



## Lawsuits Accuse Gallup's Catholic Bishop Of Sexual Abuse Cover-Up

Alleged pedophile priests were routinely assigned to rural Hispanic parishes in northern Arizona

PHOENIX, June 24, 2013 /PRNewswire/ -- A Catholic bishop allegedly engaged in an active and on-going attempt to cover-up clergy sexual abuse, according to civil lawsuits filed by two women and ten men against the Diocese of Gallup and its priests. This brings the total number of lawsuits pending against the Diocese of Gallup to 13. The Diocese of Gallup includes northern Arizona. All of the lawsuits were filed by Phoenix attorney Robert E. Pastor in Coconino County Superior Court. The law firm of Manly, Stewart & Finaldi are co-counsel.

The lawsuits allege that the Bishop of Gallup protected pedophile priests by assigning them to poor rural towns along historic Route 66. The priests were routinely assigned to small parishes made up of mostly Hispanic families.

These 6 priests of the Diocese of Gallup are accused of misconduct: The Revs. William Allison, John T. Sullivan, Clement Hageman, Raul Sanchez, Brother Mark Schomack, and Monsignor James Lindenmeyer. The lawsuits include the following facts and allegations:

### **Rev. William Allison:**

Originally from the Diocese of Alexandria in Louisiana;

Patient at the sexual abuse treatment center in Jemez Springs, New Mexico run by the Servants of the Paraclete;

Bishop of Gallup assigned him to Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Church in Flagstaff, Ariz;

Bishop of Gallup asked Fr. James Lindenmeyer to keep a close eye on him.

Lindenmeyer wrote the Bishop "that three boys came to me and have told me of incidents involving Father Allison and I have no reason whatsoever to doubt their word."

Neither the Bishop nor Lindenmeyer reported the sexual abuse to police. Instead, the lawsuit alleges Lindenmeyer "requested that all this be kept in the strictest of confidence, just as the seal of the confessional."

### **Rev. John T. Sullivan:**

Sullivan allegedly sexually abused Catholic children in New Hampshire before arriving in Arizona.

The Bishop of Grand Rapids, Michigan wrote to other Catholic bishops stating that he "honestly believe[d] Father Sullivan is a psychopath [and] while nothing of an immoral nature came out in the open while he was with us, there were indications of his conduct with children."

Sullivan became a patient at the sex offender treatment facility Via Coeli located in Jemez Springs, New Mexico.

The superior general of the treatment center, Rev. Gerald Fitzgerald, stated he was "very much disturbed by this errant padre. He has been in very serious difficulties in every parish in which he has served. Priests who have known him are of the opinion that he should have been laicized years ago. The scandals in which he has been involved have been most serious and it is amazing that he has escaped civil prosecution."

Gallup assigned Sullivan to Madre de Dios Catholic Church in Winslow, Ariz.

The Bishop of Gallup reported to other bishops that Sullivan "was doing a fine job and was very much liked by the poor Mexican people among whom he was working."

The lawsuit alleges that the Diocese of Gallup knew or should have known Sullivan would continue to sexually abuse the children of the families at Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Church in Flagstaff, Ariz.

### **Rev. Raul Sanchez:**

The Catholic Church helped Sanchez emigrate from Mexico to the United States where he become an United States Citizen.

The Bishop of Gallup sent him to a prestigious university in Rome where he obtained his degree in Cannon Law.

He was made Chancellor of the then Diocese of Gallup.

Sanchez was suddenly reassigned to serve as a chaplain in the U.S. military.

In the lawsuits, Pastor alleges that the Diocese of Gallup received "complaints of sexual misconduct by Father Sanchez toward boys

and or girls."

Lawsuits allege the decision to assign Sanchez to positions outside the Diocese of Gallup is part of a pattern and practice designed to "avoid scandal and news of [Fr. Sanchez'] sexual misconduct."

The victims of clergy sexual abuse are seeking an unspecified amount of money to compensate them for the lives and opportunities destroyed by sexual abuse. "Each victim is also asking for punitive damages to punish or deter the Roman Catholic Church from engaging in the type of egregious behavior all too common in clergy sexual abuse cases: sexual abuse followed by years of cover-up by Catholic bishops," said victim's attorney Robert Pastor.

The Diocese of Gallup is required to answer the lawsuits later this summer. Pastor said "The parties will then begin the process of uncovering the secrets the Diocese of Gallup has been hiding with the hope that when the Diocese of Gallup is finally held to answer for its actions, victims will find some peace and comfort."

**About Robert E. Pastor:** Mr. Pastor represents clients in plaintiff's personal injury, wrongful death, defective products, motor vehicle accidents, medical negligence, medical malpractice, insurance disputes, insurance bad faith, sexual abuse including clergy sexual abuse, civil rights violations, white-collar criminal defense, federal criminal practice, and internal corporate investigations. He is fluent in Spanish. Mr. Pastor tries personal injury cases to juries throughout Arizona. His trial experience includes cases of medical personnel failing to diagnose medical conditions, defective equipment, wrongful death, motor vehicle accidents, and premises liability cases. Before joining the firm, he honed his trial skills as a Deputy Maricopa County Attorney. His trial experience as a prosecutor included drug possession, drug sales, kidnapping, armed robbery, aggravated assault with a gun, and child abuse. Bob has tried more than 35 cases to verdict in his career. An Arizona native, Mr. Pastor earned his undergraduate degree in psychology from Boston College in 1997. Before law school he joined the AmeriCorps Volunteer Program, where he served indigent clients at a nonprofit civil rights advocacy center. He graduated from the College of Law at Arizona State University in 2002 and was admitted to practice law that same year.

### **Contact**

Robert E. Pastor, Attorney  
Montoya, Jimenez & Pastor, P.A.  
Phone: (602) 279-8969  
Email: [repastor@mjpattorneys.com](mailto:repastor@mjpattorneys.com)

**About Vince Finaldi and Manly, Stewart & Finaldi:** A partner at [Manly, Stewart & Finaldi](#) in California, Vince Finaldi's practice is concentrated on litigation of civil actions involving sexual harassment, exploitation, molestation and abuse in educational, familial, recreational, employment, religious and other settings. A Martindale-Hubbell AV® Preeminent™ rated litigator, ranked at the highest level of professional excellence, Mr. Finaldi has successfully litigated multiple significant national media-garnering claims against large religious entities, municipalities and Fortune 500 companies, at the trial, appellate and Supreme Court levels, helping to define the liability and duties of these entities with respect to abuse claims. Over the past decade, John Manly, Vince Finaldi and their legal team have been heavily involved in the most significant sexual abuse actions litigated across the nation, assisting in the recovery of more than a billion dollars -- through trial and settlement -- on behalf sexual abuse victims.

### **Contact**

Vince Finaldi (Kathy Frederiksen)  
(949) 252-9990  
[kaf@manlystewart.com](mailto:kaf@manlystewart.com)  
For more information about the firm, please visit [www.manlystewart.com](http://www.manlystewart.com)

SOURCE Montoya, Jimenez & Pastor, P.A.

### **Find this article at:**

<http://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/lawsuits-accuse-gallups-catholic-bishop-of-sexual-abuse-cover-up-212773441.html>

Check the box to include the list of links referenced in the article.