

EXHIBIT A

Service accepted on 9/10 @ 10:12A for WTNT

SUPREME COURT OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK
COUNTY OF BRONX

ANDRE DEJESUS, X

Date Index No. Purchased: 08/04/2021

Plaintiff,

Index No.: 70307/2021E

-against-

Plaintiff designates Bronx County as the place of trial.

THE GOVERNING BODY OF JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES,
WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF
PENNSYLVANIA, WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT
SOCIETY OF NEW YORK, INC., and CRESTON
KINGDOM HALL OF JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES,

The basis of venue is Plaintiff's residence.

SUMMONS

Defendants.

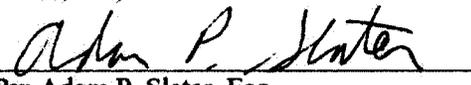
X

The Above-Named Defendants:

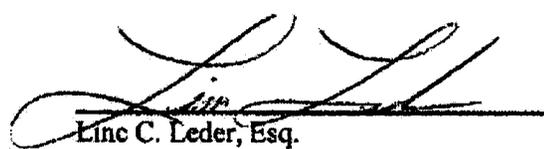
YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED to answer the complaint in this action and to serve a copy of your answer, or, if the complaint is not served with this summons, to serve a notice of appearance, on Plaintiff's Attorney(s) within twenty (20) days after the service of this summons, exclusive of the day of service (or within thirty (30) days after the service is complete if this summons is not personally delivered to you within the State of New York); and in case of your failure to appear or answer, judgment will be taken against you by default for the relief demanded in the complaint.

Dated: New York, New York
August 4, 2021

Yours, etc.,



By: Adam P. Slater, Esq.
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Counsel for Plaintiff
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(212) 922-0906



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TO: THE GOVERNING BODY OF JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES
1 Kings Drive
Tuxedo Park, NY 10987

WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF PENNSYLVANIA
200 Watchtower Drive
Patterson, NY 12563

WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF NEW YORK, INC.
900 Red Mills Road
Walkill, NY 12589

CRESTON KINGDOM HALL OF JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES
c/o the Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses
1 Kings Drive
Tuxedo Park, NY 10987

SUPREME COURT OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK
COUNTY OF BRONX

_____ X
ANDRE DEJESUS,

Date Filed:
Index No.: 70307/2021E

Plaintiff,
-against-

VERIFIED COMPLAINT

THE GOVERNING BODY OF JEHOVAH’S WITNESSES,
WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF
PENNSYLVANIA, WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT
SOCIETY OF NEW YORK, INC., and CRESTON
KINGDOM HALL OF JEHOVAH’S WITNESSES,

Defendants.

_____ X

Plaintiff, ANDRE DEJESUS (“Plaintiff”), by his attorneys Slater Slater Schulman LLP, brings this action against THE GOVERNING BODY OF JEHOVAH’S WITNESSES (“Governing Body”), WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF PENNSYLVANIA (“The Society of Pennsylvania”), WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF NEW YORK, INC. (“The Society of New York”), and CRESTON KINGDOM HALL OF JEHOVAH’S WITNESSES (“Kingdom Hall”), (collectively, “Defendants”) and alleges, on personal knowledge as to himself and on information and belief as to all other matters, as follows:

JURISDICTION AND VENUE

1. This action is brought pursuant to the Child Victims Act (“CVA”). See CPLR § 214-g and 22 NYCRR 202.72; as it alleges physical, psychological, and emotional damages suffered as a result of conduct against an infant that constitutes one or more sexual offenses as defined in Article 130 of the New York Penal Law, including without limitation, conduct constituting sexual abuse (consisting of sexual contact) (N.Y. Penal Law §§ 130.55 - 130.77).

2. This Court has personal jurisdiction over the Governing Body pursuant to CPLR §§ 301 and 302, as the Governing Body resides in New York or conducts, or at relevant times conducted, activities in New York that give rise to the claims asserted herein.

3. This Court has personal jurisdiction over the Society of Pennsylvania pursuant to CPLR §§ 301 and 302, as the Society of Pennsylvania resides in New York or conducts, or at relevant times conducted, activities in New York that give rise to the claims asserted herein.

4. This Court has personal jurisdiction over the Society of New York pursuant to CPLR §§ 301 and 302, as the Society of New York resides in New York or conduct, or at relevant times conducted, activities in New York that give rise to the claims asserted herein.

5. This Court has personal jurisdiction over the Kingdom Hall pursuant to CPLR §§ 301 and 302, as the Kingdom Hall resides in New York or conducts, or at relevant times conducted, activities in New York that give rise to the claims asserted herein.

6. This Court has jurisdiction over this action because the amount of damages Plaintiff is seeking exceeds the jurisdictional limits of all lower courts which would otherwise have jurisdiction.

7. Venue for this action is proper in the County of Bronx pursuant to CPLR § 503 as Plaintiff resides in this County.

PARTIES

8. Whenever reference is made to any defendant entity, such reference includes that entity, its parent companies, subsidiaries, affiliates, predecessors, and successors. In addition, whenever reference is made to any act, deed, or transaction of any entity, the allegation means that the entity engaged in the act, deed, or transaction by or through its officers, directors, agents, employees, or representatives while they were actively engaged in the management, direction, control, or transaction of the entity's business affairs.

9. Plaintiff is an individual residing in Bronx County, New York. Plaintiff suffered the sexual abuse described herein when he was approximately between nine (9) and ten (10) years old.

10. At all times material to the Verified Complaint, the Governing Body was and continues to be a non-profit religious corporation, organized exclusively for charitable, religious, and educational purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

11. At all times material to the Verified Complaint, the Governing Body was and remains authorized to conduct business under the laws of the State of New York, with its principal place of business at 1 Kings Drive, Tuxedo Park, NY 10987.

12. At all times material to the Verified Complaint, the Society of Pennsylvania was and continues to be a non-profit religious corporation, organized exclusively for charitable, religious, and educational purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

13. At all times material to the Verified Complaint, the Society of Pennsylvania was and remains authorized to conduct business under the laws of the State of New York, with its principal place of business at 200 Watchtower Drive, Patterson, NY 12563.

14. At all times material to the Verified Complaint, the Society of New York was and continues to be a non-profit religious corporation, organized exclusively for charitable, religious, and educational purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

15. At all times material to the Verified Complaint, the Society of New York was and remains authorized to conduct business under the laws of the State of New York, with its principal place of business at 900 Red Mills Road, Wallkill, NY 12589.

16. The Jehovah's Witnesses is a millenarian restorationist Christian denomination directed by the Governing Body as the ruling council of the denomination. The Governing Body

is responsible for the administration of the denomination's operations and public ministry on a global scale. The Governing Body specifically, along with its committees, supervises the denomination's branch offices, each branch office overseeing the activities of the denomination in a particular geographical area. Branch committees are directly appointed by the Governing Body and are in turn responsible for supervising the administrative functions of congregations falling within their jurisdiction. The United States branch office also serves as the denomination's international headquarters.

17. Congregations are divided into circuits consisting of about twenty (20) congregations. Circuit overseers are directly appointed by the Governing Body and act as circuit representatives, responsible for supervising the activities of the circuit which they are tasked with representing.

18. The Society of Pennsylvania is the main legal entity of the Jehovah's Witnesses and is used to support the denomination's work, including dissemination and publishing the denomination's religious texts, educational and Bible instruction, and charitable works.

19. As of 1976, prior to the sexual abuse described herein, all activities of the Society of Pennsylvania were officially brought under the supervision of the Governing Body. The Society of Pennsylvania is the parent organization of multiple subsidiaries within the denomination, including the Society of New York.

20. At all times material to the Verified Complaint, the Governing Body, Society of Pennsylvania, and Society of New York oversaw and continue to oversee a variety of liturgical, sacramental, educational, and faith formation programs, including but not limited to the Kingdom Hall.

21. At all times material to the Verified Complaint, the Governing Body, Society of Pennsylvania, and Society of New York had and continue to have various programs that seek out the participation of children in its activities, including those at the Kingdom Hall.

22. At all times material to the Verified Complaint, the Governing Body, Society of Pennsylvania, and Society of New York, through their agents, servants, or employees had and continue to have control over activities involving children, including but not limited those at the Kingdom Hall.

23. At all times material to the Verified Complaint, the Governing Body, Society of Pennsylvania, and Society of New York had and continue to have the power to employ individuals working with or alongside children, providing said children with guidance or instruction under the auspices of the Governing Body, Society of Pennsylvania, and Society of New York, including but not limited at the Kingdom Hall.

24. At all times material to the Verified Complaint, the Kingdom Hall was a non-profit religious corporation, organized exclusively for charitable, religious, and educational purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

25. The Kingdom Hall was authorized to conduct business under the laws of the State of New York, with its principal place of business, upon information and belief, at 216 E 183rd Street, Bronx, NY 10458.

26. Upon information and belief, Defendants closed the Kingdom Hall after the sexual abuse described herein.

27. Pursuant to N.Y. Bus. Corp. L § 1006, a dissolved corporation may sue or be sued in all courts and participate in actions and proceedings in its corporate name and process may be served upon it as the dissolution of a corporation does not affect any remedy against said corporation for any liability incurred before such dissolution.

28. The Kingdom Hall oversaw a variety of liturgical, sacramental, educational, and faith formation programs.

29. At all times material to this complaint, the Kingdom Hall operated under the control of the Governing Body, Society of Pennsylvania, and Society of New York.

30. At all times material to this complaint, the Kingdom Hall operated for the benefit of the Governing Body, Society of Pennsylvania, and Society of New York.

31. At all times material to this complaint, the Kingdom Hall had various programs and activities that seek the participation of children.

32. At all times material to this complaint, the Kingdom Hall, through its agents, servants, or employees had control over its programs involving children.

33. At all times material to this complaint, the Kingdom Hall employed individuals working with or alongside children and providing said children guidance or instruction under the auspices of the Governing Body, Society of Pennsylvania, and Society of New York, including, but not limited to, those at the Kingdom Hall.

34. At all times material to this complaint, the Governing Body, Society of Pennsylvania, and Society of New York participated in the management, control, and operation of the Kingdom Hall.

35. At all times material to the Verified Complaint, John (“Abuser”) was an elder and/or held a high-ranking leadership position at the Kingdom Hall. Upon information and belief, Abuser’s last name was either Kennedy or Kenny. Abuser additionally acted as a baseball coach in a youth program through the Kingdom Hall.

36. At all times material to the Verified Complaint, Abuser was an agent, servant, or employee of the Defendants.

37. At all times material to the Verified Complaint, while an agent, servant, or employee of the Defendants, Abuser remained under the control and supervision of the Defendants.

38. The Defendants placed Abuser in positions where he had immediate access to children.

39. The Defendants placed Abuser in positions where he had unfettered and prolonged unsupervised access to children.

FACTS

40. Plaintiff was raised in a devoutly religious family and had attended the Kingdom Hall with his family for as long as he could remember, under the authority of the Defendants.

41. At all times material to this complaint, Abuser was Plaintiff's elder at the Kingdom Hall and baseball coach and provided religious, educational, and recreational instruction to infant Plaintiff under the auspices of the Defendants.

42. At all times material to this complaint, Abuser was an adult.

43. In or about between 1985 and 1986, when Plaintiff was approximately between nine (9) and ten (10) years old, Plaintiff engaged in recreational, educational, and religious activities at and facilitated through the Kingdom Hall.

44. During said activities, Plaintiff, as a vulnerable minor, was dependent on the Defendants and Abuser for his care and welfare.

45. During said activities, Defendants had custody of Plaintiff and accepted the entrustment of then infant Plaintiff.

46. During said activities, Defendants were responsible for, and had authority over, then infant Plaintiff.

47. Under the doctrine of *in loco parentis*, Defendants assumed duties to protect the then infant Plaintiff from harm.

48. Through his positions at, within, or for Defendants, Abuser was put in direct contact with Plaintiff, a congregation member of Defendants’.

49. Under these circumstances, Plaintiff came to be under the direction, contact, and control of Abuser, who used his positions of authority and trust to sexually abuse and assault then infant Plaintiff.

50. On multiple occasions in or about between 1985 and 1986, while Plaintiff was a minor, Abuser, while acting as an elder, counselor, teacher, trustee, director, officer, employee, agent, servant, or volunteer of the Defendants, sexually assaulted, sexually abused, or had sexual contact with Plaintiff in violation of the laws of the State of New York, including New York’s Penal Law Article 130.

51. Specifically, the abuse included, but was not limited to, Abuser fondling Plaintiff’s bare genitals.

52. Said sexual abuse occurred multiple times at Abuser’s home following baseball games, as Abuser used the leadership role he held at the Kingdom Hall to create a youth organization and baseball team amongst infant members of the congregation. Upon information and belief, Abuser’s home was located off of Fordham Road in Bronx, New York.

53. Abuser held a notorious reputation within the Kingdom Hall and surrounding neighborhood for being inappropriate with other infant male members. Other members of the congregation confronted Plaintiff about whether Abuser had inappropriately touched Plaintiff too. Plaintiff also recalls various young men accusing the Abuser publicly of sexual abuse. Eventually, a family at the Kingdom Hall accused Abuser of having sexually abused their son. Upon information and belief, Abuser was forced to move upstate due to such repeated accusations.

54. At all times material to this complaint, Abuser was under the direct supervision, employ, or control of the Defendants.

55. The Defendants knew, or reasonably should have known, or knowingly condoned, or covered up, the inappropriate and unlawful sexual activities of Abuser.

56. The Defendants negligently or recklessly believed Abuser was fit to work with children, that any previous problems Abuser had were fixed and cured, that Abuser would not sexually molest children, and that Abuser would not injure children.

57. The Defendants had the responsibility to supervise and direct their employees or agents serving at the Kingdom Hall, and specifically had a duty not to aid individuals such as Abuser by assigning, maintaining, or appointing, them to positions with unfettered access to minors.

58. By holding Abuser out as safe to work with children and undertaking the custody, supervision, and care of minor Plaintiff as a congregation member, the Defendants entered a fiduciary relationship with Plaintiff. As a result of Plaintiff being a vulnerable minor and the Defendants undertaking his care and guidance, the Defendants held a distinct position of power over Plaintiff.

59. By holding themselves out as being able to provide a safe environment for children, the Defendants sought and accepted this position of power over Plaintiff. This empowerment prevented then minor Plaintiff from effectively protecting himself. As a result, the Defendants entered a fiduciary relationship with Plaintiff.

60. The Defendants had a special relationship with Plaintiff.

61. The Defendants owed Plaintiff a duty of reasonable care because the Defendants had knowledge about the risk that Abuser posed to Plaintiff, the risk of abuse in general in their programs, and the risks that their facilities posed to minor children.

62. The Defendants owed Plaintiff a duty of reasonable care because they sought out youth or their parents or guardians for participation in their programs; encouraged youth and their parents or guardians to have the youth participate in their programs; undertook custody of said youth; promoted their facilities and programs as being safe for children; held their agents, out as safe to work with children; encouraged youth and their parents or guardians to spend time with their agents; and encouraged their agents, to spend time with, interact with, and welcome children.

63. The Defendants owed Plaintiff a duty to protect Plaintiff from harm because the Defendants' actions created a foreseeable risk of harm to Plaintiff.

64. At all times material to this complaint, the Defendants, or their agents, or their employees, were responsible and liable for each other's negligent actions and omissions via, but not limited to, *respondeat superior*. However, Plaintiff does not allege that the doctrine of *respondeat superior* applies directly to intentional acts of sexual assault or sexual abuse alleged of the individual perpetrator identified in this complaint.

65. The Defendants' breach of its duties include, but are not limited to: failure to have sufficient policies and procedures to prevent child sexual abuse, failure to properly implement the policies and procedures to prevent child sexual abuse, failure to take reasonable measures to make sure that the policies and procedures to prevent child sexual abuse were working, failure to adequately inform families and children of the risks of child sexual abuse, failure to investigate risks of child sexual abuse, failure to properly train the workers at institutions and programs within the Kingdom Hall, failure to protect children in their programs from child sexual abuse, failure to adhere to the applicable standard of care for child safety, failure to investigate the amount and type of information necessary to represent the institutions, programs, leaders and people as safe, failure to train their employees properly to identify signs of child molestation by fellow employees, failure

by relying on mental health professionals, or failure by relying on people who claimed that they could treat child molesters.

66. The Defendants also breached their duties to Plaintiff by failing to warn Plaintiff and Plaintiff's family of the risk Abuser posed and the risks of child sexual abuse by their employees or agents. The Defendants also failed to warn Plaintiff about any of the knowledge that they had about child sexual abuse.

67. The Defendants also violated a legal duty by failing to report known or suspected abuse of children by Abuser or their other agents to the police and law enforcement.

68. By employing Abuser at the Kingdom Hall or other facilities and programs under their supervision, the Defendants, through their agents, affirmatively represented to minor children and their families that Abuser did not pose a threat to children, did not have a history of molesting children, that the Defendants did not know that Abuser had a history of molesting children, and that the Defendants did not know Abuser was a danger to children. Plaintiff and Plaintiff's family were induced to rely on these affirmations and did rely on them.

69. At no time did the Defendants ever send an official, investigator, or any employee or independent contractor to advise or provide any form of notice to the Kingdom Hall members or their families, either verbally or in writing, that there were credible allegations against Abuser and to request anyone who saw, suspected, or suffered sexual abuse, to come forward and file a report with the police department. Rather, the Defendants remained silent.

70. The Defendants, as educational and youth program administrators, violated various New York statutes, including, but not limited to N.Y. Soc. Serv. Law §§ 413 and 420, which require, *inter alia*, school officials, teachers, day care center workers, providers of family or group family day care, and any other childcare worker to report suspected cases of child abuse and impose liability for failure to report.

71. As a result of Defendants' conduct described herein, Plaintiff has and will continue to suffer personal physical and psychological injuries, including but not limited to great pain of mind and body; severe and permanent emotional distress; physical manifestations of emotional distress; problems sleeping and concentrating; low self-confidence, low self-respect, and low self-esteem; feelings of worthlessness, shamefulness, and embarrassment; feeling alone and isolated; losing faith in authority figures; feeling estranged from religion; struggling with gainful employment and career advancement; problems with academic performance; struggling with drug and alcohol problems; feeling helpless and hopeless; problems with sexual and emotional intimacy; relationship problems; trust issues; feeling confused and angry; depression; anxiety; feeling dirty, used, and damaged; experiencing traumatic flashbacks; and invasive feelings that his childhood and innocence were stolen. Plaintiff was prevented and will continue to be prevented from performing Plaintiff's normal daily activities; has incurred and will continue to incur expenses for medical and psychological treatment, therapy, and counseling; and, on information and belief, has incurred and will continue to incur loss of income or loss of earning capacity. As a victim of Defendants' misconduct, Plaintiff is unable at this time to fully describe all the details of that abuse and the extent of the harm Plaintiff suffered as a result.

72. The injuries and damages suffered by Plaintiff are specific in kind to Plaintiff, special, peculiar, and above and beyond those injuries and damages suffered by the public.

NATURE OF ALLEGED CONDUCT

73. This action alleges physical, psychological, and emotional injuries suffered as a result of conduct which would constitute a sexual offense on a minor as defined in Article 130 of the New York Penal Law, including without limitation, conduct constituting sexual abuse (consisting of sexual contact) (N.Y. Penal Law §§ 130.55 - 130.77).

74. The limitation of liability set forth in CPLR Art. 16 is not applicable to the claim of personal injury alleged herein, by reason of one or more of the exemptions provided in CPLR § 1602, including without limitation, that Defendants acted, with reckless disregard for the safety of Plaintiff, or knowingly, or intentionally, in concert with its agents and employees, to retain and permit Abuser mentioned herein unfettered and prolonged unsupervised access to children.

FIRST CAUSE OF ACTION: NEGLIGENCE

75. Plaintiff repeats and realleges by reference every allegation set forth above as if fully set forth herein.

76. The Defendants knew or were negligent in not knowing Abuser posed a threat of sexual abuse to children.

77. Prior to the sexual abuse of Plaintiff, the Defendants knew or should have known that Abuser was unfit to work with children. The Defendants, by and through their agents, servants or employees knew, or should have known of Abuser's propensity to commit sexual abuse and of the risk to Plaintiff's safety. At the very least, the Defendants knew or should have known that they did not have sufficient information about whether their employees or those working within the Kingdom Hall, were safe or not.

78. The acts of Abuser described hereinabove were undertaken, or enabled by, or during the course, or within the scope of Abuser's employment, appointment, or agency with the Defendants.

79. The Defendants' willful, wanton, grossly negligent, or negligent, acts of commission or omission resulted directly or proximately in the damages set forth herein at length.

80. At all times material to this complaint, Abuser was under the direct supervision, employ, or control of the Defendants.

81. At all times material to this complaint, the Defendants' actions were willful, wanton, malicious, reckless, grossly negligent, and outrageous in their disregard for the rights and safety of Plaintiff.

82. The Defendants owed Plaintiff a duty of care because they had a special relationship with Plaintiff.

83. The Defendants had a duty arising from the special relationship that existed with Plaintiff, Plaintiff's parents or guardians, or the other parents or guardians of young, innocent, vulnerable children attending the Kingdom Hall, to properly train and supervise their elders, teachers, employees, or agents. This special relationship arose because of the high degree of vulnerability of those children, including Plaintiff, entrusted to their care. As a result of this high degree of vulnerability and risk of sexual abuse inherent in such a special relationship, the Defendants had a duty to establish measures of protection not necessary for people who are older and better able to protect themselves.

84. The Defendants owed Plaintiff a duty to protect Plaintiff from Abuser's sexual deviancy, before and after Abuser's misconduct.

85. By accepting custody of infant Plaintiff, the Defendants established an *in loco parentis* relationship with Plaintiff and in so doing, owed Plaintiff a duty to protect Plaintiff from injury. Further, the Defendants entered a fiduciary relationship with Plaintiff by undertaking the custody, supervision of, or care of infant Plaintiff. As a result of Plaintiff being an infant, and by the Defendants undertaking the care and guidance of Plaintiff, the Defendants also held a position of power over Plaintiff. Further, the Defendants, by holding themselves out as being able to provide a safe environment for children, solicited or accepted this position of power. The Defendants, through their employees or agents, exploited this power over Plaintiff and, thereby, put the infant Plaintiff at risk for sexual abuse.

86. By establishing and operating the Kingdom Hall, accepting infant Plaintiff as a participant in their programs, holding their facilities and programs out to be a safe environment for Plaintiff, accepting custody of infant Plaintiff *in loco parentis*, and by establishing a relationship with Plaintiff, the Defendants entered an express or implied duty to properly supervise Plaintiff and provide a reasonably safe environment for the children who participated in their programs. The Defendants had the duty to exercise the same degree of care over minors under their control as a reasonably prudent parent would have exercised under similar circumstances.

87. The Defendants breached the aforementioned duties they owed Plaintiff and was otherwise negligent.

88. The Defendants additionally violated a legal duty by failing to report to law enforcement known or suspected abuse of children by Abuser or their other agents.

89. The Defendants' actions or inactions created a foreseeable risk of harm to Plaintiff. As a vulnerable child participating in the programs and activities the Defendants offered to minors, Plaintiff was a foreseeable victim. Additionally, as a vulnerable child who Abuser had access to through the Defendants' facilities and programs, Plaintiff was a foreseeable victim.

90. The Defendants' conduct showed a reckless or willful disregard for the safety and well-being of Plaintiff and other children.

91. Defendants breached their duties to the Plaintiff and were otherwise negligent.

92. As a direct or indirect result of said conduct, Plaintiff has suffered the injuries and damages described herein.

93. By reason of the foregoing, Defendants are jointly, severally, or in the alternative, liable to Plaintiff for compensatory damages, and for punitive damages, together with interest and costs.

**SECOND CAUSE OF ACTION: NEGLIGENT HIRING, RETENTION,
SUPERVISION, OR DIRECTION**

94. Plaintiff repeats and realleges by reference every allegation set forth above as if fully set forth herein.

95. The Defendants hired Abuser.

96. The Defendants hired Abuser for positions that required Abuser to work closely with, mentor, supervise, and counsel young boys and girls.

97. The Defendants herein were negligent in hiring Abuser because the Defendants knew or should have known, through the exercise of reasonable care, of Abuser's propensity to develop inappropriate relationships with children in the Defendants' charge and to engage in sexual behavior and lewd and lascivious conduct with such children.

98. Abuser would not and could not have been in a position to sexually abuse Plaintiff had he not been hired by the Defendants to mentor and counsel children in the Kingdom Hall.

99. Abuser continued to sexually abuse Plaintiff while within the Kingdom Hall.

100. The harm complained of herein was foreseeable.

101. Plaintiff would not have suffered the foreseeable harm complained of herein but for the negligence of the Defendants in having placed Abuser, or allowed Abuser to remain, in his position.

102. At all times material to this complaint, while Abuser was employed or appointed by the Defendants, he was supervised by, under the direction of, or answerable to, the Defendants, or their agents or employees.

103. The Defendants were negligent in their direction or supervision of Abuser as the Defendants knew or should have known, through the exercise of ordinary care, that Abuser's conduct would subject third parties to an unreasonable risk of harm, including Abuser's propensity

to develop inappropriate relationships with children under his charge and to engage in sexual behavior and lewd and lascivious conduct with such children.

104. The Defendants failed to take steps to prevent such conduct from occurring.

105. The Defendants were negligent in its retention of Abuser as the Defendants knew, or should have known, through the exercise of reasonable care, of his propensity to develop inappropriate relationships with children under his charge and to engage in sexual behavior and lewd and lascivious conduct with such children.

106. The Defendants retained Abuser in his position as mentor and counselor to such children and thus left him in a position to continue such behavior.

107. Abuser would not and could not have been in a position to sexually abuse Plaintiff had he not been negligently retained, supervised, or directed by the Defendants as a mentor and counselor to their infant congregation members, including Plaintiff.

108. The Defendants breached their duty of care to the Plaintiff and was otherwise negligent.

109. As a direct or indirect result of said negligence, Plaintiff has suffered the injuries and damages described herein.

110. By reason of the foregoing, Defendants are jointly, severally, or in the alternative, liable to Plaintiff for compensatory damages, and for punitive damages, together with interest and costs.

**THIRD CAUSE OF ACTION: BREACH OF STATUTORY DUTY TO REPORT
ABUSE UNDER SOC. SERV. LAW §§ 413 and 420**

111. Plaintiff repeats and realleges by reference every allegation set forth as if fully set forth herein.

112. Pursuant to N.Y. Soc. Serv. Law §§ 413 and 420, Defendants as educational and youth program administrators, by and through, including but not limited to their principals, agents, or employees, had a statutorily imposed duty to report or cause to report abuse or maltreatment of children in their care, or parents, guardians, custodians, or other persons legally responsible for such children that otherwise came before them in their official capacity, when Defendants had reasonable cause to suspect abuse or maltreatment of such children.

113. Defendants breached that duty by negligently, knowingly, or willfully failing to report or causing to report reasonable suspicion of abuse or maltreatment of such children, and Plaintiff in particular.

114. As a direct or indirect result of said conduct, Plaintiff has suffered injuries and damages described herein.

115. By reason of the foregoing, Defendants, jointly, severally, or in the alternative, are liable to Plaintiff for compensatory damages, and for punitive damages, together with interest and costs.

FOURTH CAUSE OF ACTION – PREMISES LIABILITY

116. Plaintiff repeats and realleges by reference every allegation set forth above as if fully set forth herein.

117. Defendants were negligent in the use and or maintenance of its property as alleged hereinabove.

118. Defendants owned or controlled the property on which Plaintiff was harmed. As the owner and occupier of the property, Defendants were under a duty to manage and act reasonably to control property and guests to prevent injury from amongst other things, foreseeable sexual assault.

119. Defendants breached its duty to Plaintiff by permitting Abuser to sexually assault Plaintiff, a young child, on Defendants' premises.

120. As described above, the actions or omissions of Defendants, their agents, servants, or employees were conducted in a negligent, or grossly negligent manner.

121. Defendants' actions and/or omissions endangered Plaintiff's safety and caused him to fear for his safety.

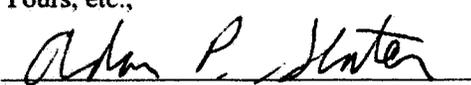
122. As a direct and proximate result of Defendants' actions or omissions which included by were not limited to negligent and/or grossly negligent conduct, Plaintiff suffered the severe injuries and damages described herein, including but not limited to mental and emotional distress.

123. By reason of the foregoing, Defendants are liable to Plaintiff for compensatory damages and for punitive damages, together with interest and costs.

WHEREFORE, it is respectfully requested that the Court grant judgment in this action in favor of Plaintiff, and against Defendants, jointly and severally, in a sum of money exceeding the jurisdictional limits of all lower courts which would otherwise have jurisdiction, together with all applicable interest, costs, disbursements, as well as punitive damages and such other, further, and different relief as the Court in its discretion shall deem to be just, proper, and equitable.

Plaintiff further places Defendants on notice and reserves the right to interpose claims sounding in Fraudulent Concealment, Deceptive Practices, or Civil Conspiracy should the facts and discovery materials support such claims.

Dated: New York, New York
August 4, 2021

Yours, etc.,

By: Adam P. Slater, Esq.
SLATER SLATER SCHULMAN LLP
Counsel for Plaintiff
488 Madison Avenue, 20th Floor
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FILED: BRONX COUNTY CLERK 03/11/2022 03:14 PM

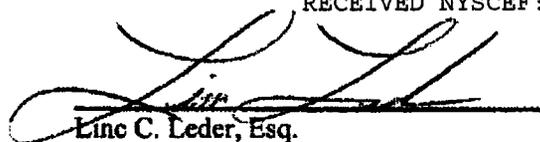
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RECEIVED NYSCEF: 03/11/2022

NYSCEF DOC. NO. 1

RECEIVED NYSCEF: 08/04/2021



Linc C. Leder, Esq.
SLATER SLATER SCHULMAN LLP
Counsel for Plaintiff
488 Madison Avenue, 20th Floor
New York, New York 10022
(212) 922-0906

ATTORNEY'S VERIFICATION

Adam P. Slater, an attorney duly admitted to practice law in the Courts of the State of New York, hereby affirms the following statements to be true under the penalties of perjury, pursuant to Rule 2106 of the CPLR:

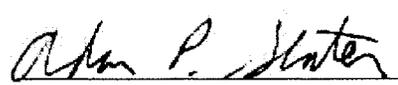
Affirmant is a partner of SLATER SLATER SCHULMAN, LLP, attorneys for Plaintiff in the within action;

Affirmant has read the foregoing Summons & Complaint and knows the contents thereof; that the same is true to his own knowledge, except as to the matters therein stated to be alleged upon information and belief, and that as to those matters he believes it to be true.

Affirmant further states that the source of his information and the grounds for his belief are derived from interviews with Plaintiff and from the file maintained in the normal course of business.

Affirmant further states that the reason this verification is not made by Plaintiff is that Plaintiff is not presently within the County of New York, which is the county wherein the attorneys for Plaintiff herein maintain their offices.

Dated: New York, New York
August 4, 2021


Adam P. Slater, Esq.

SUPREME COURT OF THE STATE NEW YORK
COUNTY OF BRONX

-----X

ANDRE DEJESUS,

Index No.: 70307/2021E

Plaintiff,

-against-

THE GOVERNING BODY OF JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES,
WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF
PENNSYLVANIA, WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT
SOCIETY OF NEW YORK, INC., and CRESTON KINGDOM
HALL OF JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES,

Defendants.

-----X

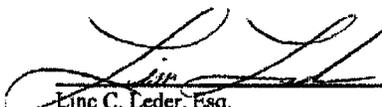
SUMMONS & VERIFIED COMPLAINT

Slater Slater Schulman LLP
Attorneys for Plaintiff
488 Madison Avenue, 20th Floor
New York, New York 10022
(212) 922-0906

CERTIFICATION

Pursuant to 22 NYCRR §130-1.1-a, the undersigned, an attorney duly admitted to practice in the courts of the State of New York, certifies that, upon information and belief, and reasonable inquiry, the contentions contained in the annexed document are not frivolous as defined in subsection (c) of the aforesaid section.


Adam P. Slater, Esq.


Eric C. Leder, Esq.

SUPREME COURT OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK
COUNTY OF BRONX

-----X
ANDRE DEJESUS,

Plaintiff/Petitioner,

- against -

Index No.: 70307/2021E

THE GOVERNING BODY OF JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES,
WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF
PENNSYLVANIA, WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT
SOCIETY OF NEW YORK, INC., and CRESTON
KINGDOM HALL OF JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES,

Defendant/Respondent.
-----X

**NOTICE OF ELECTRONIC FILING
(Mandatory Case)
(Uniform Rule § 202.5-bb)**

You have received this Notice because:

- 1) The Plaintiff/Petitioner, whose name is listed above, has filed this case using the New York State Courts E-filing system ("NYSCEF"), and
- 2) You are a Defendant/Respondent (a party) in this case.

• If you are represented by an attorney:

Give this Notice to your attorney. (Attorneys: see "Information for Attorneys" pg. 2).

• If you are not represented by an attorney:

You will be served with all documents in paper and you must serve and file your documents in paper, unless you choose to participate in e-filing.

If you choose to participate in e-filing, you must have access to a computer and a scanner or other device to convert documents into electronic format, a connection to the internet, and an e-mail address to receive service of documents.

The benefits of participating in e-filing include:

- serving and filing your documents electronically
- free access to view and print your e-filed documents
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To register for e-filing or for more information about how e-filing works:

- visit: www.nycourts.gov/efile-unrepresented or
- contact the Clerk's Office or Help Center at the court where the case was filed. Court contact information can be found at www.nycourts.gov

To find legal information to help you represent yourself visit www.nycourthelp.gov

**Information for Attorneys
(E-filing is Mandatory for Attorneys)**

An attorney representing a party who is served with this notice must either:

- 1) immediately record his or her representation within the e-filed matter on the NYSCEF site www.nycourts.gov/efile ; or
- 2) file the Notice of Opt-Out form with the clerk of the court where this action is pending and serve on all parties. Exemptions from mandatory e-filing are limited to attorneys who certify in good faith that they lack the computer hardware and/or scanner and/or internet connection or that they lack (along with all employees subject to their direction) the knowledge to operate such equipment. [Section 202.5-bb(e)]

For additional information about electronic filing and to create a NYSCEF account, visit the NYSCEF website at www.nycourts.gov/efile or contact the NYSCEF Resource Center (phone: 646-386-3033; e-mail: efile@nycourts.gov).

Dated: Aug 31, 2021

Adam P. Slater, Esq.
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To: ALL DEFENDANTS

6/6/18