

# Father Herbert G. Gloekler

## Biographical Information

YEAR OF BIRTH:	1923
YEAR OF DEATH:	1985
ORDINATION:	June 4, 1949

## Employment/Assignment History

6/1949-9/1967	Sacred Heart, Erie, PA
9/1967-10/1974	St. Bibiana, Galetton, PA
10/1974-1/1985	Mount Calvary, Erie, PA
1/1985	Died, St. Mary's Home

## Summary

Father Herbert Gloekler was accused of sexually abusing young females during the 1950s while serving as a priest at Sacred Heart. Most of the allegations involved girls who helped to sort paperwork in the rectory.

An April 28, 2002 Erie Times-News article described the abuse of the first victim while she was a student at Sacred Heart School in the 1950s. She wanted to bring to light the abuse that had taken place for years within the Catholic church. In addition to the article, on March 21, 2002, the victim had sent an e-mail communication to Bishop Trautman requesting that the church stop the abuse and help the victims who suffered from sexual abuse.

The second victim wrote a letter to Trautman in May 2002 in order to support the claims that had been set forth in the newspaper article. She was a student at Sacred Heart School in the late 1950s. She remembered that she, a female classmate (Victim #1), and Victim #2's sister (Victim #3) would assist Gloekler in the rectory by folding church bulletins. Victim #2 stated that Gloekler would fondle all of their breasts by putting his hand down their shirts. He would also look down their dresses in the summer time to check for sunburn. Victim #2's sister confided in her that Gloekler once took her into his bedroom while they were alone in the rectory. It was not until Victim #3 was an adult that she was able to tell anyone that Gloekler had raped her.

Victim #4 wrote a letter to Bishop Trautman in May of 2002 and referenced the news article in the Erie Times-News. Victim #4 stated that she was a student at Sacred Heart School and would help in the rectory on Fridays along with other female students. She was excited to have to opportunity to work with Gloekler. As a gesture of thanks to the girls who had assisted him at the rectory, Gloekler planned to take them out for dinner. Before dinner, however, Gloekler stopped at his mother's house with the girls. Victim #4 stated that Gloekler pulled her into an empty room and kissed her. He instructed her that this interaction was to be keep private. The next week, Victim #4 returned to the rectory to help on Friday. Gloekler pulled her aside

## Summary

again into a room where he kissed her and molested her. This was the last time that she helped at the rectory.

There were two additional women who came forward and contacted Bishop Trautman about sexual abuse that they had witnessed, but were not victims themselves. One of the woman who came forward was a nun in the Catholic Church who wrote a letter to Bishop Trautman in April of 2002. She was prompted to write the letter to corroborate Victim #1's sexual abuse claims in the April 28, 2002 article in the Erie Times-News. The nun was a classmate of Victim #1 at Sacred Heart School. While she was a student, she had heard other students' state that Gloekler had sexually abused them.

A second woman wrote an e-mail directly to Bishop Trautman on June 1, 2002. She was a student of Sacred Heart School from 1957-1959, and she would help fold the church bulletins on Fridays. In the e-mail, she recalled witnessing Gloekler fondling young girls' breasts in front of her. Her e-mail was also intended to help substantiate the accusation of Victim #1.

An allegation was brought against Gloekler by a female housekeeper at Mt. Calvary Church in Erie, a church where Gloekler had served as a priest in 1974. This woman said that she was the housekeeper for Gloekler before his replacement, Father Cooper, took over and eventually fired her. This woman indicated that she had knowledge that both Gloekler and Cooper were involved in sexual misconduct. She made this accusation in August of 2003 when she appeared in person at the St. Mark's Catholic Center in Erie. Although the former housekeeper did not state that she wanted money, she inferred that she had an arrangement with Gloekler for her to receive a pension. The Diocese responded to her by saying that there was not a pension agreement in place and accordingly no money had been deducted from her pay. The Diocese did not mention the abuse allegation. There were no further documents or follow-up reports regarding this allegation in the files.