

Priest H

Priest H was unusual in that he spent a short period of time as an ordained priest, where he had completed his diaconate year. There, *Priest H* developed an intimate, abusive relationship with a young boy. The boy, an altar server, was a frequent guest. He would be in the rectory at night having dinner and there in the morning for breakfast. Their first sexual contact occurred when the boy was ten. During one of his overnight visits, *Priest H* began fondling the boy's genitals. This happened over ten times, mostly in the priest's private rooms. Often, *Priest H* would ejaculate on the boy while moving his body up and down, simulating sex. *Priest H* and the boy were often observed in close proximity and in intimate conversation. This made some of the other priests in the rectory uncomfortable.

An associate Pastor from this parish testified in the Grand Jury. He acknowledged hearing, "horsing around", coming from *Priest H's* private room. On one occasion, he commented about the noise to the housekeeper. She told him that it was not horsing around going on in the room because, "I change the sheets". This priest also knew that the victim was spending nights in *Priest H's* rectory residence. The priest assumed the housekeeper was referring to a sexual relationship between the victim and *Priest H* that he acknowledged was a crime. However, he never made an official report to anyone in the Diocese at the time.⁴⁴ The priest did speak with his pastor who, in turn, spoke with *Priest H*. However, he never told the pastor of the housekeeper's remark or his understanding that a sexual relationship was occurring

⁴⁴ Grand Jury Exhibit 18E is correspondence from the Associate Pastor to a Diocesan official involved in personnel issues. In this document from 2002, the priest finally sets forth his observations of *Priest H*, the observation and comments by the housekeeper, as well as another incident wherein he saw *Priest H*, the victim and the victim's parents meeting in the rectory kitchen. The victim was sitting next to *Priest H* and had his head resting on his shoulder. After making this observation, he left, went back to his room in the rectory and made no report of the incident. Surreal benign neglect?

between the priest and the boy. He said that the visits by the victim to *Priest H's* room ceased at that time.

When the boy was thirteen or fourteen, *Priest H* took him on a pilgrimage to Yugoslavia. After *Priest H* was transferred to another parish, their contact was reduced. However, when they were together, the boy frequently gave *Priest H* massages. As the boy matured, *Priest H* seemed to lose interest in him although he provided him with cigarettes, alcohol and pornography.

Priest H was also physically abusive to this boy. Once, he bit down on his ear. Another time, when the boy did not want to go bowling with *Priest H*, he punched him in the nose so hard it bled. *Priest H* told the boy's mother he had injured his nose wrestling.

The boy told his father about *Priest H* when he was nineteen. His father, who was a law enforcement officer, told his son he would take care of the matter. When the father died a year later, the boy, unsure what, if any, action had been taken, decided he would complain to the Diocese himself. He was encouraged to do this by his therapist who arranged the initial contact. He met with a member of the Diocesan team assigned to deal with these cases. The man, a priest, the victim later learned was also an attorney, but he did not disclose this. The meeting lasted about twenty minutes. Afterwards, the Diocese paid for his therapy. Except for knowing that his therapy bills were being paid, the victim was not told anything about *Priest H*. On his own, he learned that he was assigned and working as a chaplain in a medical facility in the Diocese.

At one point, *Priest H* went on a leave of absence for psychological evaluation and treatment. His pastor at the time wrote to an official in the Diocese indicating that the leave of absence would be explained to the parish as an opportunity for *Priest H* to discern the mystery

of his vocation. (Grand Jury Exhibit 18G). It is noteworthy in this regard that only one week later, *Priest H* was deemed to be, “earnest about his ministry and his priesthood”, when he was evaluated. (Grand Jury Exhibit 18H). This official statement was business as usual, another attempt at secrecy designed to hide the true facts from parishioners.

Follow-up reports from the treatment facility on *Priest H* were informative. (Grand Jury Exhibit 181). A psychological evaluation of *Priest H* reports a finding of ephebophilia, by history, but notes that *Priest H* denied any current attraction to minors. Nevertheless, the report expressed serious concern about *Priest H's* ability to handle his feelings towards children. The facility ruled out pedophilia, but considered *Priest H* at risk to re-offend with minors. It was, therefore, recommended that he be kept away from them. (Grand Jury Exhibit 18J). *Priest H*, after completion of his evaluation and treatment, was assigned as a Chaplain at an area hospital. He was not allowed contact with minors except in emergencies. Nevertheless, *Priest H* was given weekend mass duty at a parish in the adjacent County. The pastor there was not told of the past allegations of sexual misconduct by the priest, or the report from the treatment facility to the Diocese that recommended that *Priest H* have no ministry or activities with minors. (Grand Jury Exhibit 18M).

What is clear in *Priest H's* case is the failure at the parish level of priests to report criminal activity by fellow clergyman. The official policy of the Diocesan hierarchy, secrecy, was in full bloom.

In early 2002, the Diocese asked the victim to meet with them again about *Priest H*. The victim agreed only if *Priest H* was going to be present. This meeting did not occur.