

## Reverend Edward George Ganster

### Biographical Information

YEAR OF BIRTH:	1943
YEAR OF DEATH:	2014
ORDINATION:	March 27, 1971

### Employment/Assignment History

4/13/1971 – 8/19/1975	Assistant Pastor, Notre Dame, Bethlehem, PA
4/13/1971 – 2/4/1972	Associate Professor, Bethlehem Catholic HIGH SCHOOL, PA
7/9/1973 – 10/10/1978	Regional Director, C.Y. O., Bethlehem District
8/19/1975 – 9/9/1976	Assistant, Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Bethlehem, PA
9/9/1976 – 10/10/1978	St. Joseph, Easton, PA
10/10/1978 – 6/15/1981	Assistant, St. Ignatius Loyola, Sinking Spring, PA
10/10/1978 – 6/15/1981	American Catholic Overseas Aid Fund
6/15/1981 – 5/4/1982	Pastor, St. Joseph, Frackville, PA
9/18/1981 – 4/29/1986	Catholic Daughters of the Americas Court St. James
10/08/1981 – 2/1/1982	Sick Leave
2/1/1982 – 5/4/1982	Returned as Pastor, St. Joseph, Frackville, PA
5/4/1982 – 9/7/1982	Sick Leave
9/7/1982 – 1/18/1983	Assistant, St. Ambrose, Schuylkill Haven, PA
10/01/1982 – 7/25/1983	Catholic Student Advisor, Penn State University Campus Ministry
1/18/1983 – 4/29/1986	Pastor, SS. Peter and Paul, Tower City, PA
1/13/1984	Member, Diocesan Building Committee
2/10/1984 – 4/29/1986	Member, Budget Board, Cardinal Brennan HIGH SCHOOL
4/29/1986 – 3/3/1988	Holy Ghost, Bethlehem, PA
7/10/1986 – 6/13/1988	Regional Director, Pro-Life, Northampton Deanery, PA
12/27/1987	Sick Leave
8/8/1990	Laicized
7/3/2014	Deceased

## Summary

In 2002, a victim, then aged thirty-seven, married, and the father of two children, contacted the Diocese and reported that, when he was 14 years old and an altar boy at St. Joseph in Frackville, he was fondled and groped by Father Edward George Ganster. On one occasion, Ganster dragged the boy across a living room floor, pulling him by the underwear. Ganster also beat the victim repeatedly, once using a metal cross. The abuse at the hands of Ganster lasted for over one and a half years and all happened in St. Joseph's Rectory. The victim made a second report to the Diocese in March 2004. Despite having two reports and having given counseling to the victim, the Diocese did not report the abuse to the Northampton County District Attorney's Office until 2007.

In 2005, the mother of a second victim reported to the Diocese that her now adult son was sexually abused in 1977 by Ganster, when the second victim was thirteen years of age. The mother permitted the second victim to accompany Ganster to the beach on an overnight trip. Sometime after that trip, the second victim told his parents that Ganster hurt him and got in bed with him. He also stated that something happened in the confessional. The second victim told his parents not long after the incidents occurred. The mother immediately told Monsignor Connelly about the abuse. According to the second victim's mother, Monsignor Connelly said he would take care of the situation. Connelly told her that Ganster would be given some counseling and would be removed from the parish. The following Sunday at Mass, Ganster announced he was being reassigned. Still, the second victim's life spiraled out of control with broken relationships and anger issues resulting from the abuse.

In 2015, the mother of a third victim contacted the Diocese and reported that her son was abused by Ganster in the summer of 1977, when the third victim was twelve years old. No more information regarding this incident was provided by the Diocese.

Ganster was placed on sick leave at the end of 1987 and sent to St. John Vianney Hospital in Downingtown in 1988. Ganster was eventually laicized at his request, as he wanted to get married and was already working in the secular world. The Diocese agreed and laicized him in 1990. As he was in the process of being laicized, Ganster wrote the Diocese indicating he would be seeking employment at Walt Disney World and hoped to use the Diocese as a reference. Ganster also indicated he was planning on marrying a woman he met at St. John Vianney.

In a letter to the Bishop of Orlando, Nobert Dorsey, from the Bishop of Allentown, Thomas Welsh, Welsh informed Dorsey that Ganster intended to marry. Welsh told Dorsey Ganster met his future bride while at St. John Vianney, adding, *"I don't know her problems. His were at least partially sexual and led to my decision that I could not reassign him."* Despite knowing Ganster was a sexual predator, Monsignor Muntone responded to Ganster's request for a reference by writing, *"I am quite sure that the Diocese will be able to give you a positive reference in regard to the work you did during your years of service here as a priest."* With the reference, Ganster was hired by Walt Disney World and worked there for the next eighteen years.