

Father Gary L. Ketcham

Biographical Information

YEAR OF BIRTH:	1949
YEAR OF DEATH:	N/A
ORDINATION:	September 10, 1977

Employment/Assignment History

9/10/1977 – 1/23/1984	St. Bonaventure University, Faculty Franciscan Friars, NY
5/1983–1/23/1984	St. Patrick's, Buffalo, NY
1/23/1984 – 9/11/1985	Parochial Vicar, St. John the Baptist, Erie, PA
9/11/1985 – 8/01/1989	Parochial Vicar, St. George, Erie, PA
3/05/1989 – 6/14/1989	Health Leave, Guest House, Rochester, MN
6/14/1989 – 6/08/1990	Health Leave, St. Luke's Institute, Suitland, MD
6/08/1990 – 7/16/1990	Health Leave, St. Patrick's/St. Hedwig Cluster, Erie, PA
11/13/1998 – 2004	Suspended/Other
2004– Present	Privately employed; not functioning as a Priest

Summary

Sometime prior to March 1989, allegations of sexual misconduct by Father Gary L. Ketcham became known by the Diocese of Erie. He was accused of molesting two boys while in a drunken state. This occurred while he was visiting friends in Mobile, Alabama. Ketcham was officially charged with two counts of sexual abuse of minors in Baldwin County, Alabama, on February 2, 1990. He was sent to therapy as soon as the Diocese was made aware of the Alabama incident. He was housed in a Diocese-owned treatment facility, which they called the Ecclesia Center.

Diocesan preparation for Ketcham's court case started in September 1989, when the Diocese loaned Ketcham \$5,000 for attorney fees. Subpoenaed documents revealed that this was the first of a number of loans to Ketcham. Additionally, the Grand Jury found a promissory note to Ketcham from the Diocese in which they pledged to front him \$25,000 for lawyer fees and bond. In that letter, the Director of Clergy Personnel wrote "*Don't worry . . . you're good for it.*"

Ketcham ultimately pled guilty to both counts and was ordered to pay a \$15,000 fine. He received a permanent felony record.

In 2002, Bishop Trautman initiated the laicization process to formally remove Ketcham from the church. Ketcham cooperated with this process. Trautman would note that it was Ketcham's own free will that drove the process. Ketcham was officially laicized by 2004.