

[REDACTED]

This is a very difficult statement to write. It is a blunt assessment of the numerous problems I have suffered since my abuse by my parish priest Gary Jacobs (GJ). This statement gives an insight into the endless hardships I have endured. It is important that GJ understands what a particularly terrible crime sexual abuse is for the victim and that the after effects can last a lifetime. GJ deserves to serve his maximum sentence.

My [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] families immigrated to the north woods for a better life. We visited them during summers and holidays. My father served in the military and we moved from base to base. I am [REDACTED] with a youthful appearance. My Italian family taught me that the Catholic church was the road to salvation and that the parish priest performed Gods' work. The parish priest was like a friendly uncle who you could trust to help you out with a kind ear or a warm hug. I attended church regularly and I followed the commandments. The church was always a safe haven where I felt closer to God and I could enjoy the fellowship of other parishioners.

I was 15 when I met GJ at a church youth group meeting. He must have sensed my vulnerability, we started to meet at the church rectory office to talk. Mostly, I talked to him about being lonely after my parents moved to [REDACTED] and that I didn't have any friends. At school, some of the kids bullied me and beat me up. My self-absorbed parents ignored me. GJ was a good listener and he made me feel special.

The first time that he seduced me was after such a meeting, he offered me wine and a tour of the rectory. Feeling like I was being treated like an adult I accepted his offer. We drank wine first and talked some more, he was funny and so charming. Then we toured the rectory ending up at his bedroom on the second floor. He seduced me and he attempted to sodomize me, he then masturbated and ejaculated on me. We met for sex a couple times after that and then he abruptly blocked me out of his life. I was 16 and I blamed myself for what happened. I felt anger and abandonment.

Feeling guilt and conflict about what happened, I sought advice from an adult and they told my parents. My father acted as if nothing happened and my mother blamed me for seducing a priest. I was shunned and living at home became hell. I felt abandoned, angry and betrayed by my family. I was 17 when I left to serve a 4-year enlistment in the military.

I was 21 when I was honorably discharged. And I reluctantly left my new home in [REDACTED] and returned to [REDACTED]. My father was dying and my mother was in denial of my father's decline in health. I cared for their daily needs, which included driving my father to the [REDACTED] for appointments. When I checked him into the hospital for (what I felt) was the last time I stayed at a local campground to be close to him in his final hours. I was drained and I was overwhelmed with emotion. I found the Catholic church in [REDACTED] and went in to reflect on my father's impending death and to find spiritual comfort.

I unwittingly chose the church that GJ was assigned too. He recognized me before I could recognize him and he angrily rushed towards me and he ushered me to the door while telling me

not to bother him again. I was confused by his anger and I was left feeling worse than when I came in.

I realized later that GJ is a master manipulator and on that day in [REDACTED] I saw GJ's unadulterated monstrous self and he was not a man of god. Now I realized that GJ had worn a mask of a compassionate priest when I was 15, he was hunting for vulnerable boys to satisfy his sick appetite. His impeccable performance as a kind and understanding friend wrapped in the glory and the spirituality of god and the church easily won me over. Now I was 22 and his mask was off, he was protecting his despicable behavior as a pedophile and he would say or do anything to protect himself. Because GJ chooses to use his talents as an actor playing a role to hide his true self and because his actions harm others, he must pay for his crimes by serving his maximum sentence.

After my father's funeral, I moved out of state in order to put my past behind me. I was in such a dark place (between my father's death and my conflict with the church) that I sought refuge with a friend in [REDACTED] I started down a path of self-destructive behavior. I did not understand the change in my personality from mild mannered to out of control behavior. My roommate was on the same path as me and we shared anything that would give us a thrill, drugs, fast cars and fighting. One day, I returned from working over the road to find that our house had been burned to the ground by an unknown perpetrator and that my roommate was in the ICU. The police detective told me that his lifestyle had caught up to him. I took it as a sign that it was time for me to clean up my act and I moved out of town and never looked back.

Change was not easy. I was alone and fighting my past demons. I sought help through counseling. I learned to develop awareness and understanding of my black moods and my inability to feel anything. I learned techniques to help regulate my emotions. I discussed my struggle with my sexual identity and feeling conflicted because I felt attracted to men and women. My counselor told me that conflicted feelings are normal when you suffer childhood sexual abuse and that counseling will teach me life skills that will help me deal with my feelings. I never imagined that the impacts of the sexual abuse I suffered at the hands of GJ would continue to interfere and limit my professional and personal life years after the assault, and on a daily basis. GJ deserves to serve his maximum sentence.

I continued working to rebuild my life, I married, and graduated college. I started working in my professional career. My depression returned shortly after our second child was born. I was at risk of losing my job because of interpersonal issues. I felt that my confusion over my sexual identity was the issue. I was living life as heterosexual man and I had sexual feelings towards men. I returned to counseling.

My new counselor told me that the impact of clergy-perpetrated sexual abuse in my childhood altered my natural development and psychosocial functioning. I understood what he told me on an intellectual level, but I could never connect it with how I felt. To this day I feel conflicted. I tried to suppress my feelings towards men by trying not to get close in social situations. I quit participating in sports to avoid physical contact with other men and I avoided public restrooms and locker rooms. Withdrawing from male camaraderie and friendship has affected my professional life and my ability to build and maintain long lasting relationships. I lost my ability

to feel love and my interest in sex. Losing the ability to share your most intimate feelings with your partner is life altering. GJ deserves to experience this loss of sharing intimacy by spending his time separated from his partner while he is serving his maximum sentence in jail.

Working in a professional position was a source of pride for me. I started working when I was 12 and I never had problems getting or keeping a job. Now I was in my 30s and I was receiving reports of poor work performance, not getting along with co-workers, and not respecting personal boundaries. I began experiencing musculoskeletal pain in addition to the feelings of depression and anxiety. The musculoskeletal pain was later diagnosed as Fibromyalgia. Managing my professional and personal life while managing my depressive episodes, anxiety, and pain became overwhelming. I spiraled downward and out of control. A pattern developed where I had trouble keeping jobs because of my inability to meet performance expectations and my inability to respect co-workers' boundaries.

The last year that I worked was hell, I went through my days on auto-pilot. My physical pain coupled with depression and anxiety took all of my energy. Emotionally, I was empty inside, adrenaline and medications helped me get through each day. I had three serious car accidents. Each accident had a common cause, that I dozed off at the wheel while I was going or returning from work. My new psychiatrist and mental health counselor voiced concerns that these accidents were a veiled attempt at my suicide. I was 55 when I was dismissed from my last job because of unprofessional conduct. I never returned to the workforce.. Afterwards, I sought counselling and I lost my ability to feel anything but anger. I hid in my house for months. GJ deserves to see what it feels like being locked alone in his cell. GJ deserves to serve his maximum time.

The impact that this has had on my family and romantic life is hard to quantify, but I will do my best. Managing pain, depression and anxiety while having to work full time limited my ability to interact with my children as much as I wanted to. They were raised in a household where I fell asleep after coming home from work because I was emotionally and physically drained. I missed out on their school activities. I was physically present to my family, but I was emotionally unavailable to enjoy them or to provide my family with my love, support and guidance. Now grown, I am missing out on adult relationships with my children because traveling to see them is so hard on me. My family has stood by me and they have adjusted to my condition. They step in where I am not able to. My wife and daughter do my shopping, drive me to appointments, and they meet with neighbors and repairmen who drop by the house so that I don't have to meet and talk with them.

When I am out in public or I travel, my body and mind react as if I am going into a life-or-death battle. An example of this occurred while I was visiting my son who lives out of state. During a family gathering I passed out and seriously injured myself. I was taken by ambulance to the ER where I was treated and released. The attending doctor told me that, given my medical history, that I passed out from stress.

When my son announced his wedding, I told him how conflicted I felt for not attending. He hired a videographer so I could watch his wedding, from home on video conferencing. My son and his wife have given us a beautiful granddaughter who I love and miss dearly. I have watched

her grow up on video chat while my wife travels to see her frequently. I feel so much guilt for missing out on my family and I feel powerless to change.

My wife has stood by me for 40 years, she is my rock. As a partner of a sexual abuse survivor, she has struggled with her own depression and anxiety. Through it all she loves and cares for me and our family with a quiet strength and dignity.

I am now 65 and my health prevents me from leading a fulfilling life. I still receive counseling. Dealing with depression, anxiety and physical pain has left me feeling empty inside and devoid of any feeling. Whenever I feel any emotion welling up in me, it feels blocked. Instead of having an appropriate emotional response to what I feel, I cry. I have severe memory problems, there are parts of my past that are a complete blank. I am forgetful and easily confused. I feel that I have lost everything that is precious to me. GJ deserves to experience how it feels to have lost everything precious to him.

The impacts of sexual assault continue to affect me, years after the assault, on a daily basis. Not a day goes by when what GJ has done to me does not interfere with my life or limit the life that I lead in some way. Sexual assault has cost me profoundly, in many ways, and has set my life on a completely different course from the one it would have taken had I not been assaulted. I have lost so much and many of those losses cut right to the core of who I am and can never be undone.

I believe child sexual abuse is worse than murder. Once you are dead you are finished. When you are abused, you endure the mental anguish for the rest of your life. The sexual abuse that GJ inflicted on me has interfered and destroyed my life. The ripple effects of this man's crime against me as a boy are still present and he must be held accountable by serving his maximum sentence.