

Hudson Valley priest accused of sexually abusing the son of a missionary

By Frank Esposito / The Journal News

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OSSINING - The son of a missionary claims he was sexually abused by a priest from a local order, according to a Westchester County court filing.

The case, filed by an anonymous plaintiff, accused Ronald Boccieri, a Maryknoll priest, of sexually abusing him at a cabin in the Catskills.

Boccieri was accused of initially grooming the plaintiff while at the Ossining Maryknoll campus.

The plaintiff's family were lay missionaries who lived close to the Maryknoll campus and ate most of their meals at the campus dining halls, according to the suit.

This was one of the last cases filed in 2019 under the Child Victims Act, a law that allows people to sue for abuse regardless of the statute of limitations. Legal filings under the law started in August 2019 and the window to file a suit will remain open until August 2020.

Since the filings started:

- Over 1,300 filings have been made.
- Suits have been filed against hospitals, family members, boy scout troops, modeling agencies, youth sports leagues and religious organizations.
- There are currently talks to extend the window another year.
- Other states such as New Jersey are enacting their own versions of the law.

Boccieri started his grooming by telling the plaintiff about his gun collection, and eventually took him up to his room to show him his guns, according to the suit.

After winning the plaintiff's trust, he took him to a camp in the Catskills, where he taught the plaintiff and another boy how to shoot.

Bocchieri convinced the plaintiff to shower with him in order to save water, and afterward drugged the plaintiff, according to the suit.

Bocchieri died in 2015 and had no prior accusations against him.