the Diocese and St. Adalbert Church owned the premises where Defendant Saint Adalbert's Catholic School was located.

16. At all relevant times, the Diocese and St. Adalbert Church oversaw, managed controlled, directed and operated Defendant Saint Adalbert's Catholic School.

17. At all relevant times, the Diocese and St. Adalbert Church oversaw, managed, controlled, directed and assigned priests and other clergy to work in parishes, churches and schools of the Diocese, including Defendant Saint Adalbert's Catholic School.

#### **FACTUAL ALLEGATIONS**

18. Plaintiff repeats and re-alleges all preceding paragraphs of this Complaint.

19. Plaintiff attended Saint Adalbert's Catholic School.

20. At all relevant times, Plaintiff's teacher (herein "Sister Jane Doe"), who was also a Roman Catholic nun, was employed by the Defendants.

21. At all relevant times, the Sister Jane Doe was under the direct supervision, employ, and control of the Defendants.



22. During the time that Plaintiff was a student attending Defendant Saint Adalbert's Catholic School, Defendants assigned Sister Jane Doe to be a teacher at Saint Adalbert's Catholic School.

23. By assigning Sister Jane Doe to the role of nun and teacher, Defendants gave Sister Jane Doe complete access to minors, including Plaintiff, and empowered her to discipline, punish, reprimand, chastise, expel and otherwise exercise complete authority over minors.

24. Sister Jane Doe's duties and responsibilities included supervising, interacting with, mentoring and counseling minors.

25. In the performance of their duties, Defendants authorized Sister Jane Doe to be alone with minors, including Plaintiff, and to have unfettered and unsupervised access to them on Defendants' property.

26. Defendants also authorized Sister Jane Doe to have physical contact with minors, in a manner consistent with providing discipline, counseling, educational and spiritual guidance, and leadership.

27. Defendants required students, like Plaintiff, to accept discipline and instruction from nuns and other clergy and teachers, and to obey their instruction.

28. Plaintiff was raised as a Catholic, and at all relevant times had developed a reverence, respect and/or fear for the Catholic Church and its clergy, including Sister Jane Doe.

29. From approximately Plaintiff's third to fifth grade years at Defendant Saint Adalbert's Catholic School (approximately 1953 - 1956), Sister Jane Doe, acting in her capacity as nun and teacher, and in furtherance of the business of Defendants, brought Plaintiff into empty classrooms in order to "punish" him.

30. There, on multiple occasions, Sister Jane Doe engaged in unlawful, unpermitted, forcible and harmful sexual contact with an intimate part of Plaintiff's body.

31. The acts forced upon Plaintiff by Sister Jane Doe were aggressive and violent and were done for the purpose of degrading or abusing Plaintiff, and/or gratifying her own sexual desire.

32. Given the aggressive and violent nature of the acts, Plaintiff was threatened both physically and verbally not to come forward about the abuse he suffered by Sister Jane Doe.

33. Further, in addition to these direct threats, Plaintiff's relationship to Defendants as a vulnerable child and student, and the culture of the Catholic Church which Defendants endorsed, put pressure on Plaintiff not to report Sister Jane Doe's abuse.

34. Defendants knew or should have known that Sister Jane Doe was a danger to minors like Plaintiff before she sexually abused Plaintiff.

35. The Vatican and other church authorities addressed the problem of clergy sex abuse on countless occasions prior to Sister Jane Doe's abuse of Plaintiff, and communicated as much with all levels of Church hierarchy including bishops and other Diocesan leaders. As such, at all relevant times, Defendants were well aware that errant sexual behavior by some priests, nuns, and other clergy members was not only widespread but predictable.

36. Upon information and belief, not only was the Diocese aware of sexual abuse of children, but it participated in covering up such heinous acts by moving errant priests, nuns, and clergy members from assignment to assignment, thereby putting children in harm's way.

37. Defendants owed Plaintiff a duty of reasonable care because they had superior knowledge about the risks their facilities posed to minor children, the risk of abuse in general, and the risks that Sister Jane Doe posed to Plaintiff.

38. Prior to the time of Plaintiff's abuse by Sister Jane Doe, Defendants knew or should have known of numerous acts of sexual assault committed by clergy members within the Diocese and elsewhere in the Roman Catholic Church, and knew that there was a specific danger of child sex abuse for children in their institutions and programs.

39. The sexual abuse of Plaintiff by Sister Jane Doe was foreseeable.

40. Prior to the time of Plaintiff's abuse by Sister Jane Doe, Defendants knew or should have known of Sister Jane Doe's acts of child sexual abuse on other minors.

41. Defendants owed Plaintiff a reasonable duty of care because they affirmatively solicited children and parents to send their children to Saint Adalbert's Catholic School; they undertook custody of minor children, including Plaintiff; they promoted their facilities and programs as being safe for children, they held out their agents, including Sister Jane Doe, as safe to work with and around minors, they encouraged parents and children to spend time with their agents; and/or authorized their agents, including Sister Jane Doe, to spend time with, interact with, and recruit children.

42. Defendants owed Plaintiff a heightened, fiduciary duty of care because they held themselves out as being able to provide a safe and secure environment for children, including Plaintiff; Plaintiff's parents entrusted Plaintiff to Defendants' care, and expected that Plaintiff would be safe and properly supervised in an environment free from harm and abuse; Plaintiff was a vulnerable minor, and unable to protect himself; and Defendants affirmatively assumed a position of empowerment over Plaintiff.

43. Defendants owed Plaintiff a duty to protect him from harm because Defendants' acts and omissions created a foreseeable risk of harm to Plaintiff.

44. As a result of the foregoing, Plaintiff has suffered and continues to suffer great physical and mental pain and anguish, severe and permanent emotional distress, psychological injuries, fear and anxiety; was prevented and will continue to be prevented from performing his normal daily activities; was and will continue to be deprived of the enjoyment of life's pleasures; has suffered and continues to suffer loss of spirituality; has suffered and will continue to suffer loss of earnings and earning capacity; has incurred and will in the future incur expenses for medical and psychological treatment, and was otherwise damaged in an amount that exceeds the jurisdictional limit of the lower court of this State.

45. To the extent that any Defendants plead, or otherwise seek to rely upon Article 16 of the New York Civil Practice Law and Rules (CPLR) to have fault apportioned to another allegedly culpable party, Plaintiff expressly states that Defendants' conduct falls within one or more of the subdivisions of CPLR 1602.

### COUNT I

#### NEGLIGENT HIRING, RETENTION, SUPERVISION, AND DIRECTION

46. Plaintiff repeats and re-alleges each and every allegation set forth above as if fully set forth herein.

47. At all relevant times Defendants had a duty to exercise due care in hiring, appointing, assigning, retention, supervision and direction of Sister Jane Doe, so as to protect minor children, including Plaintiff, who were likely to come into contact with her, and/or under her influence or supervision, and to ensure that Sister Jane Doe did not use this assigned position to injure minors by sexual assault, contact, or abuse.

48. Defendants were negligent and failed to use reasonable care in hiring, appointing, assigning, and retention, of Sister Jane Doe, failed to properly investigate his background and

employment history, and/or hired, appointed and/or assigned him to Defendant Saint Adalbert's Catholic School, when Defendants knew or should have known of facts that would make her a danger to children; and Defendants were otherwise negligent.

49. Defendants were negligent and did not use reasonable care in their supervision and direction of Sister Jane Doe, failed to monitor her activities, failed to oversee the manner in which she carried out the duties to which Defendants assigned her, even though they knew or should have known that she posed a threat of sexual abuse to minors; allowed the misconduct describe above to occur and continue; failed to investigate her dangerous activities and remove her from their premises; and Defendants were otherwise negligent.

50. Sister Jane Doe would not have been in a position to sexually abuse Plaintiff had Defendants not been negligent in the hiring, retention, supervision, and direction of Sister Jane Doe.

51. At all relevant times, Sister Jane Doe acted in the course and scope of her employment with Defendants.

52. Defendants' aforesaid actions were willful, wanton, malicious, reckless, and/or outrageous in their disregard for the rights and safety of Plaintiff.

53. Plaintiff suffered grave injury as a result of Sister Jane Doe's sexual abuse and misconduct, including physical, psychological and emotional injury as described above.

54. By the reason of the foregoing, Defendants are liable to Plaintiff for compensatory and punitive damages, in an amount to be determined at trial, together with interest and costs in an amount that exceeds the jurisdictional limit of the lower court of this State.

**COUNT II****NEGLIGENT, RECKLESS, AND WILLFUL MISCONDUCT**

55. Plaintiff repeats and re-alleges each and every allegation set forth above as if fully set forth herein.

56. Defendants were negligent and did not use reasonable care in their training, if any, of minor students and/or about the risk of sexual abuse in their institution and facilities, to identify signs of sexual abuse, grooming behaviors, or sexual predators, and to report any suspicion that a minor may be getting abused, maltreated, groomed, or otherwise sexually abused.

57. Defendants were negligent and did not use reasonable care in their training, if any, of clergy members and/or adult staff about the risk of sexual abuse in their institution and facilities, to identify signs of sexual abuse, grooming behaviors, or sexual predators, and their statutory duty to report any suspicion that a minor may be getting abused, maltreated, groomed, or otherwise sexually abused.

58. At all relevant times, Defendants affirmatively and/or impliedly represented to minor children, their families and the general public that clergy working in the Diocese, including Sister Jane Doe, did not pose a risk and/or that they did not have a history of sexually abusing children, and that children, including Plaintiff, would be safe in their care.

59. Defendants knew or should have known this representation was false and that employing Sister Jane Doe and giving her unfettered access to children, including Plaintiff, posed an unacceptable risk of harm to children.

60. Defendants maintained a policy and practice of covering up criminal activity committed by clergy members within the Diocese.

61. Over the decades, this “cover-up” policy and practice of the Defendants resulted in the sexual assault of untold numbers of children, and put numerous other children at risk of sexual assault.

62. Defendants failed to report multiple allegations of sexual abuse by its employees, agents and representatives, to the proper authorities, thereby putting children at risk of sexual assault.

63. Upon information and belief, Defendants covered up acts of abuse by Sister Jane Doe, and concealed facts concerning Sister Jane Doe’s sexual misconduct from Plaintiff and his family.

64. By failing to disclose the identities, histories and information about sexually abusive clergy in their employ, including Sister Jane Doe, Defendants unreasonably deprived the families of children entrusted to their care, including Plaintiff, of the ability to protect their children.

65. Defendants failed to warn Plaintiff and his parents that Sister Jane Doe posed a risk of child sexual assault.

66. The conduct of Defendants as described herein was done with utter disregard as to the potential profound injuries which would ensue, and with depraved indifference to the health and well-being of children, and to the fact that Defendants were knowingly subjecting children in their charge, including Plaintiff, to sexual crimes.

67. Defendants’ aforesaid actions were negligent, reckless, willful and wonton in their disregard for the rights and safety of children, including Plaintiff.

68. As a direct and proximate result of Defendants' misconduct, Plaintiff suffered grave injury, including the physical, psychological and emotional injury and damages as described above.

69. By the reason of the foregoing, Defendants are liable to Plaintiff for compensatory and punitive damages, in an amount to be determined at trial, together with interest and cost in an amount that exceeds the jurisdictional limit of the lower court of this State.

### COUNT III

#### NEGLIGENT INFLICTION OF EMOTIONAL DISTRESS

70. Plaintiff repeats and re-alleges each and every allegation set forth above as if fully set forth herein.

71. The sexual abuse of Plaintiff was extreme and outrageous conduct, beyond all possible bounds of decency, atrocious and intolerable in a civilized world.

72. Defendants' aforesaid negligent, grossly negligent and reckless misconduct, endangered Plaintiff's safety and caused him to fear for his own safety.

73. Defendants knew or disregarded the substantial probability that Sister Jane Doe would cause severe emotional distress to Plaintiff.

74. As a direct and proximate result of Defendants' foregoing misconduct, Plaintiff suffered severe emotional distress including psychological and emotional injury as described above.

75. By the reason of the foregoing, Defendants are liable to Plaintiff for compensatory and punitive damages in an amount to be determined at trial, plus interest and costs in an amount that exceeds the jurisdictional limit of the lower court of this State.



**COUNT IV****PREMISES LIABILITY**

76. Plaintiff repeats and re-alleges each and every allegation set forth above as if fully set forth herein.

77. At all relevant times, Defendants owned, operated, and /or controlled the premises known as Saint Adalbert's Catholic School, including the areas where the sexual abuse of Plaintiff occurred.

78. At all relevant times, Plaintiff was rightfully present at the aforementioned premises.

79. Defendants had a duty to see that the premises at which Plaintiff was rightfully present were in a reasonably safe condition for the intended use by students, like Plaintiff, whose presence was reasonably anticipated.

80. Defendants willfully, recklessly, and negligently failed to provide a reasonably safe premise that was free from the presence of sexual predators and/or the assault by the occupants of the premises, including Sister Jane Doe. Defendants thereby breached their duty of care of Plaintiff.

81. As a direct and proximate result of Defendants' misconduct, Plaintiff suffered grave injury, including the physical, psychological, and emotional injury and damages as described above.

82. By reason of the foregoing, Defendants are liable to Plaintiff for compensatory and punitive damages in an amount to be determined at trial, plus interest and costs in an amount that exceeds the jurisdictional limit of the lower court of this State.

**COUNT V****BREACH OF FIDUCIARY DUTY**

83. Plaintiff repeats and re-alleges each and every allegation set forth above as if fully set forth herein.

84. At all relevant times, there existed a fiduciary relationship of trust, confidence and reliance between Plaintiff and each Defendant. The entrustment of Plaintiff to the care and supervision of the Defendants while Plaintiff was a vulnerable child, imposed upon Defendants fiduciary duty to act in the best interests of Plaintiff.

85. Defendants were entrusted with the well-being, care, and safety of Plaintiff, which Defendants had a fiduciary duty to protect.

86. By reason of the foregoing, Defendants breached their fiduciary duties to Plaintiff.

87. As a direct and proximate result of Defendants' foregoing breach, Plaintiff suffered grave injury, including the physical, psychological and emotional injury and damages as described above.

88. By reason of the foregoing, Defendants are liable to Plaintiff for compensatory and punitive damages in an amount to be determined at trial, plus interest and costs in an amount that exceeds the jurisdictional limit of the lower court of this State.

**COUNT VI****BREACH OF DUTY IN LOCO PARENTIS**

89. Plaintiff repeats and re-alleges each and every allegation set forth above as if fully set forth herein.

90. At all relevant times, Plaintiff was a vulnerable child entrusted to Defendants care, and was under the supervision and control of Defendants, such that Defendants owed him a duty to act *in loco parentis* and to prevent foreseeable injuries.

91. By reason of the foregoing, Defendants breached their duties to act *in loco parentis*.

92. As a direct and proximate result of Defendants' foregoing breach, Plaintiff suffered grave injury, including the physical, psychological and emotional injury and damages as described above.

93. By reason of the foregoing, Defendants are liable to Plaintiff for compensatory and punitive damages in an amount to be determined at trial, plus interest and costs in an amount that exceeds the jurisdictional limit of the lower court of this State.

#### COUNT VII

#### BREACH OF STATUTORY DUTIES TO REPORT

94. Plaintiff repeats and re-alleges each and every allegation set forth above as if fully set forth herein.

95. Pursuant to N.Y. Soc. Serv. Law §§ 413 and 420 and New York Education Law Art. 23-B, Defendants had a statutory duty to report reasonable suspicion of abuse of children in their care.

96. Defendants breached their statutory duty by failing to report reasonable suspicion of abuse by Sister Jane Doe of children in their care.

97. As a direct and proximate result of Defendants' foregoing breaches, Plaintiff suffered grave injury, including the physical, psychological and emotional injury and damages as described above.

98. By reason of the foregoing, Defendants are liable to Plaintiff for compensatory and punitive damages in an amount to be determined at trial, plus interest and costs in an amount that exceeds the jurisdictional limit of the lower court of this State.

**WHEREFORE**, Plaintiff prays for judgment as follows:

- a. Awarding Plaintiff compensatory damages for his injuries, in an amount to be determined at trial;
- b. Awarding Plaintiff punitive damages for his injuries, in an amount to be determined at trial;
- c. Awarding Plaintiff prejudgment interest, to the extent available by law;
- d. Awarding Plaintiffs costs and disbursements and attorneys' fees to the extent available by law; and
- e. Awarding such other and further relief as this Court may deem just and proper.

**JURY TRIAL DEMANDED**

99. Plaintiff demands a trial by jury of all issues triable by jury in this action.

Dated: December 23, 2019

Yours, etc.

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