



Corrections to Secular News Stories

The late Father John Sutton, a priest of the Diocese of Pueblo, Colorado, was not reassigned to another parish in the Fort Worth Diocese after his service at Notre Dame Middle-High School in Wichita Falls, Texas. He taught at Notre Dame Middle-High School under contract from 1984 to 1992, at which time he left the Diocese of Fort Worth on his own accord to work as a priest at the Sacred Heart Church in Cando, North Dakota.

The court found that all of Montgomery's claims were not supported by evidence. Montgomery could not point to any objective evidence that showed the abuse actually occurred. Further, Montgomery could not point to any evidence that supported his baseless allegations that Father Sutton or Principal Ron Staley had a propensity to sexually abuse minors, and that the Diocese of Fort Worth knew or should have known of such a propensity. If the evidence supported Montgomery's claims, his case would not have been dismissed.

The statute of limitations had long passed before Montgomery ever contacted the Diocese in 2013 with the false claims of sexual abuse in 1990-1992. Any notion about being strung along until the limitations period had passed is false and wholly incorrect.

Court Dismisses Lawsuit Against Catholic Diocese of Fort Worth Stemming From Allegations of Sexual Abuse By Late Father John Sutton and Former Principal Ron Staley

A State District Judge has dismissed a lawsuit brought by Jason Montgomery against the Catholic Diocese of Fort Worth related to allegations of sexual abuse by the late Father John Sutton and Principal Ron Staley.

In March 2015, Montgomery filed a lawsuit against the Diocese of Fort Worth, claiming he was sexually abused by the late Father Sutton while Montgomery was a student at Notre Dame Middle High School in Wichita Falls from 1990-1992. Montgomery later amended his lawsuit to add allegations that then-Principal Ron Staley also sexually abused him while he attended Notre Dame. Tahira Khan Merritt of Dallas and Jerry Murad, Jr. of Fort Worth represented Montgomery in his lawsuit against the Diocese.

The Diocese, led by Bishop Michael F. Olson, investigated Montgomery's allegations of abuse and found no evidence to support Montgomery's claims in the lawsuit. No other allegations of sexual misconduct have ever been made against the late Father Sutton or Mr. Staley. Based on the lack of evidence, the Diocese defended against Montgomery's claims and sought dismissal of the lawsuit.

Michael D. Anderson, a partner at Kelly Hart & Hallman LLP, represented the Diocese in the lawsuit. "There is no objective evidence whatsoever to corroborate Mr. Montgomery's allegations of sexual abuse. Without supporting evidence, Mr. Montgomery's abuse claims are barred by the statute of limitations," Anderson said.

Under the leadership of Bishop Olson, the Diocese has been and will continue to be committed to providing a safe environment in its parishes and ministries, particularly for the children and young people, and to reach out to those who have been abused to offer not only pastoral care but other assistance.

"The Catholic Diocese of Fort Worth and I are committed to ensuring the safety of the Church's members, especially children and young people," Bishop Olson said. "Essential to this priority is the Diocese's commitment to the truth in Christ," continued Bishop Olson.

The Diocese asks that anyone who has either witnessed or has suffered sexual abuse by anyone who serves the Church to come forward so that the individual and the Church can continue the healing process. To report abuse to the civil authorities, call the Texas Department of Family Protective Services (Child Protective Services) at 1-800-252-5400.

To contact the Diocese, please call the Diocesan Victims' Assistance Office at the Victims' Assistance Hotline: 817-945-9345 or the Victims' Assistance Direct Line: 817-602-5119. You may also contact the Chancellor and Moderator of the Curia, Msgr. James Hart, who can be reached at 817-945-9313. If anyone believes that a crime has been committed, please immediately contact the police.

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