

Nfld. & Labrador

Convicted Mount Cashel brother turns up in Illinois child abuse investigation

Ronald Lasik allegedly abused kids in Chicago and Australia after leaving Canada

[Ryan Cooke](#) · CBC News · Posted: May 25, 2023 6:00 AM NDT | Last Updated: 2 hours ago



Ronald Justin Lasik was a teacher with the Christian Brothers, stationed at Mount Cashel Orphanage in the 1950s. He would later be sentenced to 11 years in prison for abusing the kids under his care. (St. Bonaventure College Yearbook)

WARNING: This story contains details of child physical and sexual abuse.

One of the most notorious child abusers in Newfoundland and Labrador history has popped up in another investigation into allegations of Catholic child abuse in the United States.

Ronald Lasik, a member of the Christian Brothers of Ireland until his death in 2020, is one of 451 men "credibly accused" of abusing children in Illinois while holding a position of authority affiliated with the church.

Lasik is well-known for his time at the Mount Cashel Orphanage in St. John's during the 1950s, where it's alleged he abused at least eight boys in a violent and sexual manner. He was sentenced to 11 years in prison in 1999.

According to the report, Lasik also worked at Saint Laurence High School in Chicago. While it doesn't get into details of the allegations against him, the *Chicago Sun-Times* has previously reported he was accused of abusing two boys between 1966 and 1968. Students say he disappeared from the school sometime during the 1967-68 school year without an announcement.

The attorney general of Illinois — in an effort to understand the full scope of the Catholic clergy abuse problem in the state — launched an investigation in 2018. The goal was to identify as many clergymen and members of lay orders as possible who were credibly accused of sexual abuse.



Illinois Attorney General Kwame Raoul speaks on the findings of his office's investigation into Catholic clergy child sex abuse in Chicago on Tuesday. (Eileen T. Meslar/Chicago Tribune via AP)

The former attorney general, Lisa Madigan, suspected the true number of abusers was much higher than the number listed publicly by the Catholic Church.

"Before this investigation, the Catholic dioceses of Illinois publicly listed only 103 substantiated child sex abusers," said current Attorney General Kwame Raoul. "By comparison, this report reveals names and detailed information of 451 Catholic clerics and religious brothers who abused at least 1,997 children across all of the dioceses in Illinois."

There are five men on the list with ties to Canada, including Lasik, Thomas Job, Konstanty Przybylski, Marion Joseph Snieg and William C. Wert.

Lasik also faced allegations in Australia

Ronald Justin Lasik was born in Chicago, and educated by the Christian Brothers in New York. He came to Newfoundland in 1950 to take a teaching position at St. Bonaventure's College,

where he also oversaw several sports programs.

By 1954, Lasik was working at the Mount Cashel Orphanage. One former resident, who has since passed away, spoke to CBC News in 2020 and described Lasik lashing him relentlessly while he was naked in the shower.

Another man, who is now in his 80s, told CBC News he was constantly targeted by Lasik with acts of physical, sexual and psychological abuse. He snapped one day in 1955, and hit Lasik over the head with a chair to stop him beating a child. The man was expelled from the orphanage the following day.

- **Q&A** [Mount Cashel survivor reflects on traumatic path to victory against Catholic church](#)
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The Mount Cashel orphanage is shown in a 1989 photo. (Andrew Vaughan/The Canadian Press)

Lasik's movements between leaving St. John's in 1957 and arriving in Chicago in 1966 are unknown.

An [investigation by the Australian Broadcasting Corporation](#) last year found he showed up in that country in the early 1970s. Multiple former students have accused Lasik of physical and sexual abuse at a pair of Australian schools.

The Christian Brothers in Australia subsequently hired a lawyer to undertake an inquiry into allegations of historic physical and sexual abuse by its members, including Lasik.

Conviction, later life and death

Lasik was found guilty of abusing six boys, more than 40 years after his time at Mount Cashel came to an end. He received the stiffest punishment of any of the Christian Brothers of his era, netting an 11-year sentence.

He'd serve about half of that time, and was then deported back to the United States. He was registered as a high-risk sex offender, and was reportedly living at a Christian Brothers residence in upstate New York.

He died in February 2020. No obituary was posted online. Lasik died a Christian Brother, according to lawyer Geoff Budden, who represents several of Lasik's victims in a civil case that's still ongoing in Newfoundland.

Despite allegations in three countries and an 11-year prison sentence in Canada, he was never kicked out of the order.

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