

Father Roger J. Trott

Biographical Information

YEAR OF BIRTH:	1944
YEAR OF DEATH:	2017
ORDINATION:	May 9, 1970

Employment/Assignment History

1970 - 1975	Blessed Sacrament Cathedral, Greensburg, PA
1975 – 1982	Holy Trinity, Ligonier, PA
1982 – 1985	St. Matthew, Saltsburg, PA
1985 – 1987	St. John the Baptist de la Salle, Delmont, PA
1987	Leave of Absence

Summary

In 1987, the families of 12 altar boys alleged that Father Roger Trott committed sexual acts on them during his assignment as Pastor at St. John the Baptist de la Salle. An investigation was conducted and Trott ultimately confessed in a written statement. He admitted that on numerous occasions he invited boys and young men on “outings” and to the rectory. Trott acknowledged his sexual motive in these invitations.

While specific sexual acts were not described, according to court records associated with criminal charges later filed against Trott, Trott fondled and masturbated at least four of his victims and massaged and performed oral sex on an additional eight. It should be noted that although one of the victims was listed as 21 years of age at the time of the abuse, he was described as being a "mongoloid"¹³ who was reportedly hospitalized for “*surgery for a blockage of the lower bowel, which the doctors say is directly linked to the incidents with Father Trott.*”

On February 26, 1987, Trott pled guilty to one count of corruption of minors and was sentenced to five years’ probation. The parents of all the victims, the Westmoreland County District Attorney's Office, the investigating officers, and Westmoreland County Child Services all agreed to the disposition of Trott's criminal case, believing it was in the best interest of his victims. Representatives of the Diocese of Greensburg were present for the meeting during which this agreement was reached.

Following his guilty plea, Trott went to the St. Luke’s Institute in Suitland, MD, for inpatient treatment. He was discharged on January 12, 1988.

¹³ "Mongoloid" is an outdated term that was once used to describe a person with Down syndrome.

Summary

Among the penalties imposed upon Trott by the church were: “*Suspension of all priestly Power of Orders in the public forum until an evaluation can be made in conjunction with medical advisors,*” “*Absence from the Delmont area for a period of five years,*” as well as “*No unsupervised contact with any person under the age of eighteen for a period of five years.*”

The files regarding Trott provided by the Diocese of Greensburg also contained a complaint made on April 17, 2002 from an adult male who was approximately 39 years of age at the time. He alleged abusive behavior by Trott in 1973, when he was ten years of age. While his complaint stated he was abused by Trott on numerous occasions, the victim specifically mentioned an occasion in the sacristy of the church during which Trott “sexually fondled” him. The victim further alleged that on another occasion, after serving for the Bishop, Trott took him out for dinner and while sitting in the parking lot of the restaurant, Trott performed oral sex on him in his car.

Also in the files provided by the Diocese of Greensburg were numerous newspaper reports related to the victim’s allegations of sexual abuse by Trott. In these articles, it was reported that he accused Trott of repeatedly raping him while he was an altar boy in 1973.

The victim ultimately filed a lawsuit against the Diocese of Greensburg and was awarded \$130,000.

Diocesan files also contained handwritten letters by Trott to Bishop Anthony Bosco and retired Bishop William Connare requesting permission to return to his priestly duties at the completion of his five years’ probation. Trott was informed that if he could find a “*benevolent bishop*” to accept him into his diocese, then Bishop Bosco would not stand in his way, but that he would be required to inform any such bishop of his previous misconduct. Bosco also pointed out to Trott that his return to active church service involved numerous problems, including the liability of placing an offending priest into a diocese, regardless of him having completed his treatment requirements, and the issue of whether parishioners would accept him. Additional obstacles were posed by the effect his return to ministry would have on his victims’ families should they find out about it and the potential for renewed bad publicity.

After Trott’s five year leave of absence was set to expire, he contacted the Diocese of Greensburg - Connare specifically - in an effort to be reinstated as an active priest. Connare, who was retired at the time, appeared to have been supportive of Trott in his attempt to be reinstated into a diocese. Bosco, in contrast, while telling Trott he would not block his efforts to transfer to another diocese, did not encourage or otherwise support his efforts. Bosco told Trott he did not believe he would ever find a diocese which would accept him and that his arrest for child molestation had brought about the death of his career as a priest.

On November 18, 2004, [REDACTED] shortly after taking over as Bishop of the Greensburg Diocese, petitioned the Vatican to have Trott dismissed from the Roman Catholic Church. [REDACTED] request was granted. Trott died in 2017 in Florida.