

Father Michael Gibbney

At least on victim forced to sign confidentiality agreements

At least ten more boys come forward to allege abuse

Lay Review Board saw none of the allegations

The year 1991 was a bad one for Fr. Michael Gibbney. It was the year of his first allegation of sexual abuse, and the beginning of the end of his career as a priest. As a result of the allegation, Gibbney was sent to Jemez Springs, New Mexico for treatment. In a letter, Gibbney states that he is “looking forward” to serving again in the Joliet Diocese.

Instead, Gibbney took a leave of absence in 1992 and never returned to active ministry. But the allegations—that spanned his 20-year career as a priest—continued. In 1994, one of Gibbney’s victims was forced to sign a confidentiality agreement.

Things did not remain quiet for long. In 2002, more allegations began to flood the Joliet Diocese. By 2010, the Diocese of Joliet admitted that Gibbney had at least eleven known victims. They also stated that none of the allegations were reviewed by the Lay Review Board because the charges pre-dated 2002.

Gibbney was laicized in 2010 to marry. He is living in Oak Forest, Illinois.

TIMELINE OF DOCUMENTS – MICHAEL L. GIBBNEY

5/31/73 - Ordained to Diaconate

6/15/73 Deacon of Notre Dame Parish, Clarendon Hills, Illinois

2/1975 Reverend Daniel L. Ryan votes negatively for Gibbney to be ordained.

5/24/75-Ordained into priesthood at St. Alexander Catholic Church in Villa Park, IL

5/27/75 - Associate Pastor, Immaculate Conception Parish, Elmhurst, IL

7/5/76 - Associate Pastor, Visitation Parish, Elmhurst, IL

8/22/77 - Associate Pastor, Mary Queen of Heaven Parish, Elmhurst, IL

6/19/80 - Associate Pastor, St. Francis of Assisi Parish, Bensenville, IL

6/18/86 - Associate Pastor, St. Charles Borromeo Parish, Bensenville.

6/22/88 - Associate Pastor at St. Liborius Parish, Steger, IL

6/20/90 – Pastor, Immaculate Conception Parish, Morris, IL

11/21/91 Doe K reports to Kaffer that in 1978 Doe K had three year sexual relationship with Gibbney (Doe K was 13-16 years old). Doe K would stay at rectory – Gibbney would get parent’s permission. (174)

- 1/27/92 Resigns as pastor from Immaculate Conception Parish, Morris, IL due to personal spiritual and emotional reasons. Enter Jemez Program. Looks forward to serving again in the Joliet Diocese after the program. (179)**
- 4/16/92 Gibbney requests from Bishop Imesch a one-year leave of absence from the Diocese of Joliet and from active priestly ministry.
- 6/1/92 Withdrew from active ministry. (604)
- 3/25/93 Sister Judith writes memo to Bishop Imesch, Bishop Kaffer and Jim Byrne of a call she received from Doe. Doe was abused by Gibbney when he was 11 or 12 years old at the rectory of St. Francis Assisi in Bolingbrook. Drank and smoked with Gibbney. Also abused on trips to MN and WI. (233)
- 3/26/93 Letter to Bishop Kaffer from Doe outlining abuse by Gibbney when he was 11. (235-242)
- 4/1/94 Doe signs Statement Regarding Confidentiality of his abuse by Gibbney. (264)
- 4/24/02 Sister Judith Davies, OSF, Chancellor wrote memo regarding Doe K. She received a call concerning abuse from 1976-1980. Doe K was 11 years old and a member of Mary Queen of Heaven Parish in Elmhurst, IL. Gibbney took him and about 6 other boys at a time on trips. First incident was on a retreat in WI while other were at the rectory – would spend the night when Father Tom Fleming was gone.
- 4/25/02 Thomas A. O'Donnell interviewed Doe K. Writes memo to Diocesan Review Committee. Memo states date of interview as April 25, 2002. Doe was abused approximately 2 times a month for three years. Doe states Gibbney left Mary Queen of Heaven abruptly and was assigned to, he thinks, St. Andrew in Bolingbrook. Doe visited Gibbney there one time and was sexually abused. (273-74)
- 4/29/02 O'Donnell writes memo to Diocesan Review Committee of interview with another Doe who has knowledge of Gibbney and inappropriate behavior. Mentioned Doe K and Gibbney had a relationship and Doe K spent the night at the rectory often. (276)
- 4/30/02 O'Donnell writes memo to Diocesan Review Committee of interview with another Doe, Doe B Q, who has knowledge of Gibbney. Q attended Mary Queen of Heaven in Elmhurst. Stated Doe K has a "relationship" with Gibbney and was often abused by Gibbney. Q denies being abused other than wrestling matches. (277)
- 5/2/02 Memo to File from Bishop Goedert regarding Mr. PK's call on April 30, 2002 – returned call on 5/2/02. In around 4th to 6th grade while attending Mary

- Queen of Heaven school in Elmhurst he was abused by Gibbney. Went on camping trips (280-81)
- 5/10/02 Rev. Goedert writes letter to Rev. Imesch regarding allegation of abuse by Gibbney he received from Doe P-K concerning his abuse at Mary Queen of Heaven parish Elmhurst, IL. (279)
- No date Letter to Sister Judith from Mrs. Z regarding abuse of her son by Gibbney. (328)
- 4/22/04 Memo by Sister Judith regarding her meeting with Mrs. Z. whose son was molested by Gibbney on camping trips. (329)
- 5/3/04 Memo to Diocesan Review Board from Review Committee Vice-Chair. April 26, 2004 phone conversation regarding son's abuse as altar boy and overnight trips with Gibbney. (330-331)
- 6/14/05 Memo to File from Sister Judith Davies, OSF, regarding call from Leah McClusky from Archdiocese of Chicago who received a call from Mrs. Doe H. Doe H's husband was abused in 1981/82 at St. Francis Assisi in Bolingbrook, IL. Left message for Doe H to contact Sister Mary Francis Seeley, Victim Assistance Coordinator.
- 6/16/05 Memo to File from Sister Davies regarding call from Mr. Doe who was abused by Gibbney in 1983 when he was 12 years old. Doe never received a call from Sister Seeley and wanted to make sure Gibbney was no longer in ministry. Sister Davies assured Doe that Gibbney left in January 1991. (399)
- 7/1/05 Letter from Doe H to Rev. Imesch regarding abuse by Gibbney at St. Francis of Assisi in Bolingbrook during 1982-84. (436)
- 12/3/07 Memo to File by Sister Davies regarding Doe B. Received call from Leah McClusky at the Archdiocese of Chicago regarding allegation of abuse by Gibbney when 11 years old. Sister Davies referred to Sister Seeley. (565)
- 4/8/08 Letter to Doe B from James Wright, Diocese of Joliet, sending settlement draft from the Diocese of Joliet on Doe B's claims against Gibbney.(586)
- 4/1/10 Gibbney writes to Pope Benedict XXVI requesting laicization. Requests to marry a "wonderful woman." (608)**
- 6/1/10 Petition for laicization.
- 6/9/10 Letter from Rev. Sartain to Prefect of the Sacred Congregation for the Clergy regarding Gibbney laicization stating: eleven men who have alleged that they were sexually abused by Gibbney and financial settlements have been made. Since the charges were brought prior to the Dallas Charter, the Diocesan Review Board did not consider them. (605)**

4/8/11

Pope Benedict XVI grants Gibney grace of dispensation *iuxta petita*, from all priestly obligations, including celibacy. (594-96)