

Reverend Gerald Royer

Biographical Information

YEAR OF BIRTH:	1917
YEAR OF DEATH:	2003
ORDINATION:	June 1, 1947

Employment/Assignment History

6/1947 – 1/1948	St. Bartholomew, Brockton
1/1948 – 6/1948	St.s Simon and Jude, Bethlehem
6/1948 – 12/1948	St. Bartholomew, Brockton
12/1948 – 6/1950	St. Catherine of Siena, Reading
6/1950 – 5/1952	St. Joseph, Girardsville
5/1952 – 1/1953	Annunciation, Shenandoah
1/1953 – 3/1954	Chaplain, Convent of Divine Love
3/1954 – 11/1955	St. Mary of the Assumption, Philadelphia
11/1955 – 2/1956	Leave of Absence
2/1956 – 5/1956	St. Jane Frances de Chantal, Easton
5/1956 – 4/1960	St. Paul, Reading
4/1960 – 7/1961	Leave of Absence
7/1961 – 8/1964	Chaplain, St. Joseph's Manor
8/1964 – 2/1965	Left active ministry (laicized)

Summary

Held in the secret archives of the Diocese of Allentown was a folder titled by a victim's name. Inside the folder was information describing the sexual abuse of a minor that occurred in 1948. The abuser was Father Gerald Royer. At the time of the abuse in 1948, the Diocese of Allentown did not exist and the location was under the control of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia.

In January 2003, the victim, then in his sixties, made a report of sexual abuse to the Diocese against Royer. Because Royer was under the authority of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia at the time of the sexual abuse, the Diocese referred this victim to Monsignor William Lynn, Vicar for Clergy of the Archdiocese. The Diocese of Allentown began paying for counseling then referred the costs to the Archdiocese of Philadelphia in June 2003.

In 2009, this victim contacted the Diocese again to discuss his sexual abuse. He brought his therapist along. While in Saint's Simon and Jude church, he saw a chair in which he was repeatedly sexually abused by Royer.

On April 18, 2018, now an 83-year-old man, the victim testified before the Fortieth Statewide Investigating Grand Jury. He disclosed that the abuse that occurred in 1948 still

Summary

haunts him to this day. The victim attended Saint's Simon and Jude in Bethlehem. He was a fatherless, 12-year-old boy. His mother was happy that a priest took interest in her son. Royer would kiss the victim and the kissing progressed to molestation. Royer would abuse the child behind the airport in Allentown, in his home, and in the rectory. Royer would have the child sit in a green chair located near a closet and the rectory's safe. Royer would fondle the victim's genitals. The child told a friend who did not believe him. During one abuse, the friend hid in the closet and watched Royer molest the victim. The child who witnessed the abuse could not fathom what had just occurred.

The victim testified that, after the 2002 Boston, Massachusetts, scandal broken by the Boston *Globe*, he found the strength to finally disclose his abuse to the Catholic church. During a meeting with a priest in the Diocese, the priest acknowledged that Royer was a "*bad actor*," stating that the priest had counseled Royer. The victim never told his wife why he could not hug or kiss his own children, who were boys. He was unable to be affectionate with his grandchildren. To this day, he cannot shake hands with men. He cannot be seen by male doctors or dentists. His therapist had to be a female.

The victim told the Grand Jury that he was in the Army, fought in Korea, and was stationed on Okinawa in the 1950's. However, every day of this victim's life has been tormented by what Royer did to him as a child in 1948.