

Father Dennis Dellamalva

Biographical Information

YEAR OF BIRTH:	1949
YEAR OF DEATH:	1994
ORDINATION:	May 3, 1975

Employment/Assignment History

6/03/1975	Mt. St. Peter, New Kensington, PA
8/17/1977	Mother of Sorrows, Murrysville, PA
5/25/1982	Holy Family, Latrobe, PA
10/01/1983	Leave of Absence

Summary

During the relatively short time period Father Dennis Dellamalva served as a priest in the Diocese of Greensburg, numerous allegations of child sexual abuse were made against him.

In 1983, as conveyed in complaints to the Church and various legal filings, two adolescent brothers went to their parents and told them of sexual assaults committed against them by Father "Denny," as Dellamalva was known. These sexual assaults occurred throughout 1981 and 1982.

The reports revealed that on occasions when Dellamalva would be welcomed into the family home, Dellamalva would get the brothers alone in their respective bedrooms and pray with them when they went to bed for the night. He would massage their necks and rub their backs before ultimately massaging their buttocks and working his way into the bottoms of their pajamas. He would fondle their genitals and, on occasion, place the boys' hands on their own genitals and have them massage themselves while he held their hand. This molestation happened both in the boys' home and on trips Dellamalva would be invited on with their family, such as to the Seven Springs Ski Resort and Rehoboth Beach, Delaware.

While at the ski resort, Dellamalva shared a bed with the younger brother because beds were at a premium. Again, he fondled the boy's penis on this occasion.

On another occasion while at the family home, Dellamalva attempted to rub and massage the back of the younger brother. He yelled at Dellamalva to stop and screamed that he hated when the priest would rub his neck and back. When this occurred, the boys' parents became concerned and spoke to the boys about Dellamalva, at which point the brothers finally told their parents what Dellamalva had been doing to them. The boys told their parents they were afraid to tell them about what had been happening because their parents seemed to like Dellamalva so much.

Summary

Between 1981 and 1982, Dellamalva had also become friendly with the family of a boy who was friends with the brothers. Dellamalva engaged in the same sexual behavior with the third victim as he did with the brothers.

The families of all of the victims reported Dellamalva's abuse to Bishop William Connare and ultimately filed a lawsuit against Dellamalva, the Diocese, and the Bishop. Neither set of parents wanted criminal charges filed, however, because they did not want the matter publicized nor did they want to put the boys through a criminal trial.

In August of 1985, a settlement offer totaling \$375,000 was extended to, and accepted by, all three victims.

Records provided by the Diocese also contained voluminous documents on two other juvenile boys who were sexually assaulted by Dellamalva. One of these individuals - - the fourth victim - - described his time serving as an altar boy at Mother of Sorrows in Murrysville. He stated that while in grades nine through twelve, *"I had the misfortune of attending an annual mountain 'retreat,'"* which he explained was specifically created by Dellamalva so that he could *"get closer to the church's young people."*

The fourth victim stated that he was sexually assaulted by Dellamalva while on the mountain retreat.

The fourth victim eventually left the Murrysville area is now an attorney in California. He explained the horrors of fighting the depression and addiction brought on by Dellamalva's sexual abuse and the difficulties he had to overcome in order to accomplish what he had in his life. He stated that in spite of his success, he is still haunted by the memories of being molested by Dellamalva. He placed the blame for his struggles with depression and addiction squarely on Dellamalva and Connare for letting Dellamalva prey on the church's youth.

The fourth victim ultimately reached a \$25,000 settlement with the Diocese.

Another lawsuit was filed against Dellamalva, the Diocese, and church officials by a fifth victim who alleged that he was molested by Dellamalva when he was between 13 and 15 years old and playing junior varsity football for Franklin Regional High School.

According to this victim, while alone with Dellamalva in the rectory at Mother of Sorrows, Dellamalva had him lay on a blanket on the floor while Dellamalva laid beside him and removed the victim's pants and t-shirt. Although he was not comfortable with what was happening, he went along with it, in part because Dellamalva had been in the locker room with the football team after games and had seen them undressed.

Dellamalva told the victim to close his eyes and meditate, at which point he removed the victim's shorts and massaged his penis, before performing oral sex on him. Dellamalva then had the victim hold his erect penis as he ejaculated on the victim's face. When Dellamalva then began kissing the victim on the mouth, the victim fled.

Summary

The fifth victim ultimately reached a settlement with the Diocese in the amount of \$25,000.

From 1982 to 1983 - - at the time the Diocese received complaints of sexual abuse by Dellamalva - - he was given a leave of absence and sent to the Spencer Abbey treatment center in Massachusetts.

With respect to Bishop William Connare, among the pertinent facts appearing in his deposition in connection with civil litigation was that after the parents of the first two victims came and personally confronted him with the allegation that Dellamalva had molested their sons, Dellamalva was transferred to Holy Family. When Connare was asked whether Dellamalva had admitted to molesting the two boys, the Bishop stated that he did.

Further, in his deposition, when Connare was specifically asked if he informed the pastor of Holy Family of the reason Dellamalva was being transferred to his parish, Connare stated that he did not. When Connare was asked why he failed to do so, he stated he did not believe it was necessary due to the fact that Dellamalva had been to treatment and was reportedly dealing with his issues. This was after Dellamalva had admitted to Connare that he had sexually molested children in the Mother of Sorrows.

Connare also never informed the pastor of Mother of Sorrows, Monsignor Donald Fisher, of Dellamalva's admitted molestation of boys. When Connare was asked why he did not inform Fisher of Dellamalva's apparent sexual attraction to, and abuse of children, he once again stated he believed Dellamalva had dealt with his problems and did not feel he should get involved.

Eventually, according to church records, after several other parents complained about Dellamalva's behavior with their children (no specifics provided with respect to these complaints), Connare stated he informed the pastor of Holy Family that it may be best to limit Dellamalva's contact with children.

Dellamalva last functioned as a priest in the Diocese in 1984, before resigning from the priesthood in 1986. He died in 1994.