

NAME: Fr. James Bunn
DATE OF BIRTH: September 30, 1938
STATUS: Retired
ORDINATION: May 23, 1964

ASSIGNMENTS:

06/1964-06/1965 St. Andrew's Church, Johnstown, PA
06/1965-06/1967 Sacred Heart Church, Altoona, PA
06/1967-05/1976 Asst. Principal Bishop McCort High School
St. Clement Church, Johnstown
12/1977-07/1978 Acting Principal Bishop McCort High School
07/1978-08/1984 Principal Bishop McCort High School
08/1984-06/1995 Saints Philip & James Church, Meyersdale, PA
*03/1988 Psychiatric evaluation
06/1990-04/1992 Seven Dolors Church, Clearville, PA
06/1995-05/2002 Saint Joan of Arc and St. Thomas Aquinas, Ashville, PA
*1997 Guest House treatment facility
05/15/2002 Retired

Father James Bunn engaged in sexual intercourse with a child on multiple occasions during a six month to one year period between the child's 10th and 13th birthdays. Bunn befriended the child's family as their Parish Priest at St. Andrew's Church in Johnstown, Pennsylvania. Bunn would return to visit the victim's family after his transfer to Sacred Heart in Altoona, Pennsylvania. The family remarked that Bunn was "always in the company of a different boy."

Bunn's victim was sodomized on numerous occasions when Bunn would stay with the victim's family and often while consuming alcohol. The entire family deeply trusted their priest, James Bunn. The stress of Bunn's victimization of their family was crushing. The victim's father found himself dealing with intense feelings of anger and violence. The victim's mother was treated with medication. The victim himself began to struggle with his faith and abandoned hopes of being a priest.

The victim's parents addressed the violation of the child with Bishop James Hogan in March 1982. The family did not seek any kind of compensation for what had occurred, only to speak to the Bishop of their pain and ask that Bunn not be permitted to have contact with children. The victim wrote the Bishop on January 23, 1982. The victim explained in detail that Father Bunn showed him how to give a "blow job" and explained his first sexual encounter was with Father Bunn. The victim stated "He's a

very sick man and needs professional help. I feel very sorry for him. I just can't imagine taking a kid in grade school to bed with me especially knowing the permanent damage that is being done." Bishop James Hogan gave the family and the victim assurances that he would take care of the matter.

The family again approached the Bishop in 1984 with concerns noting that Bunn had been made Principal of Bishop McCort Catholic High School. The family brought a family friend with them to their meeting, Cambria County Judge Caram Abood. The family hoped that the Bishop could be persuaded to keep his promise and remove Bunn from ministry. The family complained that Bunn and Father Martin McCamley had continued to correspond with their son suggesting he should enter the priesthood because he was of the same sexual "orientation" as Bunn and McCamley. Bishop James Hogan removed Bunn as principal of McCort and assigned Father Bunn to continue in ministry as a parish priest at Saints Philip & James Church in Meyersdale, Pennsylvania.

The family sought action from Bishop Joseph Adamec shortly after he became Bishop of the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown. The Grand Jury has substantiated much of this evidence through the Diocese's own documents. One such document contained the notes of Bishop Joseph Adamec. Bishop Adamec met with Bunn on Friday, February 26, 1988 following the family's latest complaint to Adamec. Adamec recorded the following:

"I explained to him (Bunn) my receiving the file after our meeting at the Residence and the additional information that it contained. When asked why he did not share it with me on the 7th of January but actually stated that he had no involvement with any minors, he stated that it was his impression that Bishop Hogan considered the case closed and, so, he did not think it necessary to mention. He again denied the allegations and somewhat blamed the mother on being possessive and not wanting to share friends, implying that she somehow was getting back at him. He also said that the son, (REDACTED), was somewhat effeminate and could easily misunderstand certain actions. Likewise, he denied the comment to (REDACTED) that it was alright to enter the seminary and study to be a priest since his orientation was not different from his (Bunn). Father Bunn stated more than once that he (Bunn) has no problem of the nature we were discussing. When I kept asking him for answers and clarifications, Father Bunn asked if the matter involving the

allegations is still being pressed for action. I answered that it was. At that, his whole attitude changed, and he became silent. After my observing to him that very fact and asking why it apparently made a difference in his attitude, he answered by admitting that there was one incident at the (REDACTED) house when he stayed overnight with him in his bed. He attributed it to drinking and said that neither of them knew what was going on. I said that it would appear that (REDACTED) did since it continues to haunt him and he remembers it to this day. When asked if he has a drinking problem, he answered "no" but stated that he has a drink everyday, before and after the evening meal. Since he obviously was not willing to share the truth with me unless I pulled it out of him, I stated that it was difficult at this point to believe anything that he said. Father Bunn insisted that there were no incidents of involvement since in the past "20" years and that he does not have this kind of a problem."

Bunn was sent for an evaluation which did not clear Bunn for pedophilic tendencies but rather concluded Bunn, based upon his self-report, did not demonstrate such interests. Adamec returned James Bunn to further ministry within the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown as a parish priest for over a decade until requiring him to seek additional treatment. The Grand Jury concludes this was yet more of the same. A priest had been identified as an admitted child predator, yet the Diocese simply shuffled the priest to another location with access to the children of the faithful and the public.

On March 17, 2015, Father James Bunn testified before the Grand Jury. Bunn's attorney sought 5th amendment protections from the Supervising Judge of the Grand Jury. Resultantly, Father Bunn secured a right to not discuss any details of the allegations made against him. However, Father Bunn, now retired, explained how his time in active ministry came to a close following an additional complaint lodged against him in 2001:

Mr. Dye: And then there's this complaint in 2001 where you're sent for an evaluation again?

Fr. Bunn: Yeah.

Mr. Dye: And then at that time that's whenever you're removed from public ministry in 2002. And that was when you retired?

Fr. Bunn: Yeah, that's when it came – see, I retired. The Bishop suggested – that's when I went – In those days we were sent -- the Diocese had a practice. I was sent out to the Mayo Clinic for a health examination and so on and so forth. And the way the Bishop stated then before I went out there, he said simply that then when I retired – when I

came back, he said, that will be the end of it and so on, just retire and so forth. And there was no public announcement made of this until the following year.

Mr. Dye: And the public announcement, do you recall what was said?

Fr. Bunn: No. It was just an announcement in the paper --

Mr. Dye: Okay.

Fr. Bunn: -- in the Johnstown Tribune, that I had been rem- -- I had retired on that basis; but my retirement actually had taken place the year before.