

NAME: Fr. Joseph Gaborek  
 DATE OF BIRTH: June 30, 1945  
 STATUS: Dismissal from Priesthood  
 ORDINATION: May 15, 1971

ASSIGNMENTS:

06/1971-11/1972	St. Benedict's Church, Geistown, PA
11/1972-05/1973	Saints Peter & Paul Church, Philipsburg, PA
05/1973-05/1976	St. Joseph's Church, Portage, PA
1973-1974	Part time religious teacher Bishop Carroll High School
05/1976-05/1980	St. Agnes Church, Lock Haven, PA
05/1980-03/1981	St. John Cantius, Windber, PA
04/1981-08/1984	St. Michael's Church, West Salisbury, PA
	St. Mary's Church, Pocahontas, PA
*08/1984	Sabbatical at Orchard Lake School
08/1984-08/1987	St. Thomas More, Roaring Spring, PA
*08/1987	Saint Luke's Institute (Diocese knew of active warrant in Somerset County)
08/1988	Suspended from ministry
2004	Dismissed from Priesthood

Joseph Gaborek was a priest and child predator in the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown. During the summer of 1982 Gaborek recruited a 16-year-old boy to work at St. Michael's Church, West Salisbury and St. Mary's Church, Pocahontas, Pennsylvania. Father Gaborek invited the child to stay overnight at the rectory where he proceeded to sexually violate the boy. On other occasions Gaborek would take the boy into St. Mary's and molest the boy inside the parish itself.

During the final incident of abuse, Gaborek took a break during the extended and brutal assault; the boy ran from the rectory screaming for help and found it at a nearby home.

The Pennsylvania State Police were promptly involved. The state's criminal investigation of Gaborek was brought to the attention of Bishop Hogan almost immediately. Bishop James Hogan's brief notes in the "Secret Archives" tell a chilling tale of cover-up:

*"On 2.VIII.84 Officer Markle (?) Stat. Pol. Somerset Investig. Div. called for an apt. to go over a complaint filed w. office by CASA re Fr. G"*

Hogan went on to explain that the victim's grandmother was pushing the issue writing "it is the grandmother that is bitterly hostile and wants something done." Hogan notes that

Father Gaborek was seen in the Nanty-Glo and Twin Rocks area with youthful boys. However, Hogan closes the note optimistically recording that while the state police officer was non-Catholic he was "great." He had consulted with a Catholic lawyer and then with the permission of his superior gone to Hogan. Hogan records that there was no desire to "occasion publicity, etc." and that he gave his assurance he was moving Gaborek and sending him to an institution "e.g. Orchard Lake." The Bishop's August 6, 1984 letter to Gaborek again summarizes the agreement. Hogan told Gaborek he could take a brief "sabbatical."

Bishop James Hogan had worked a successful cover-up for Gaborek. But as cover-ups go, James Hogan was particularly proud of this one. Years later, even the 1987 clinical notes confirm the Bishop's interference with a police investigation. Those notes state that Gaborek "would have been prosecuted and convicted of [sexual contact with a 16 year old boy] except that the bishop intervened and he was sent to Michigan for treatment and then placed in another parish upon his return". Gaborek's "treatment" in 1987 was part of the standard self-reporting based "treatment" ritual the Diocese commonly engaged in - which would permit Hogan to return the priest to ministry in another parish, St. Thomas Moore in Roaring Spring, Pennsylvania.

Gaborek himself testified before the Grand Jury on February 10, 2015. Gaborek admitted to molesting the 16-year-old boy and stated "*[Bishop Hogan] said, Joe, he says, I made a deal with the authorities -- maybe I shouldn't say this about him -- he says, and I was moving you for them to, you know, get you off the burner.*" Gaborek testified regarding Bishop Hogan's 1982 discovery of his crimes stating:

*Mr. Dye: This was '82?*

*Mr. Gaborek: '82.*

*Mr. Dye: Okay. Now, we've seen a lot, a lot, a lot, a lot of Bishop Hogan's writings where he talks about your incident in 1982. So he was aware of that?*

*Mr. Gaborek: Yes.*

*Mr. Dye: In '82. How did he become aware of it?*

*Mr. Gaborek: Well, they wrote a letter.*

*Mr Dye: Okay.*

*Mr. Gaborek: Yeah, see the grandmother -- once I was at the grand- -- the mother said, it blows my mind, the grandfather said, blows my mind, and (REDACTED) himself says, don't do anything to hurt Father Joe and that. And he continued to come and do work at the church but this time never on his own. He always came with his mother's*

boyfriend. And I even -- he even invited me to -- like I said, he was like about a half year shy of being 18. He invited me to his graduation.

Mr. Dye: There's no question here that he thought very, very highly of you?

Mr. Gaborek: Yes. And it bothers me to today, you know, that I think about it. But what was done was done. But he was --

Like I said, when his mother wrote the letter and I went to see Bishop Hogan, I read the letter, and he says, Joe, it says in here about, you know, touching or fondling her son. Did you or didn't you? And I says, yes. He says -- and this is where Bishop Hogan said to me, he says, well, he says, do you need help in that matter? Do you think you need a -- I says, no. I says, I told him, no. I says, I just -- it was an indiscretion on my behalf. I says, it won't happen again. But I went away. He sent me to the seminary. He always believed that your seminary is like you nest egg. He says, well, I'm going to send you on a retreat. And it ended up like six weeks. He said, get ahold of a counselor, get ahold of one of the priests, spiritual director and have some good talks with them and that and we'll go from there.

Mr. Dye: Do you remember where that retreat was at?

Mr. Gaborek: Right there at Orchard Lake.

Gaborek explained that Orchard Lake was a school for boys. The school lacked any psychological or psychiatric treatment facilities and did not address his desire to have sexual intercourse with children. Gaborek's dispatch to Orchard Lake was quite literally a vacation. Gaborek indicated in hindsight the welfare of the children was not the primary concern of the institution in the following exchange before the Grand Jury:

Mr. Dye: When you're dealing with -- this will be my last question -- but when you're dealing with Canon law and the bureaucracy of the Catholic Church, because it's an institution made of men, fallible, versus, right, scripture, which is supposed to be upon which the Catholic Church is based, and you're dealing with obligations to protect children, you know, better a millstone be cast around your neck and cast into the sea than to harm a little one, if your right hand offends you cut it off because it's better to lose that hand than your whole body be cast into hell, right?

Mr. Gaborek: Right.

Mr. Dye: I mean, these don't seem like scriptures to me that say, let's make sure we send the child molester to Orchard Lake, you know? I mean, there seems to be a real clash here between those interests.

Mr. Gaborek: Yes. Well, I think, Dan, the thing is today it's the child. The emphasis is on the victim, the child. If the child is victimized, you deal -- that's the essence. It's like you protect the child, you do everything you can --

Mr. Dye: What was the emphasis then?

Mr. Gaborek: I think like you said, the essence probably as you -- as I look back at that, it was like you protect the institution, you protect the priest, teacher. See, because that went on probably in schools that way, whether it be Catholic, public. I think that the child was put more or less down like saying, okay, the victim will get over it or something; I don't know.

The Grand Jury found the Gaborek case to be a particularly heinous example of the Diocese exercising authority and influence to cover up the sexual abuse of a child at the hands of a Diocesan Priest. The victim of Gaborek's assault again reported the matter to the Diocese in 2005. He noted he recalled being interviewed by the Pennsylvania State Police regarding the allegation, but "nothing ever happened." An unrelated incident involving Gaborek's alleged sex with a dog was not prosecuted in 1989. Gaborek was prosecuted in Cambria County for corruption of minors in 1998. However, the Diocese did not defrock Gaborek until 2004.

#### A. Father Joseph Gaborek

Joseph Gaborek was both priest and predator. Gaborek's position facilitated his crimes. Isom's analysis noted that Gaborek engaged in grooming of the victim. Gaborek would pat children on the head and give them hugs. Through this common and repeated process Gaborek was able to normalize physical contact. The Grand Jury found numerous priests engaged in such contact which, without the knowledge of Bishops Hogan and Adamec, appeared harmless.

Gaborek had his victim spent the night at the rectory. The result of this was that both the victim and his family approved of the action because it naturally felt like a privilege had been extended. The Grand Jury repeatedly found families who permitted contact with their children because the individual requesting the contact was a priest and such interest in their family or the child was considered an honor.

Gaborek was able to fill a role for the child; the victim reported Gaborek felt like a valued family member. Gaborek was able to exploit what he recognized was a need the child felt he had. Finally, Gaborek's role as a priest and his ability to offer his victim work, promoted contact and normalized the contact between Gaborek and his victim. The seemingly legitimate reason to remain in regular contact permitted Gaborek more opportunities to sexually abuse the victim; which he did.