

Reverend George Koychick

Biographical Information

YEAR OF BIRTH:	1922
YEAR OF DEATH:	N/A
ORDINATION:	April 2, 1949

Employment/Assignment History

4/22/1949-9/23/1949	Annunciation Blessed Virgin Mary, McSherrystown, PA
9/23/1949-5/23/1952	St. Francis of Assisi, Harrisburg, PA
5/23/1952-6/04/1953	Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, Mount Carmel, PA
6/04/1953-5/23/1957	St. Joseph, York, PA
5/23/1957-11/08/1957	Assumption Blessed Virgin Mary, Lebanon, PA
11/08/1957-10/02/1962	Chaplain, Penna. Industrial School
10/02/1962-11/24/1967	Sacred Heart, Williamstown, PA
11/24/1967-6/18/1981	St. Patrick, York, PA
6/18/1981-6/04/1997	Church of the Holy Spirit, Palmyra, PA
1997	Retired

Summary

Multiple individuals alleged that Father George Koychick sexually abused them. In 2003, a woman notified the Diocese of Harrisburg via an anonymous e-mail account. The woman stated in the 1970's, when she was 13 or 14 years old, Koychick touched her sensually. He rubbed her upper thighs. She reported that Koychick rubbed multiple girls. This occurred at St. Patrick's, York.

Diocesan officials followed up on the e-mail complaint. A report summarizing an interview between the Diocese and Koychick was located in Koychick's Diocesan files. Koychick was asked if there was any truth to the allegation of sexual touching of minor girls. Koychick responded, "*yes, it was when I was going through a touchy/feely time in my life.*" Koychick stated he had eighth grade girls record the collections the church received from attendees at the rectory. He sat close to girls and touched or patted the girls' inner thighs or the top part of their thighs. He admitted touching skin on skin, under the girls' skirts. Koychick admitted "*it was sensual rubbing.*" He stated he sensually touched multiple young girls. He admitted that one time he touched the breasts of one young girl, but immediately apologized afterwards. He admitted he felt an attraction to the young girls and the touching was for his own sexual pleasure. Koychick stated, "*This is a test of ones [sic] faith. I have prayed over this for years. I have lived in fear for years wondering if anyone would come forward with an allegation...I have said more Acts of Contrition than anybody.*"

Koychick was immediately suspended from active ministry and issued a penal precept. In 2004, the Diocese of Harrisburg authored a document noting a 2003 allegation that provided:

Summary

“By the actions taken (removing him permanently from all active ministry, forbidding him from residence in any rectory, and admonishing him to lead a life of prayer and penance), Bishop Dattilo believed that the harm done by his past actions has been sufficiently repaired, and therefore did not seek his dismissal from the clerical state.” Koychick was allowed to remain retired. In 2005, the Diocese of Harrisburg and the Archbishop of Alabama granted Koychick permission to celebrate a funeral mass for his sister. There was to be no publicity regarding his celebration of mass.

In 2013, another woman came forward and made a report to the Diocese of Harrisburg against Koychick. She asserted that she was abused from age 12 to age 15, between 1976 and 1979. She reported that Koychick touched her breasts over top of her clothing. She reported that Koychick also exposed his genitalia. This occurred while Koychick was at St. Patrick’s in York. Koychick took the victim on boating trips and touched her breasts on the trips. She stated he never touched her in the rectory. An additional penal precept was issued detailing the suspension of priestly activities.

A news article dated March 24, 2014, from Fairhope, Alabama, announced the Marietta Johnson Museum was planning a christening of its Memory Garden and its donors. Listed as a donor was “Father George Koychick.” This was a direct violation of the penal precept issued May 10, 2013, which stated in relevant part: *“You are not to present yourself as a priest or a cleric. Accordingly you may not wear the attire appropriate to the clerical state, or employ the title ‘Father’ or ‘Reverend’.”* There was no document establishing that the Diocese of Harrisburg undertook any action concerning Koychick’s violation.

The Diocese received notice that in 2015 Koychick’s cousin wrote Archbishop Vigano at the Apostolic Nunciature of the Holy See in the United States asking Pope Francis to send a note of encouragement to Koychick, who was suffering his final illness. Koychick’s cousin noted that Koychick resided in Fairhope, Alabama and was a Catholic priest in the Harrisburg Diocese for 64 years, currently retired.

Archbishop Vigano sent a letter to the Diocese of Harrisburg to be forwarded to Koychick. The letter stated, *“As the personal representative of His Holiness Pope Francis to the United States of America, I wish to express my gratitude for your long and fruitful ministry as a priest of Jesus Christ. During these days especially, when the accumulation of years has rendered your health frail, I pray that the good Lord may let His face shine upon you and give you His peace.”* A note was found attached to the letter from Archbishop Vigano to the Diocese of Harrisburg from an unknown person that stated Archbishop Vigano should have checked with the Diocese before writing a letter. It is unknown if a copy was ever sent to Koychick.

In 2016, another victim came forward to report she was sexually abused by Koychick from 1976 to 1979. The victim stated Koychick touched her breasts and sunbathed nude.

The allegations were reported to the York County District Attorney’s Office.