

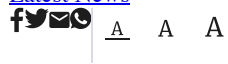
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July 30 2019 - 7:28AM

## Former Warrnambool priest jailed for another 26 months

- **Caroline Schelle and Andrew Thomson**

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 Locked up: Former priest Paul David Ryan worked in Warrnambool during the early 1980s. Sex abuse allegations were made against him within a week of ordination and he was first jailed in 2006.

A Warrnambool schoolboy victim of a predator priest who was abused at a Victorian religious retreat says there is no quick fix to ease his pain.

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Defrocked Catholic priest Paul David Ryan, 70, now of Western Australia, was jailed on Monday after he admitted molesting three teenage boys in the 1980s and 1990s.

"There was no healing, or medication that dimmed the pain. No band-aid to cover the wound, no quick fix, no cure," the victim said.

"No sentence was ever going to be long enough but it does now give other silent victims another chance to come forward and seek justice."

The victim said Ryan's appearance in court again highlighted clergy pedophile offenders and particularly repeat offenders like Ryan.

He said the sentencing hearing continued the shame.

"The shame of victims, the shame of former Father Paul Ryan and the shame of the Catholic church," he said

"The church knew he was offending and the only action it took was to enable him to continue abusing children."

The victim was 17 when he woke to Ryan molesting him at the retreat in 1985.

The victim struggled but was held down, and was told afterwards by the priest "you enjoyed it".

"You don't survive sexual abuse," the victim said.

Another victim was 15 when molested while training to be an altar boy at Warrnambool.

He was "petrified" during the assault and never returned to training. The offending happened while his mother waited in a car outside.

The third victim played "strip poker" with the priest as a 14-year-old in Ararat where Ryan touched his genitals, showed him pornography and rubbed his body against the teenager's.

The victim continues to feel ashamed by what happened to him.

"The facts in this case are most serious and disturbing," County Court Judge Susan Pullen said as she jailed Ryan during a heated hearing.

She said there was grooming before each of the offences and as a priest Ryan held a position of trust among his victims.

"Your offending is quite unacceptable, (it was) simply to satisfy you're own sexual desires," Judge Pullen said.

Ryan pleaded guilty to one charge of indecent assault, one of sexual penetration of a person between the ages of 16 and 18 and one charge of committing an indecent act with a child under 16.

He was sentenced to serve two years and two months in prison and will not be eligible for parole until he has served at least 17 months behind bars.

Ryan has already served 133 days in custody so will be eligible for parole in just over 12 months.

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He was previously jailed for a minimum 12 months in 2006.

Former Warrnambool police detective Colin Ryan, whose investigation in 2006 led to Paul Ryan's first criminal conviction for molesting two altar boys at Peshurst, said he was delighted to see more victims get justice.

"My investigation showed that Paul David Ryan was sponsored into the seminary by Bishop of Ballarat Ronald Mulkearns, knowing he had a history of being kicked out of the Adelaide seminary," he said.

"Bishop Mulkearns was advised Paul David Ryan should not be admitted and yet he was sponsored, continued through the seminary and went on to offend against children."

Abuse allegations were made even before Ryan was ordained as a priest in 1976 and almost everywhere he worked - from Ballarat to Warrnambool, Terang, Peshurst and Ararat - until he was defrocked in 1993.

The Catholic Church paid for him to go to the United States in 1985 and 1988 and, according to evidence to the Royal Commission, the church also paid out two boys who said Ryan abused them in the USA.

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Much of this was under the tutelage of then Bishop Mulkearns, who Ryan had known since the early 1970s.

Ryan was kicked out of the seminary in Adelaide and, in 1971, was teaching at St Joseph's in Mildura.

There, he met prolific pedophiles Gerald Ridsdale and Monsignor John Day before Bishop Mulkearns moved him to Ballarat.

In evidence to the commission, Ryan claimed Ridsdale suggested to him in Ararat in the early 1990s that he joined him and others in abusing boys after Ridsdale learned Ryan had been removed from Peshurst.

A victim told the commission he had gone to Ararat to inquire about becoming a priest and came face-to-face with Ryan, who he said abused him when he was a teenager.

He told Bishop Mulkearns.

"Mulkearns did not act surprised. He did not seem to display any emotional response at all," he said.

Helen Watson, who gave evidence to the Victorian parliamentary inquiry in 2012, said Ryan's abuse of her son in Ararat in 1991 led to his suicide at the age of 24.

"It is well documented that Ryan's sexual behaviours were a concern to the church, which did not know where to place him or what to do with him, nor did the church act upon allegations by reporting the sex offender to the police for investigation," she said.

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