

FR. JOHN HEFFERAN



Claiming that a priest's touching was not "deliberately sexual in nature," Cardinal Francis George intervened on behalf of four-time accused child molesting cleric and asked his board in charge of clergy misconduct to reconsider their decision to remove the priest from ministry.

Fr. John Hefferan had been a priest for almost 40 years before his victims began to come forward and report their abuse. By 1993, the archdiocese, knowing that there was a credible allegation, allowed Hefferan to remain in ministry, unmonitored.

After the Dallas Charter in 2002, two more victims came forward. A third came forward in 2003. That year, the clergy misconduct review board, after reviewing that allegations, decided that Hefferan should be removed from active ministry. In response, Cardinal George appealed to the Board to reconsider the possibility that "the touch was not deliberately sexual in nature."

As a result, Hefferan was placed on monitoring in 2003, but was not removed from the priesthood.

In May 2014, the Archdiocese decided that the monitoring protocols in place should be strengthened, since Hefferan lived alone was able to "come and go as he pleases."

Hefferan lives in Palos Park, IL. He is the subject of at least four allegations of child sexual abuse.

TIMELINE OF DOCUMENTS

5/1/1956 Ordained

1956 – St. Louise de Marillac (parish school had approx. 637 children)

1962 – St. Anastasia (parish school had approx. 715 children)

1967 – St. Simeon (parish school had approx. 1,141 children)

1968 – Infant Jesus of Prague (parish school had approx. 711 children)

1973 – St. John the Evangelist (parish school had approx. 206 children)

1975 – St. John Vianney (parish school had approx. 341 children)

Overlapped here with accused priest Thomas J. Job; parish school had 341 children

1981 – St. James (parish school had approx. 160 children)

1985 – St. Ann (parish school had approx. 381 children)

Overlapped here with accused priest Eugene P. Burns.

1990 – St. Gerald's (parish school had approx. 550 children)

3/16/1993 Woman reports abuse by Hefferan to the Archdiocese. (AOC 014411)

Victim statement abstract says a minor girl was abused by Hefferan at St. John Vianney in Northlake, IL in the late 70s (AOC014413)

9/9/1993 Memo, handwritten notes say “remain in ministry” (AOC 014388)

3/24/1993 Hefferan placed on monitoring, not allowed around minors without another adult. Victim is believable and credible. (AOC 014415)

6/29/1993 Review Board determined that Hefferan can remain in ministry. (AOC 014426)

7/28/1993 Monitoring discontinued (AOC 014450)

1997 – St. Bede (parish school had approx. 243 children)

2002 – Bishop Lyne Home

4/10/2002 Report of abuse by Hefferan at St. Anastasia in Waukegan from 1964-1967. (AOC 014516)

5/2/2002 Report of abuse by Hefferan at Infant Jesus of Prague in 1970. (AOC 014517)

7/1/2002 – Parochial Administrator, St. Alphonsus (AOC 014519)

1/15/2003 Report of abuse by Hefferan at Infant Jesus of Prague in the late 1960s. (AOC 014530)

2/1/2003 Review Board determines that there is reasonable cause to suspect misconduct occurred. (AOC 014538)

3/7/2003 Despite several unanimous determinations by the Review Board that there is reasonable cause to suspect that Hefferan engaged in sexual misconduct with minors, Cardinal George appealed to the Board to reconsider the possibility that “the touch was not deliberately sexual in nature” (AOC 014547)

12/3/2003 Hefferan placed on monitoring. (AOC 014595)

- 10/21/2005 Memo re: possibility of laicization. "Accusations which came in prior to April 30, 2001, had to be reported to the CDF prior to the Feast of Christ the King last year (2004)." AD will refer Hefferan's case to Rome only if he no longer wants to abide by the agreement that he was to not engage in public ministry. (AOC 014605)
- 5/2014 Review of Hefferan's individual specific protocols says he has enjoyed a tremendous amount of freedom by living alone without a site monitor, he can come and go as he pleases. Recommends strengthened risk management protocols. (AOC 014688)