

## Philly abuse trial: Prosecution rests its case

Brian Roewe | May. 18, 2012 NCR Today

After eight weeks, the prosecution in the trial against two Philadelphia priests has rested its case.

[From the Philadelphia Inquirer](#) [1]:

After calling nearly 50 witnesses and presenting close to 1,900 documents over eight weeks, prosecutors on Thursday rested their case in the landmark trial involving child sex abuse by Archdiocese of Philadelphia priests.

The team of district attorneys ended by letting jurors handle what they contend is the closest thing to a smoking gun in the case: a tattered gray folder that had been hidden in a locked safe at archdiocesan offices for more than a decade.

Inside were handwritten and typed records, including a list that Msgr. William J. Lynn drafted in 1994 naming about three dozen priests who had admitted or were accused of sexual misconduct with minors, and other documents suggesting the church was girding against a possible wave of lawsuits.

The trial against Lynn is the first charging a U.S. church official not for sexual abuse, but for the cover-up of such abuse.

Though Lynn and co-defendant the Rev. James J. Brennan were initially charged with conspiracy, the Inquirer reported that Judge M. Teresa Sarmina dismissed those charges Thursday, saying the prosecution failed to prove a conspiracy between the two. Lynn still faces one charge of conspiracy with former co-defendant defrocked priest Edward Avery.

Brennan stands accused of attempted rape of a 14-year-old boy in 1996, and Lynn faces charges of child endangerment, for allowing Brennan and Avery to remain in ministry despite abuse allegations against them. Before the trial began, Avery pleaded guilty to a 1999 sexual assault of an altar boy.

The defense will begin its case Tuesday, still uncertain if Lynn will take the stand.

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[1] [http://www.philly.com/philly/news/20120518\\_Prosecutors\\_rest\\_in\\_Philly\\_clergy\\_sex\\_abuse\\_trial.html](http://www.philly.com/philly/news/20120518_Prosecutors_rest_in_Philly_clergy_sex_abuse_trial.html)