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Related Practice

Clergy Abuse

Minor Child Abuse

Sexual Abuse & Hazing

\$1,400,000 Settlement – Clergy Abuse

August 2018

A settlement was reached with the Roman Catholic Diocese of Joliet on behalf of our clients, three males who endured repeated sexual abuse and molestation by their priest, Father Leonard Mateo, between 1980 and 1982. At the time of the abuse, all victims were under the age of 11-years-old. The Roman Catholic Diocese of Joliet has had numerous lawsuits filed against it in regards to Father Mateo's conduct spanning decades and the Defendant's role in covering up the sexual abuse of children.

In a deposition, former Bishop Joseph Imesch (now deceased) admitted to allowing numerous priests with credible sexual abuse allegations to continue ministry within the Diocese of Joliet without any warning to parishioners. The defendant Diocese attempted to dismiss our plaintiffs' case on a statute of limitations argument, arguing that the time expired for these victims to pursue justice in the court. The Will County Circuit Court denied the Diocese's motion, finding that sufficient allegations were pled establishing that the Diocese fraudulently concealed its own culpability in assigning, retaining or sheltering pedophile priests and specifically Father Mateo until 2014 when his 122-page secret file was released to the public.