



For Immediate Release
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CONVICTED PRIEST IS DECLARED A SEXUALLY VIOLENT PERSON

Commitment by DuPage County Jury Requires Priest to Receive Sex Offender Treatment and Periodic Review

Chicago - Attorney General Lisa Madigan today announced that her office has successfully prosecuted a case that will keep a Catholic priest in custody as a sexually violent person (SVP) and provide him sex offender treatment in a secure facility in downstate Illinois.

A DuPage County jury today ruled that the Rev. Fred Lenczycki, 63, will remain in the custody of the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS). Lenczycki is the first priest in the United States to be declared a sexually violent person.

“Our goal in this unfortunate case was to ensure the families whose lives were so tragically affected by Rev. Lenczycki that he would not be free to simply move back into society,” Madigan said..

In 2004, Lenczycki pleaded guilty to three counts of Aggravated Criminal Sexual Abuse and was sentenced to five years in the Illinois Department of Corrections. In April 2006, shortly before Lenczycki was scheduled to be released on parole, Madigan’s office filed the petition for his civil commitment under the Sexually Violent Persons Commitment Act. He has been detained at the IDHS facility in Rushville since 2006 and will return there following today’s proceeding.

The Attorney General’s office handles the prosecution of cases to civilly commit sex offenders. During the four-day trial in DuPage County, several expert witnesses testified on behalf of the State of Illinois that Lenczycki appeared to be capable of reoffending based on medical and psychological evaluations and his record abusing boys with whom he was in contact at various parishes in the 1980s.

Ordained in 1972, Lenczycki served at several parishes in the Naperville and Romeoville area. From 1980 to 1984, he was assigned to St. Isaac Jogues Parish in Hinsdale, where in December 1984, a student at the parish school reported that Lenczycki sexually molested him. After being removed from the parish, Lenczycki was briefly placed at a parish in Missouri and then entered treatment in California. After serving in a California parish, Lenczycki returned to Illinois and in 2002, prosecutors in DuPage County filed charges against him for the sexual abuse of several boys at St. Isaac Jogues in 1984.

To be committed under the Sexually Violent Persons Commitment Act, a person must have been convicted of a sexually violent offense and exhibit a mental disorder. Additionally, prosecutors must prove that the offender is likely to commit future acts of sexual violence if released from custody. Once committed to IDHS, offenders are reevaluated on a regular basis to determine if they continue to meet the criteria for commitment as a sexually violent person.

Since enactment of the Sexually Violent Person Act in 1998, 215 convicted sex offenders have been committed as sexually violent persons. Madigan's office currently has an additional 150 commitment petitions seeking commitment of offenders who otherwise would be released from prison.

Assistant Attorneys General Debra Blomgren and Michael Kress handled the case for Madigan's Sexually Violent Persons Bureau.

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