

James Hagan

Member of the Vatican 400

James Hagan is a prime example of Chicago priests (see also Cloutier, William) who narrowly escaped criminal prosecution for felony child molestation, only to go on and abuse more kids. After a 1988 DCFS/Cook County investigation closed, Hagan was assured by the Vicar for Clergy in 1991 that he would not be included in an Archdiocesan review of prior allegations of child sex abuse by priests. Hagan was told, “not to worry.”

By 1996, the Archdiocese, because of mounting new allegations against Hagan, had to construct a confidential timetable around Hagan’s career and spin what they knew about prior reports and allegations of child sexual abuse. Later that year, Hagan was removed from ministry. Hagan resigned from the priesthood in 1997. The Archdiocese gave Hagan a letter of thanks for his years of service.

[In a 2007 deposition](#), Bishop Raymond Goedert admitted that Hagan was promoted after the Archdiocese learned of credible allegations of abuse.

Hagan is not laicized until late 2010, making him one of the “[Vatican 400](#)”—400 priests who were quietly and secretly laicized by the Vatican because they sexually abused children.

TIMELINE OF DOCUMENTS – JAMES HAGAN

5/8/74 – Ordained

1974 – Associate Pastor, St. Catherine of Sienna

1981 – Associate Pastor, St. Richard’s

1981 -1986 According to a report from August 21, 1996, Hagan sexually abused four minors. (AOC 002404- AOC 002408)

1982 According to a report from March 14, 2003, Hagan fondled and performed oral sex on a survivor at the rectory, movie theater and amusement park. (AOC 002382)

1986 – Associate Pastor, St. Gertrude’s

1988 Allegation of sexual abuse by Hagan determined unfounded by DCFS Cook County State Attorney’s Office. (AOC 002403)

1988 – Pastor, St. Denis

- 12/4/91 Letter from Vicar for Clergy, Fr. Patrick O'Malley, to Hagan saying that even though the Cardinal appointed a committee to review all child abuse cases: "Not to worry. We can put it away for good now." (AOC 002508)**
- 4/23/96 Archdiocese constructs confidential timetable to control Hagan situation and spin prior knowledge and reports. (AOC 002505- AOC 002506)
- 4/25/96 Fr. Daniel Coughlin meets with Hagan at Cardinal Stritch Retreat House at Mundelein. (AOC 002500)
- 8/26/96 Chancellor Thomas Paprocki writes Vicar for Clergy, Fr. McBrady, that Review Board and Cardinal Bernardin have determined that Hagan is "not reasonable to return to ministry."(AOC 002395)

8/26/96- Resigns as Pastor of St. Denis

- 4/9/97 Hagan resigns from ministry and receives letter from Bishop Goedert saying: "Be assured of my deep appreciation, Jim, for having given over twenty two years of service in the Archdiocese. No doubt, your ministry and presence were of significant help to many people." (AOC 002502)
- 4/4/07 Cardinal George determines additional investigation into Hagan is warranted. (AOC 002371)
- 11/13/07 [Bishop Goedert is deposed](#) in order to meet a non-monetary demand of sex abuse survivors. In the deposition, he admits that Hagan was kept in ministry and promoted, even after credible allegations of abuse in 1988.

7/10/10 - Hagan laicized (protocol number 176/08)

Laicization not produced.