

IN MONTGOMERY COUNTY CIRCUIT COURT, MARYLAND
CIVIL DIVISION

JANE DOE (pseudonym),
NORMA NOE (pseudonym),
ROBIN ROE (pseudonym),
PAULA POE (pseudonym),
CARLA COE (pseudonym)
GRACE GOE (pseudonym)
KAREN KOE (pseudonym),
KARL KOE (pseudonym),

Plaintiffs and Class Representatives,

v.

SOVEREIGN GRACE MINISTRIES, INC.
7505 Muncaster Mill Rd
Gaithersburg, MD 20877

COVENANT LIFE CHURCH, INC.
7505 Muncaster Mill Rd
Gaithersburg, MD 20877

COVENANT LIFE SCHOOL, INC.
7501 Muncaster Mill Road
Gaithersburg, MD 20877

SOVEREIGN GRACE CHURCH OF FAIRFAX
5200 Ox Rd,
Fairfax, VA 22030

CHARLES JOSEPH MAHANEY,
20911 Lochaven Court
Gaithersburg, MD 20882-4467

GARY RICUCCI
404 Sanders Lane
Gaithersburg, MD 20877-3410

DAVID HINDERS,
5328 Ox Road
Fairfax, VA 22030-4606

JURY DEMAND

Case No. 369721-V
Judge: Hon. Sharon V. Burrell

RECEIVED

JAN 11 2013

Clerk of the Circuit Court
Montgomery County, Md.

LOUIS GALLO)
 9663 Mason Bluff Court)
 Burke, VA 22015-3148)
)
 FRANK ECELBARGER)
 4113 Leafy Glade Place)
 Casselberry, FL 32707-5286)
)
 JOHN LOFTNESS)
 3005 Arden Forest Lane)
 Bowie, MD 20716-3821)
)
 GRANT LAYMAN)
 20305 Oyster Bay Terrace)
 Montgomery Village, MD 20886-5908)
)
 LAWRENCE TOMCZAK)
 1312 Wolverton Drive)
 Franklin, TN 37067-6523)
)
 MARK MULLERY)
 10606 Henrico Street)
 Fairfax, VA 22032)
)
 VINCE HINDERS)
 5587 Ann Peake Drive)
 Fairfax, VA 22032)
)
 Defendants.)
 _____)

CLASS ACTION COMPLAINT AND JURY DEMAND

1. Plaintiffs and the Class were seriously harmed by Sovereign Grace Ministries, Inc., Covenant Life Church, Inc., Covenant Life School, Inc. and the individual Defendants.. The facts show that certain individual Defendants and other predators not named repeatedly physically and sexually abused children. Although these facts were known to Defendants, they cared more about protecting its financial and institutional standing than about protecting children, its most vulnerable members. Defendants failed to stop repeated and ongoing sexual

predation occurring at SGM churches and organization, including Covenant Life Church and Covenant Life School. Defendants failed to report known incidences of sexual predation to law enforcement, encouraged parents to refrain from reporting the assaults to law enforcement, and interposed themselves between the parents of the victims and law enforcement in order to mislead law enforcement into believing the parents had “forgiven” those who preyed on their children. Defendants’ acts and omissions were not isolated events. Defendants’ repeated acts and omissions created a culture in which sexual predators were protected from accountability, and victims were silenced.

2. This action arises under common law of Maryland.

PARTIES

3. Paula Poe is a female who was repeatedly sexually assaulted during her childhood at the School at CLC and at various church events convened in Maryland. Due to the nature of the lawsuit, she wishes to use the pseudonym Paula Poe to keep her identity confidential. Paula Poe brings this action on her own behalf and on behalf of those similarly situated.
4. Carla Coe is a female who was repeatedly abused by Defendant Tomzcak, primarily in Maryland and Virginia. Due to the nature of the lawsuit, she wishes to use the pseudonym Carla Coe to keep her identity confidential. Carla Coe brings this action on her behalf and on behalf of those similarly situated.
5. Grace Goe is a female who, along with her siblings, was repeatedly abused by her father while residing in Maryland. When she sought assistance from Defendants to stop the ongoing physical and sexual abuse, they failed to assist the girls, failed to report the ongoing abuse to the secular authorities, and instead alerted the abuser to his

daughters' pleas for aid. Due to the nature of the lawsuit, she wishes to use the pseudonym Grace Goe to keep her identity confidential. Grace Goe brings this action on her own behalf and on behalf of those similarly situated.

6. Karen Koe and Karl Koe are brother and sister, both of whom were sexually assaulted as children residing in Virginia. Due to the nature of the lawsuit, they wish to use the pseudonyms Karen Koe and Karl Koe to keep their identities confidential. They bring this action on their own behalf and on behalf of those similarly situated.
7. Jane Doe is a female high-school student residing in Virginia who was sexually assaulted when she was three years old. Due to the nature of the lawsuit, she wishes to use the pseudonym Jane Doe to keep her identity confidential. Jane Doe brings this action on her own behalf and on behalf of those similarly situated.
8. Norma Noe is a 22-year old female college student residing in Maryland who was sexually assaulted when she was two years old. Due to the nature of the lawsuit, she wishes to use the pseudonym Norma Noe to keep her identity confidential. Norma Noe brings this action on her own behalf and on behalf of those similarly situated.
9. Robin Roe is a young woman residing in Maryland whose sister was sexually assaulted by a pedophilic stepfather. Due to the nature of the lawsuit, she wishes to use the pseudonym Robin Roe to keep her identity confidential. Robin Roe brings this action on her own behalf and on behalf of those similarly situated.
10. Defendant Sovereign Grace Ministries, Inc. ("SGM") operates in 21 countries and the United States. SGM is located at 7505 Muncaster Mill Road, Gaithersburg, MD 20877, and at 2002 Fandango Court, Louisville, KY 40245. The Church is a nonprofit organized under Maryland law. SGM includes and operates Sovereign

Grace Church Fairfax at 5200 Ox Road, Fairfax, VA 22030, Covenant Life Church, at 7501 Muncaster Mill Rd, Gaithersburg, MD 20877, and numerous other churches in the United States and abroad. During timeframe at issue in this lawsuit, SGM generated substantial revenues in Maryland and elsewhere by planting churches,¹ training leaders, holding conferences, operating the “Pastors College,” selling books, music and audio products, and owning real estate in this District and elsewhere.

11. Defendant Covenant Life Church (“CLC”) is located at 7505 Muncaster Mill Road, Gaithersburg, MD 20877. CLC is a nonprofit organized under Maryland law and operates in Maryland. At all times relevant to the allegations in this lawsuit, CLC was part of SGM. During timeframe at issue in this lawsuit, CLC generated substantial revenues in Maryland and elsewhere by planting churches, training leaders, holding conferences, operating the “Pastors College,” selling books, music and audio products, and owning real estate in this District and elsewhere.

12. Defendant Sovereign Grace Church of Fairfax (“Fairfax Church”) is located at 5200 Ox Road, Fairfax, VA 22030. At all times relevant to the allegations in this lawsuit, the Fairfax Church was part of SGM. During timeframe at issue in this lawsuit, the Fairfax Church generated substantial revenues that were sent to Maryland, and worked in collaboration with SGM and CLC to plant churches, train leaders, hold conferences, operate the “Pastors College,” and sell books, music and audio products.

¹ Church planting involves sending groups of SGM members to begin an SGM church in a new area. Many SGM members all buy or rent houses near each other to live out their religious beliefs in a communal setting. Church planting requires members to attempt to persuade other neighbors to attend and participate in the new church.

13. Defendant Covenant Life School (“School”) is located at 7501 Muncaster Mill Road, Gaithersburg, MD 20879. The School is a nonprofit organized under Maryland law and operates in Maryland. The School began in 1979, and has graduated 225 students. The School’s current enrollment is 260 children. The School provides an education based on the Church’s philosophy in exchange for tuition payments. The School is controlled by the Church. Defendant Charles Joseph (“C.J.”) Mahaney resides at 20911 Lochaven Court, Gaithersburg, MD 20882-4467. Together with Defendant Tomczak, he founded SGM in 1982. He presently serves as President of SGM..
14. Defendant Lawrence Tomczak resides at 1312 Wolverton Drive, Franklin, TN 37067-6523. Together with Defendant Mahaney, Defendant Tomczak founded SGM in 1982 and was personally involved in the events that led to this lawsuit, including but not limited to, the abuse of Carla Coe.
15. Defendant John Loftness resides at 3005 Arden Forest Lane, Bowie, MD 20716-3821. He presently serves as Chairman of the Board of SGM and was personally involved in the events that led to this lawsuit.
16. Defendant Grant Layman resides at 20305 Oyster Bay Terrace, Montgomery Village, MD 20886-5908. He is employed by SGM and was personally involved in the events that led to this lawsuit.
17. Defendant Gary Ricucci resides at 404 Sanders Lane, Gaithersburg, MD 20877-3410. He is employed by SGM and was personally involved in the events that led to this lawsuit.
18. Defendant David Hinders resides at 5328 Ox Road, Fairfax, VA 22030-4606. He is employed by SGM and was personally involved in the events that led to this lawsuit.

19. Defendant Louis Gallo resides at 9663 Mason Bluff Court, Burke, VA 22015-3148.

He is employed by SGM and was personally involved in the events that led to this lawsuit.

20. Defendant Frank Ecelbarger resides at 4113 Leafy Glade Place, Casselberry, FL

32707-5286. He is employed by SGM and was personally involved in the events that led to this lawsuit.

21. Defendant Mark Mullery resides at 1606 Henrico Street, Fairfax, VA 22302. He is

employed by SGM and was personally involved in the events that led to this lawsuit.

22. Defendant Vince Hinders resides 5587 Ann Peake Drive, Fairfax, VA 22302. He is

employed by SGM and was personally involved in the events that led to this lawsuit.

23. The Individual Defendants not presently living in Maryland (Tomczak, D. Hinders, V.

Hinders, Gallo, Ecelbarger) engaged in a persistent course of conduct in the State of

Maryland, and have purposefully availed themselves of the privilege of conducting

activities in the State of Maryland. Among other things, each non-resident Individual

Defendant participated in setting policies and procedures for Sovereign Grace

Ministries, Inc. and Covenant Life Church, which operated in Maryland. Upon

information and belief, each non-resident Individual Defendant also visited Maryland

for training, consultation and other business activities and engaged in a persistent

course of conduct in Maryland such that personal jurisdiction over each Individual

Defendant is consistent with due process and Maryland law.

FACTUAL ALLEGATIONS

24. Since beginning operations, the institutional Defendants constantly engaged in the

care of members' children. Among other things, the Defendants operated a school,

directed the establishment of home schooling groups, arranged for and provided day care to permit members to attend services, and arranged for babysitting during multiple weekly Home/Care meetings. According to Defendants' own admissions, it was responsible for more than 250 children at the School and 800 children in the CLC youth ministry, and many hundreds of others elsewhere in youth ministries and church school settings.

25. Defendants failed to take the necessary steps to ensure the safety of children under its care, such as requiring that pastors be licensed or ordained. Defendants negligently hired sexual predators, failed to supervise those who were placed in direct control over children, failed to adopt any processes or policies to deal with sexual predation, and failed to train adequately those placed in direct control over children.
26. During the time frame at issue in this lawsuit, Defendants SGM and CLC operated the School and youth ministries. In addition, Defendants operated through a "Home Group" structure and required members to attend a Home Group meeting each week in various residential premises.² The individual Defendants, acting on behalf of SGM and/or CLC, implemented Defendants' policies and practices through regular weekly teachings, books, and audio tapes conditioning members to follow "spiritual leaders." Defendants directed members to unquestioningly "obey" the Church in all matters, including methods of parenting, place of residence and employment.

² Defendants initially called this structure "Home Groups," but later changed the terminology to "CareGroups." Plaintiffs use the term "Home Groups" to encompass both "Home Groups" and "CareGroups."

27. Defendants learned about multiple instances of sexual and physical abuse of children by receiving credible reports directly from victims and from a number of different Church members. Defendants also learned of sexual and physical predation by admissions made in non-confessional settings by perpetrators.
28. To date, Defendants have never taken any steps to investigate the extent of physical and sexual abuse of children occurring on Defendants' premises and during Defendants' proceedings, such as Home Group and Celebration. Defendants failed to alert law enforcement authorities, and failed to take any steps whatsoever to protect children from physical and sexual abuse.
29. Instead, Defendants taught members to fear and distrust all secular authorities, and expressly directed members not to contact law enforcement to report sexual and physical assaults on children. Defendants gave guidance to members on how best to prevent secular authorities from observing bruising and other physical indicia of abuse. This practice has not stopped, as is evidenced by teachings as communications as recent as August 2011. On those occasions when Defendants were not successful in persuading the parents of the victim to refrain from contacting law enforcement, Defendants interfered with the administration of justice by tipping off the sexual predators that they had been reported to law enforcement.
30. Defendants provided sexual predators with free legal advice and counsel on how to evade accountability, and repeatedly worked with sexual predators to mislead law enforcement. Defendants were willing to, and did, make false statements to law enforcement officials and in courts of law in its efforts to protect sexual predators.

31. Upon information and belief, Defendants never initiated contact with the police or any other secular authority when it learned of sexual predation occurring under its auspices. Instead, Defendants concealed the ongoing sexual predation in order to avoid any financial or reputational harms to the Church. Defendants admitted that it placed such harms over the well-being of the vulnerable children in its care, claiming “[t]hat is our responsibility to protect the Church from harm, and that includes a lawsuit against the Church.”
32. Defendants forbade members from discussing sexual predation, which created additional opportunities for sexual predation to occur, as sexual predators repeat their conduct unless detected and incarcerated.
33. Defendants refused to alert members to the presence of known and convicted pedophiles, instead relying on such persons to “self-report” to church members. Defendants knew that pedophiles were not “self-reporting” to church members and instead were participating in church events involving children. Defendants permitted and, as reasonable discovery will show, is continuing to permit, known pedophiles to interact with children without advising the parents of these interactions. For example, Defendants have permitted one known pedophile to homeschool children at his house, and have permitted another to attend a children’s camping trip.
34. Defendants exacerbated the harm to the innocent victims of sexual predation by forcing them (some as young as 2 and 3 years old) to meet and “forgive” their sexual predators. These sessions re-traumatized the victims and their parents.
35. In the majority of instances of sexual predation, Defendants managed to silence the parents of the child victims, and effectively prevented the involvement of law

enforcement. Defendants retaliated against those parents who refused to participate in Defendants efforts to assist sexual predators evade secular accountability. Defendants engaged in a series of coercive and retaliatory acts designed to isolate and harm, including threatening families' financial well-being, threatening expulsion from the church, and threatening legal action against victims and their families.

36. Defendants misled its members by making a series of false statements designed to allay concerns about the ongoing sexual predation. During a meeting held on August 17, 2011, Defendants claimed – falsely – that there had only been two incidents of sexual predation when they knew the number was far greater.

FACTS REGARDING PAULA POE

37. Paula Poe attended the School and services at CLC beginning in kindergarten until her family moved away from Gaithersburg, Maryland. Paula Poe was repeatedly sexually assaulted by two men. The primary perpetrator was a pastor and teacher. The secondary perpetrator was a children's ministry worker.
38. On multiple occasions, the two perpetrators, acting in concert, had Poe strip, and sexually molested her. These sexual molestations occurred on the School and Church premises, and at Church events, such as picnics.
39. On multiple other occasions, the primary perpetrator sexually molested Paula Poe at the School and Church events.
40. On one occasion, the secondary perpetrator sexually molested Paula Poe outdoors during a Church picnic.
41. Upon information and belief, Paula Poe was not the only victim of this pedophilia ring operating within the School and Church.

42. Upon information and belief, the pedophilia ring's victims included children who subsequently went on to prey upon other younger children.

FACTS REGARDING CARLA COE

43. Carla Coe was repeatedly assaulted by Defendant Tomczak and his co-conspirators during a 25-year period spanning her childhood and young adulthood. Defendant Tomczak assaulted Carla Coe with his hands, as well as with various instruments, including but not limited to, plastic and wooden sticks.

44. On multiple occasions, including occasions after Carla Coe reached the age of majority, Defendant Tomczak forced Carla Coe to strip out of her clothing against her will, and be beaten on her bare buttocks. Defendant Tomczak continued to engage in this forced undressing and beating of Carla Coe until she fled and escaped from the abuse.

45. On several occasions, Defendant Tomczak imprisoned Carla Coe and denied her food for extended periods of time.

46. Defendant Tomczak verbally admitted on one or more occasions to the individual Defendants and to the Church that he abused Carla Coe. No one reported the beatings to the secular authority.

47. The assaults by Defendant Tomczak and his co-conspirators' assaults primarily occurred in Maryland and Virginia.

FACTS REGARDING GRACE GOE

48. Grace Goe was physically and sexually abused by her father when she was a minor and living in Maryland. Grace Goe's father repeatedly beat her on her naked buttocks

- so harshly that she bled and bruised. Her father would then submerge her into an ice bath to hide the physical manifestations of the beatings.
49. Grace Goe's father also repeatedly sexually abused her, making her rub his feet, which he then inserted into her vagina.
50. Grace Goe's father engaged in the physical and sexual abuse towards the other children, including the male children, whose penises he repeatedly fondled.
51. Grace Goe and her older female sibling reported the fact of the abuse to Defendant CLC, seeking protection from their father. Grace Goe and her sibling met with Defendants Ricucci and Layman, and explained the severity of the abuse.
52. Rather than report the ongoing abuse to the secular authorities, Defendants informed the father that his children had reported the abuse. This led to further abuse by the father.

FACTS REGARDING KARL KOE

53. Karl Koe was seven years old when he was repeatedly sexually molested (approximately ten times) by the male son of a Church pastor.
54. The perpetrator (then aged approximately 12 or 13) molested Karl Koe in multiple locations, including the bathroom at Church. The perpetrator engaged in multiple unwanted sexual acts, including kissing Karl Koe and fondling his penis.
55. After Karl Koe informed his parents that he had been molested, his parents advised Defendants Ecelbarger, Gallo, Mullery and V. Hinders, as well as others, of the molestation. Defendants failed to report the molestation to the secular authorities. Defendant V. Hinders misrepresented to the parents of Karl Koe that the Church had

taken care of the matter by requiring the perpetrator to attend a different church service than Karl Koe.

56. Defendants, including the pastor father of the predator, failed to take any steps whatsoever to prevent the juvenile sexual predator from preying upon other children. Defendants continued to permit the juvenile sexual predator to have unfettered access to children on Church premises and during Church activities, such as Home Group and Celebration.
57. Upon information and belief, the juvenile perpetrator may have been one of the victims of the pedophilia ring operating at the School prior to sexually molesting Karl Koe.

FACTS REGARDING KAREN KOE

58. Karen Koe was sexually molested by a juvenile sexual predator when she was eight years old.
59. Karen Koe did not tell her parents about the molestation until some years later. At that point, her parents alerted Defendants and also alerted the police.
60. Karen Koe's parents learned that the juvenile sexual predator who had molested their daughter had been initially charged with raping a minor, and subsequently served time in juvenile detention. Although this fact was known to Defendants, they permitted the juvenile sexual predator unfettered access to children.
61. Defendants refused to cooperate with the prosecuting secular authorities, who successfully prosecuted and convicted the juvenile sexual predator on felony charges. Defendant Gallo took steps to obstruct justice, including but not limited to making misrepresentations.

62. Between August 1998 and March 1999, a church member repeatedly sexual assaulted and sexually molested Jane Doe. Jane Doe was three years old at the time of the sexual assaults and repeated sexual assaults. She was living in Woodbridge, Virginia.
63. On or about March 15, 1999, the mother of the perpetrator told Defendants in a non-confessional setting that that her son had been repeatedly sexually molesting Jane Doe. She told Defendants Ecelbarger, Phillips, Hinders, Gallo, and perhaps others that her son had admitted to these crimes.
64. Upon learning of the crimes, the Defendants failed to report the crimes to the secular authorities. Instead, Defendants engaged in a lengthy pattern of fraud and deception to try to prevent anyone from learning the full extent of the ongoing criminal activity.
65. Defendants directed the parents of Jane Doe -- church officials who ran a Home Group -- to remain silent about the sexual assault and assault, and refrain from alerting other members of the church to the ongoing predation of their three-year old daughter.
66. Defendants sought to persuade the parents of Jane Doe to refrain from reporting the crimes and involving social services.
67. Defendants did nothing to prevent the perpetrator from babysitting at other church functions or otherwise having contact with other children.
68. Defendants interfered with the administration of justice by repeatedly interviewing the perpetrator, and working with him and his mother to determine how best to prevent any prosecution and publicity regarding his criminal sexual deviance.
69. Defendants misled secular authorities into believing that it was providing “accountability measures” to ensure that the perpetrator was not permitted access to

his siblings or other children. In fact, Defendants did not put any “accountability measures” in place, but instead permitted a known child molester to frequent the “children’s ministry” without any supervision, babysit children of members, and otherwise interact with children at church events, including a weekend retreat, without any supervision whatsoever.

70. Defendants lied to the parents of Jane Doe, telling them that they would ensure that the parents were kept informed of all court dates. In fact, Defendants, working with the perpetrator and his mother, lied and misled the parents in order to prevent them from attending court appearances and filing a victim impact statement.

71. Defendants lied to the public authorities, representing that they were speaking on behalf of the parents of Jane Doe, and falsely claiming that the parents did not wish to participate in the court proceedings regarding the sexual assault and sexual molestation of Jane Doe.

72. Defendants made a series of misrepresentations to their church members to ensure that they did not learn that the perpetrator had been raping Jane Doe.

73. Defendants did not take any steps whatsoever to protect other children from sexual predation by a known sexual predator.

FACTS REGARDING NORMA NOE

74. On or about March 17, 1993, a church member sexually molested Norma Noe.

Norma Noe was two years old at the time of the sexual assault and living in Gaithersburg, Maryland.

75. The parents of Norma Noe learned of the abuse the day after it occurred. They immediately called the police and reported the assault. After calling the police, they

contacted Defendant Loftness. He immediately advised the parents “do not call the police.” When the parents of Norma Noe advised Defendant Loftness that they had already called the police, he expressed his displeasure (stating “that is going to be a problem”), and explained that such matters were handled internally by the church leadership, not by secular authorities.

76. Defendants, acting through Defendant Loftness, immediately interfered with the administration of justice by tipping off the perpetrator that the parents had reported his sexual predation to the police. Defendant Loftness also took steps to ensure that other church members in the neighborhood were not alerted to the crime.

77. Defendant Loftness continued to interfere with the impartial administration of justice. Defendant Loftness “obtained” a confession from the predator, and began to serve as an intermediary between the police and the predator in order to control and prevent the dissemination of information to other families whose children were at risk of predation.

78. Defendants required the parents of Norma Noe to bring Norma Noe to a meeting to be “reconciled” with her predator. When Norma Noe (who had just turned three) was brought into the same room with her predator, she was visibly scared and crawled under the chair. The “reconciliation” meeting created additional damage to Norma Noe, already traumatized by the initial abuse, and traumatized the parents of Norma Noe.

79. Defendant Loftness involved Defendants Ricucci and Layman to assist him in disseminating false and misleading information to the police and to church members.

80. Defendants did not take any steps whatsoever to learn the extent of sexual predation by the predator, such as advising the police that the predator had been charged with the care of numerous toddlers in his role as a Home Group babysitter. The parents of other children exposed to the predator were never advised of the sexual assault, and never counseled to be alert for signs of trauma in their children.

81. Defendants advised the parents of Norma Noe that they were required to remain completely silent about who had committed the assault, and thus refrain from providing other members of the Church information needed to protect their own children from the sexual predation.

82. Defendants required the parents of Norma Noe to refrain from telling any other church members the name of the sexual predator who had sexual assaulted their three-year old daughter.

83. Defendants knowingly permitted the sexual predator to continue to participate, unsupervised, in church activities with children despite his conviction for molesting Norma Noe.

84. Defendants withheld information from the parents of Norma Noe about the assault that they had obtained directly from the predator.

85. Defendants misled the parents in order to prevent them from attending court appearances and filing a victim impact statement.

86. Upon information and belief, the juvenile perpetrator who molested Norma Noe may have previously been a victim of the pedophilia ring operating at the School.

FACTS REGARDING ROBIN ROE

87. Plaintiff Robin Roe's adoptive father ("Parental Pedophile") is a sexual deviant who sexually abused her older sister for three and one-half years. His criminal conduct was

discovered by Robin Roe's mother on or about November 2, 1987. Parental Pedophile was and remains a member of SGM and CLC.

88. Defendants actions taken after discovering her adoptive father's pedophilia permanently harmed Robin Roe. Robin Roe's mother reported Parental Pedophile's sexual abuse of her 11-year old daughter to the Church leader Dave Mays, who in turn immediately reported the abuse to Defendant Ricucci, and later reported the abuse to Defendant Loftness.

89. Defendants did not report the matter to the police or any other law enforcement authorities, as they were required to do. Instead, acting through Defendant Ricucci, they directed Robin Roe's mother to let them "take care of everything." Robin Roe's mother wanted counseling for the victim and herself, but Defendant Ricucci told Robin Roe's mother that they did not want her to go to a counselor because counselors had a duty to report abuse. Rather than assisting the victims, Defendants retained a lawyer for the sexual predator.

90. Defendants worked with him and intervened repeatedly on his behalf to try to lessen the consequences for his criminality. Defendants interposed themselves between law enforcement authorities and the family members, and falsely claimed that they were acting on the family's behalf. Defendants even suggested to Robin Roe's mother that she send Robin Roe's sister, the victim, out of the house in order to "bring" the predator home as "head of the household."

91. Defendants took steps to prevent Robin Roe from alerting others in the church community about her stepfather's sexual predation. After Robin Roe confided in one friend, another church member, about the Parental Pedophile's abuse of her sister, Defendants acted to prevent Robin Roe from remaining within the church community.

92. As a result of the Church's conduct and misrepresentations, Robin Roe was not cared for by loving and responsible adults, but instead was incarcerated in a juvenile half-way house with criminal juveniles.

93. Defendants obstructed the investigation and the pursuit of justice. Defendants interfered with interactions with the secular authorities. Defendants warned Robin Roe's mother that her means of financial support would disappear if Parental Pedophile was convicted. Defendants intervened with the State in support of the Parental Pedophile, and otherwise supported his defense efforts contrary to the wishes of the victim and her mother.

94. After Robin Roe's mother refused to acquiesce in Defendants' attempt to obstruct justice, Defendants dropped all pretense of support, and expelled the family from the Church. Defendants also effectively expelled the children from school by denying them the reduced tuition that the family had received for over ten years. Defendants told Robin Roe's mother that the family's financial destitution was self-induced because she was refusing to cooperate.

95. The secular authorities prosecuted and incarcerated Parental Pedophile. During the incarceration, Defendants continuously intervened on his behalf, trying to reduce his sentence. When the Parental Pedophile was released from incarceration, Defendants continuously intervened with the secular authorities in supporting his effort to obtain custody of the children.

CLASS ALLEGATIONS

96. Plaintiffs seek to certify this action as a class. Representative Plaintiffs, acting in the interest of others similarly situated, allege that there is a class of male and female persons harmed by Defendants' negligent and intentional misconduct in hiring and failing to supervise sexual predators, concealing, tolerating, and failing to report allegations of physical and sexual

abuse. Defendants' negligence created an environment conducive to and protective of the physical and sexual abuse of children.

97. Certification of a class is permitted here under Rule 2-231 of the Code of Maryland because the prerequisites have been met. Joinder of all members of the class is impracticable for two reasons: there are too many members, and they seek anonymity given the facts. There are questions of law and fact common to the class that predominate over any question affecting only individual members and a class action is superior to other available methods for the fair and efficient adjudication of the controversy. Plaintiffs' claims are typical of the class claims, and plaintiffs will fairly adequately protect the interests of the class.

98. The Plaintiff Class is defined as those who were minors attending Church and School events, and who were abused by Defendants or as a result of Defendants' acts and omissions.

99. Discovery is needed to ascertain the size of the class, but based on the number of persons contacting putative class counsel, a class is needed for efficient adjudication. Many of the victims are not willing to come forward in a public setting as a result of the nature of the harms done to them. Two examples are provided here: First, a young girl was repeatedly sexually abused by her father, a member of the SGM church located in Fairfax, Virginia. When the girl reached the age of ten, she told her mother about the ongoing and long-standing sexual abuse. The mother immediately contacted Defendants.

100. Defendants directed the mother to remain completely silent about the father's repeated incestuous sexual assaults, and to refrain from reporting the pedophilia to the police or other authorities.

101. Defendants directed the mother to refrain advising other members of the church of her husband's sexually-deviant behavior. When the mother turned to her friends (fellow SGM members) for support, Defendants reprimanded her for the sin of "gossiping."

102. Defendants required the family to undergo pastoral counseling. During the counseling, Defendants told the mother that she was a "sinner," and directed her to refrain from seeking any outside counseling for herself or her daughter. Defendants also told the 10-year old victim that she was a "sinner" for having been victimized.

103. Defendants blamed the mother for the father's pedophilia and instructed her to engage in sex with her husband more frequently to prevent him from "being tempted."

104. Defendants instructed the mother to place a lock on the inside of her daughter's door, and have the daughter lock it from the inside each night to keep the father from assaulting the child.

105. Defendants knew the abuse was ongoing and that the pedophilic father was not going to turn himself into the authorities, yet they directed the mother to refrain from reporting the crimes or otherwise involving any civil authorities.

106. Defendants withheld information about the abuse from other church members.

107. Defendants continued to allow this pedophile to attend church events that put him in unsupervised contact with other minors.

108. Defendants disseminated the false information that sexual deviants who molest their own children are unlikely to molest non-family members.

109. Second, a child was molested by a person of the same sex. The parents immediately advised Defendants of this attack. Defendants told the parents that the sexual predator had been caught molesting several other children on occasions in the past. Defendants

did not report the sexual predator to the authorities or take any other steps to protect children in their care. Instead, Defendants merely required the parents and the victim to attend a session in which the sexual predator “apologized” for the attack.

110. Defendants directed the parents and victim to refrain from telling anyone about the attack because the predator “repented.” As a result of the attack and subsequent cover-up, the victim suffered serious mental after-effects, including but not limited to suicidal ideation.

111. Defendants have conspired repeatedly to permit sexual predators to evade detection and prosecution. Defendants have abused their positions of trust and subjected defenseless children to life-changing crimes.

112. Defendants’ repeated misconduct and/or negligence breaches duties owed to Representative Plaintiffs and the Plaintiff Class, and harmed and continues to harm the Representative Plaintiffs and the Plaintiff Class in wholly foreseeable ways.

113. Defendants’ negligence caused Representative Plaintiffs and the Plaintiff Class Members severe emotional distress as well as financial distress arising from the need for treatment and inability to function to an optimum capacity.

114. Defendants’ negligence caused harm to Representative Plaintiffs and to the Plaintiff Class.

COUNT I – NEGLIGENCE

115. All the foregoing allegations are hereby incorporated by reference in their entirety.

116. Defendants, individually and through their actual and or apparent agents, servants and/or employees, owed Representative Plaintiffs and the Plaintiff Class a duty to exercise

reasonable care to protect them from predators and report abuse to law enforcement when it was found to have occurred under the auspices of the Church or by Church officials.

117. Defendants are liable for the sexual and other violence that happened in their ranks because they acted in reckless and grossly negligent fashion with complete disregard for the safety of children entrusted into their care in educational and religious settings.

118. Defendants were on notice that sexual predation and physical abuse of children was occurring in church settings and as a result of authority bestowed by the Defendants on pastors, youth ministry leaders, home group leaders and others. Yet Defendants failed to report any abuse, and instead lied and intervened to try to protect the predators from being incarcerated.

119. Defendants negligently breached duties owed to Representative Plaintiffs and the Plaintiff Class by repeatedly allowing known sexual predators unsupervised access to children at church-sponsored events or on church premises, by failing to report the abuse themselves, by directing parents not to report the abuse and by concealing the abuse from church members and authorities.

120. Defendants knew, or should have known, that making children available to sexual predators breached a duty of care owed to minors.

121. Defendants knew, or should have known, that failure to report sexual and physical abuse and instead engage in its concealment, breached a duty of care owed to minors.

Defendants knew, or should have known, that state laws required the reporting of suspected sexual and physical abuse of a minor to the secular authorities.

122. As a direct and proximate result of this breach of duty, Representative Plaintiffs and the Plaintiff Class suffered and continue to suffer physical and emotional distress, shock, embarrassment, loss of self-esteem, disgrace, humiliation and loss of enjoyment of life; have

sustained and will continue to sustain loss of earnings and earning capacity; and have incurred and will continue to incur expenses for medical and psychological treatment, therapy and counseling.

COUNT II – INTENTIONAL INFLICTION OF EMOTIONAL DISTRESS

123. All the foregoing allegations are hereby incorporated by reference in their entirety.

124. Representative Plaintiffs and the Plaintiff Class have suffered from extreme stress and severe emotional distress due to Defendants' extreme and outrageous actions.

125. Defendants' conduct was intentional and reckless and Defendants knew or should have known that injury and emotional distress would likely result from their conduct.

126. Defendants knew, or should have known, that failure to report abuse and engage in its concealment, breached a duty of care. Defendants knew, or should have known, that state laws required the reporting of suspected abuse of a minor to the authorities.

127. Defendants' acts and omissions that made Representative Plaintiffs and the Plaintiff Class available to sexual predators, prevented parents from reporting, and interfered with police investigations were so extreme and outrageous that it violated human dignity.

128. As a direct and proximate result of this breach of duty, Plaintiffs and the Plaintiff Class suffered and continue to suffer physical and emotional distress, shock, embarrassment, loss of self-esteem, disgrace, humiliation and loss of enjoyment of life; have sustained and will continue to sustain loss of earnings and earning capacity; and have incurred and will continue to incur expenses for medical and psychological treatment, therapy and counseling.

COUNT III - CONSPIRACY TO OBSTRUCT JUSTICE

129. All the foregoing allegations are hereby incorporated by reference in their entirety.

130. Defendants engaged in a conspiracy with each other by agreement or understanding to not report acts of abuse, to refrain from contacting civil authorities, to conceal the sexual abuse, and to interfere with police investigations.

131. Defendants owed a duty of care arising from the operation of schools and churches.

132. Plaintiffs and the Plaintiff Class were owed a duty to be safe on Defendants' property and to be free of abuse.

133. Defendants knew, or should have known, that dangerous conditions existed on their premises. They knew, or should have known, that sexual predators were allowed on their property and were placed in unsupervised rooms with minors.

134. Defendants' knowledge was gained in sufficient time to allow Defendants to remove the sexual predators from their premises and/or to warn the Plaintiffs and the Plaintiff class. Instead, Defendants tipped off the predators, thus obstructing justice.

135. Defendants adopted policies and practices that required members to refrain from reporting crimes to secular law enforcement authorities until and instead report such crimes to Defendants.

COUNT IV - NEGLIGENCE HIRING AND SUPERVISION

136. All the foregoing allegations are hereby incorporated by reference in their entirety.

137. The institutional Defendants (SGM, CLC, Fairfax Church and School) negligently retained sexual deviants to serve in capacities with authority over children. Defendants negligently failed to supervise those to whom Defendants entrusted the care of minors. Defendants routinely refused to report suspected child abuse to secular authorities, encouraged parents to refrain from seeking outside help or counsel, allowed child abusers access to minors and fostered a culture of concealment of sexual deviance.

138. Defendants' actions and omissions caused injury to Plaintiffs and to the Plaintiff Class, who have suffered and continue to suffer physical and emotional distress, shock, embarrassment, loss of self-esteem, disgrace, humiliation and loss of enjoyment of life; have sustained and will continue to sustain loss of earnings and earning capacity; and have incurred and will continue to incur expenses for medical and psychological treatment, therapy and counseling.

139. Defendants' negligence in hiring, supervising and/or retaining employees is a direct and proximate cause of injuries to Plaintiffs and Plaintiff Class.

COUNT V - MISREPRESENTATION

140. All the foregoing allegations are hereby incorporated by reference in their entirety.

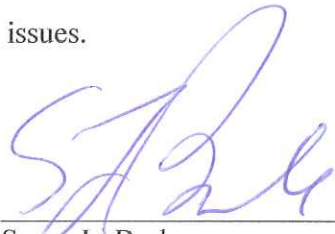
141. Defendants owed a duty of care to Plaintiffs and the Plaintiff Class. Defendants misrepresented that they would provide a safe atmosphere for Plaintiffs and the Plaintiff Class. Defendants intended and had knowledge that their statements would be relied upon by parents. Defendants knew, however, that reliance on those statements would cause injury, since Defendants allowed sexual predators access to minors.

142. Defendants misrepresented that they would act as advocates for the victims and their families. Defendants intended and had knowledge that their statements would be relied upon by parents. Defendants knew, however, that reliance on those statements would cause injury, since Defendants acted as advocates for the perpetrators, not the victims.

143. As a direct and proximate result of Defendants' misrepresentations, Plaintiffs and the Plaintiff Class were harmed and injured.

JURY DEMAND

Plaintiffs hereby request a trial by jury on all issues.



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Dated: January 11, 2013

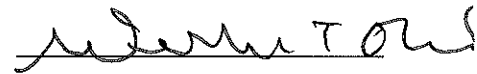
CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that on January 11, 2013, I filed Plaintiffs' First Amended Complaint with the Clerk of the Court and served copies of the foregoing on the following counsel of record by e-mail and U.S. mail:

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