

# Reverend John S. Hoehl

## Biographical Information

YEAR OF BIRTH:	1938
YEAR OF DEATH:	N/A
ORDINATION:	May 9, 1963

## Employment/Assignment History

1964	St. Mary Magdalene, Homestead, PA
1966	St. Francis Xavier, Pittsburgh, PA
1971	Quigley Catholic High School, Baden, PA
1985	Bishop Boyle High School, Homestead, PA
1985	St. John Joachim, Greenfield, PA
1986	Secretariat for Education, Pittsburgh, PA
1987	Shadyside Hospital, Pittsburgh, PA

## Summary

On May 2, 1986, a 28-year-old male made a report to the Diocese of Pittsburgh that he had been sexually abused by Father John S. Hoehl. He stated that from 1972, when he was a 14-year-old freshman at Quigley High School, until 1979, when he was a senior at Duquesne University, Hoehl fondled his genitals and they performed mutual masturbation and oral sex on each other on a regular basis. At the time when this disclosure was made to Diocesan officials, a young man was living with Hoehl at the rectory at St. Joachim. Found within the rectory were various drug paraphernalia, condoms and other pornographic materials, including videos and literature.

In 1993, a 29-year-old adult male reported that he had been sexually involved with Hoehl beginning in 1978 when he was 15-years-old. He stated that it continued from his sophomore year at Quigley until 1980 when he was a senior. He stated that he was sodomized on at least two occasions. He further stated that oral sex and mutual masturbation occurred on many occasions during that time period. He advised that he had sought the assistance of Hoehl in connection with sexual abuse that he had suffered prior to attending Quigley.

In 1997, a 29-year-old male reported that in 1976, when he was nine years of age, Hoehl touched and rubbed his genitals, and, performed oral sex on him. He stated that the sexual activity lasted until he was 18-years-old. It then occurred again when he was a sophomore in college. He indicated that there were many boys who stayed at Hoehl's residence at Quigley and that some of them had similar experiences with Hoehl. On September 22, 2000, the male and his wife filed a lawsuit against Hoehl and the Diocese in connection with the sexual abuse. On December 14, 2007, Bishop Zubick provided the male's parents with a check in the amount of \$10,000.00. The accompanying letter stated that the money was for emotional and financial hardship suffered.

## Summary

On April 26, 2002, a 33-year-old male reported sexual abuse by Hoehl. He stated that the sexual contact occurred at Hoehl's private residence at Quigley in 1979 when he was 16 years of age. The male reported that Hoehl sexually abused him and provided him with drugs and alcohol until 1982.

In 2004, an adult male informed the Diocese that he was sexually abused by Hoehl when he was 16 years old and in his sophomore year at Quigley. He stated that in April, 1978, he was outside of the school building when a friend came out to tell him that a girl (hereinafter referred to "Jane Doe") was in trouble in Hoehl's office. The two boys ran into the office where they saw her. She was naked from the waist down. She was being held down by an older student and Hoehl was about to rape her. The boys helped Jane Doe retrieve her clothes and wanted to get her out of the office as quickly as possible. Hoehl told them that he would release Jane Doe if they stayed behind to take her place. They agreed and Jane Doe was released. Hoehl locked the office on both sides. He then sodomized both boys. The adult male reported that he and Jane Doe told a female teacher what had occurred but the teacher did not take any action. The male further stated that he came forward after receiving the letter wherein Bishop Wuerl invited people to contact the Diocese if they had been abused.

Another additional victim came forward in 2004 to report that Hoehl had touched him inappropriately between 1980 and 1984. The incidents occurred in Beaver County. The male attended therapy and was diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder. The Diocese assumed responsibility for the costs of the therapy sessions and his prescriptions. On April 21, 2008, the Diocese issued a check to the male in the amount of \$10,000.00 as a pastoral gesture for the financial difficulties he had experienced.

The Diocese received additional reports regarding abuse at the hands of Hoehl. Specifically:

- Hoehl entered the shower with a 14-year-old boy in 1975. He also engaged in manual masturbation with the boy and oral sex. The abuse occurred in the school locker room, Hoehl's residence at Quigley and at a cabin near Youghioghenny Lake;
- Hoehl sexually touched a boy from 1972 to 1973 when he was 15 to 16 years of age. The incidents occurred in Beaver County;
- Hoehl inappropriately touched a boy from 1979 to 1980 when the boy was 12 to 13 years of age. The incidents occurred in Beaver County;
- Hoehl fondled the genitals of a 16-year-old boy in 1976. The incidents occurred at Quigley and at the Youghioghenny Reservoir.

The Diocese was also notified that Hoehl fondled the genitals of a 13-year-old boy in 1979. He also approached the boy in the shower. These incidents occurred at Quigley and in a "cabin at a lake." The victim received \$40,000.00 from the Diocese to settle his part of a 32 victim lawsuit against the Diocese. He later received a check in the amount of \$10,000.00 to help with his additional expenses.

## Summary

The following is a summary of further allegations of sexual abuse committed by Hoehl:

- Hoehl fondled the genitals of a boy and washed his back. This occurred between 1974 (when the boy was 10-years-old) and 1981. The conduct occurred at Quigley and at a cabin at Youghioghenny Lake. He is the brother of the immediate victim listed above;
- In 1973, Hoehl wrestled and showered with a 15-year-old boy. He removed the boy's underwear and rubbed his genitals. The incidents occurred at Hoehl's private home at Quigley. He is the brother of the immediate victim listed above;
- A male reported that Hoehl would make the boys go to bed wearing long shirts with no underwear so that he could fondle their genitals in the middle of the night; and
- From 1975 to 1976, Hoehl kissed a boy, provided him with alcohol, performed oral sex on him, fondled his genitals and took nude photographs of him. The incidents occurred from 1975 to 1976 when the boy was 17 to 18 years of age.

On May 18, 2015, Father David DeWitt, Pastor of Risen Lord, telephoned Father Mark Eckman. DeWitt explained that he was scheduled to preside over a funeral and was contacted by the son of the deceased who stated that he was having a difficult time dealing with his father's death. The son further advised that he felt uncomfortable coming back to Pittsburgh because he was sexually abused by Hoehl when he was a student at St. Francis Xavier from 1966 to 1967.

An adult male met with Diocesan officials on May 11, 2005. The male explained that he was a student at Quigley and, when he was approximately 15-16 years of age, Hoehl took him and several other boys to his cabin. While at the cabin, everyone was divided up to sleep in various places. He was assigned to sleep with Hoehl and Hoehl insisted that the boy sleep in a long t-shirt with no underwear. During the night, Hoehl fondled him. The male also reported that Hoehl had him work around his property during the summer. Afterwards, Hoehl instructed him to take a shower. When he got out of the shower, Hoehl was there waiting with a towel to dry him off. After three days in a row of this behavior by Hoehl, the male did not return. Finally, the male reported that on graduation day, his diploma case was empty. Hoehl informed him that if he wanted his diploma, he needed to come to see him. He cried all the way home and never returned to get his diploma because he did not want to deal with Hoehl.

The file contained a confidential memorandum that revealed that on May 20, 2009, Bishop Zubik met with a man whose brother was abused by Hoehl. The family had heard second-hand information that the brother was also abused by another priest who served at St. Teresa of Avila in Perrysville. Zubik stated in his report that he reached out to the widow of the brother several times, but she never returned any of his messages. Attached to the confidential memorandum were what appeared to be journal writings authored by the brother wherein he described certain incidents at Quigley.

## Summary

In an e-mail communication on November 2, 2004, a 1979 Quigley graduate wrote to Father Ronald Lengwin about Hoehl. He stated that when he was a student, he was approached by Hoehl. However, he was able to avoid being molested by him. Others in his class were not so lucky. The male advised that his cousin was molested by Hoehl "*that creature*" and that another good friend of his committed suicide because of what Hoehl did to him. He expressed a strong concern because other priests and adults affiliated with the school were aware that Hoehl was giving the boys drugs and alcohol and having them spend the night at his house. He stated that as an adult, he now he realizes how the adults at the school buried their heads in the sand. He wrote: "*Not one adult did anything to stop it*" and "*To say that there was no knowledge or conspiracy is ludicrous and a flat-out lie.*"

In 2010, a woman telephoned the Diocese Hotline to report that her son was abused by Hoehl in the late 1980's or early 1990's. She stated that Hoehl "*grabbed*" her son and asked to sleep naked with him while at his cabin on the Youghiogheny River. Her son, now 33 years of age, did not want to see or speak with Hoehl.

Following the first report of sexual abuse on May 2, 1986, Hoehl was removed as pastor of St. Joachim and as Headmaster of Bishop Boyle High School on May 4, 1986. He was admitted to Southdown treatment facility in Aurora, Canada on May 6, 1986. While at Southdown, he underwent therapy for approximately six months and was discharged on November 21, 1986. During his treatment at Southdown, the Director informed the Diocese that Hoehl had admitted that he had been sexually involved with several high school students when he was Headmaster at Quigley. At the conclusion of his treatment, Southdown provided the Diocese with an assessment that Hoehl, in fact, was/is a pedophile. On December 3, 1986, Hoehl was assigned as an educational consultant to Father Douglas Nowicki, then Secretary of Education for the Diocese.

On July 1, 1987, Hoehl was appointed as a chaplain at Shadyside Hospital. However, on November 29, 1988, he was informed by the Diocese that he could no longer continue in ministry. Hoehl resigned. After the Diocese withdrew his priestly faculties, he was provided with subsistence and medical benefits for three and one half years. The Diocesan records indicated that each report of sexual abuse was brought to the attention of the District Attorney's Office and that counseling for the victims and their families was provided.

The expiration of the statute of limitations prevented Hoehl from being arrested and charged criminally for sexual abuse of minors.

On April 26, 2002, several victims reported to WTAE Channel 4 that they were sexually abused by Hoehl when they attended Quigley.

In October, 2007, following an initiation of a lawsuit, 32 victims settled with the Diocese.

In 2009, Hoehl was reported to be living in Addison, Pennsylvania. In a letter to the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown, the Diocese of Pittsburgh reported the allegations against Hoehl and where he was living.