

Reverend Joseph Galko

Biographical Information

YEAR OF BIRTH:	1944
YEAR OF DEATH:	N/A
ORDINATION:	1980

Employment/Assignment History

5/1980 – 6/1982	St. Paul, Reading, PA
6/1982 – 1/1983	St. Anne, Bethlehem, PA
1/1983 – 6/1986	St. Ambrose, Schuylkill Haven, PA
6/1986 – 7/1987	St. Bernard, Easton, PA
2/12/1988	Placed on Administrative leave
6/2010	Dismissed from the Priesthood

Summary

Father Joseph Galko was ordained and began work in the Diocese in 1980. Records received from the Diocese indicate that, as early as 1984, the Diocese was aware of inappropriate sexual conduct by Galko. Galko admitted to the Diocesan Chancellor in 1984 to having sexual contact with a male parishioner who was eighteen at the time. Galko also admitted that, while at St. Ambrose in Schuylkill Haven, Schuylkill County, he inappropriately touched a male while they were in the rectory. Galko performed oral sex on the male and had the male perform oral sex on him. Galko further admitted to “occasional occurrences” over a span of many years including the time before he entered the seminary, while he was in the seminary, and after his ordination. Galko was moved to St. Bernard’s in Easton in 1986.

A “Summary of Case” time-line and other documents received from the Diocese indicate that, in 1987, while serving at St. Bernard’s, Galko “spends too much time with the altar servers,” and another pastor in the parish expressed concern regarding Galko’s interaction with adolescent males in the parish. Galko was then sent for treatment at the “Downingtown facility.” The Summary of Case time-line indicates a therapist at the facility described Galko as a “*pathological liar*.” Additionally, it was noted that the therapist did not know “*if anything can be done for him*.” In 1988, Galko was placed on administrative leave but was not dismissed from the priesthood until 2010.

In 2002, the Diocese received a report of sexual abuse from a known victim. The victim reported that, in 1980 or 1981, when he was 17 to 18-years-old, Galko fondled him after giving him alcohol. The abuse occurred in Galko’s room in the rectory and lasted about twenty minutes. A second incident occurred as the victim was leaving the confessional and Galko touched his

Summary

buttocks. The Diocese offered the victim their condolences, offered counseling, and encouraged the victim to go the Berks county District Attorney if he desired.

In 2007, the Diocese received a report of sexual abuse by Galko from a second known victim. This victim reported that, when he was approximately thirteen years old and in eighth grade at St. Anne's School in Bethlehem, Galko was assigned to St. Anne's. The second victim met Galko when he had taken some things to the rectory. He stated that Galko made him feel special and that he really liked Galko. When the second victim was in eighth grade, Galko began to take him to the rectory and give him alcohol. Once the second victim was drunk, Galko would touch him inappropriately and have the victim touch Galko inappropriately. Galko was confronted with the allegation by Monsignors Gobitas and Schlert. Galko admitted that the allegation was true. The Diocese laicized Galko and he was eventually dismissed from the priesthood.