

Abused Parish Schoolgirl First to Sue Baltimore Archdiocese Affiliate Under New Child Victims Act

BALTIMORE, MARYLAND, UNITED STATES, October 3, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- More than a half-century after she was sexually abused by priests while a student at her parish school, St. Clement's of Lansdowne, 68-year-old survivor Eva Dittrich today is seeking justice and accountability under the new Child Victims Act, in a lawsuit against the affiliate of the just-

“

St. Clement . . . failed to protect the children in its care from sexual abuse, and ignored or silenced reports of child sexual abuse that that foreseeably occurred on their premises”

Filed Lawsuit

declared “bankrupt” Archdiocese of Baltimore. Ms. Dittrich’s complaint, seeking a jury trial and unspecified damages for decades of pain and suffering, is the fourth – and the first against an AOB parish - brought under the CVA by local attorneys from Jenner Law, [Grant & Eisenhofer](#), and Baird, Mandalas, Brockstedt & Federico. The firms collectively represent numerous survivors who are eligible to file claims under the historic law that became effective on October 1st.

“St. Clement systematically hired child predators (including

Maskell), provided them with open access to children, ...failed to protect the children in its care from sexual abuse, and ignored or silenced reports of child sexual abuse that that foreseeably occurred on their premises at the hands of their teachers or priests,” asserts the multi-count complaint (Dittrich v. St. Clement, In Pastorate with St Phillip Neri, Lansdowne, Roman Catholic Congregation, Inc., Baltimore City Circuit Court, Date-Stamped Oct. 2, 2023 8:38 a.m.) The [filed complaint, time and date stamped](#), can be reviewed here.

Attorneys Robert K. Jenner (Jenner Law), Steven J. Kelly (Grant & Eisenhofer), and Phil Federico, (BMB&F), stated after this morning’s landmark filing that, “Clergy-abuse survivors like Ms. Dittrich are entitled to justice and we believe the eleventh-hour bankruptcy filing by the morally-bankrupt AOB in no way precludes taking action against documented predators and predator parishes like St. Clement, as detailed in this complaint.” They noted the first hearing in the federal bankruptcy court proceeding is scheduled for today.

Ms.. Dittrich, of Pasadena, Maryland, is one of countless victims of Fr. Anthony Joseph Maskell, and the systemic sexual abuse culture allegedly allowed and perpetuated by the AOB and affiliated parishes under its supervision. Born and raised in Lansdowne, Baltimore County, her

devout Catholic family belonged to the AOB's St. Clement Parish at 2700 Washington Avenue. The church rectory – Maskell's residence at the time of Ms. Dittrich's abuse – was just around the corner from her house; as a pastor at St. Clement's he exploited his position of authority to overpower and prey upon the little girl, one of nine siblings. According to her complaint, Maskell repeatedly raped the child. He is alleged to have drugged and groomed her, as he had other children entrusted to his care, starting when she was about 11. He told her, including in the church confessional, she was being "cleansed of her sins" when she was forced to sexually submit to him and others at the parish who wore the collar, on and off church grounds. Ms. Dittrich vividly recalls, as a pre-teen, being taken by Maskell for a boat ride where she was sexually abused by him and another man. All along, it is asserted that church officials and the leaders of defendant St. Clement Parish knew Maskell, and several other clerics, were engaging in serial sexual abuse of children and did nothing to prevent or stop it.

The three prior first-to-file plaintiffs-survivors' filed cases are: Schappelle v. Archdiocese of Washington, Circuit Court for Montgomery County, Case No.14089648, 12:05 a.m., Bunker v. Key School et al., USDC Md., Northern Division, Case No. No. 1:23-cv-02662, 12:05 a.m., and Surrick v. Key School, Richard E. Sohmer, and Paul Stoneham, Anne Arundel County Circuit Court, Case No. 14084877, 12:06 a.m.. Copies of the filings can be viewed on the docket or at <https://www.facebook.com/jennerlawpc/>

In addition to the attorneys noted above, the legal team includes Kathleen Kerner, Mary Beth Diaz, paralegal (Jenner Law); Beth Graham, Suzanne Sangree, Gordon Novod (G&E); Brent Ceryes, Wray Fitch and Catherine Cramer (BMB&F).

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