

RIVERSIDE: Ex-detective sentenced for molestation

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A retired Riverside police detective and Christian ministry chief is called a “master of deceit”



Booking photo for Granville Douglas "Bud" Kelley Jr.

A retired Riverside police detective who had organized a law enforcement ministry and served on the board of a Christian school was sentenced to 24 years in prison Tuesday for nine felony counts of child molestation.

Granville Douglas "Bud" Kelley Jr., 74, had pleaded guilty to the counts last month in a plea agreement with prosecutors.

He tearfully apologized after members of one of the two female victims' families addressed him in court, as well as one of the victims.

"The pain he has put me through, and my family, is sickening," the now-teenage girl told Riverside County Superior Court Judge Becky L. Dugan.

The girl's father called Kelley a "master of deceit" for the way the retired officer used his reputation in law enforcement and his Christian faith to insinuate his way into friendship with the family.

"He was a Marine. He was a well-known and honored detective, he was a deacon ... He was on the board of a Christian school," the father said. "And Bud and I shared a common faith in Christ."

Realizing Kelley had molested his daughter "made me feel powerless," the man told Dugan. "It's my job as the father to protect my kids," the man said, his voice faltering. "I didn't protect her."

The father said reassurances it was not his fault did not help.

The Press-Enterprise does not routinely identify victims of sexual assault, nor disclose the identities of those who could be linked to them, such as the name of the victim's father.

"I am tragically sorry for what I did," Kelley said in a tearful address to the family.

"I can't undo it," he said. "I believe the God I love and serve will forgive me. And I do pray that someday all of you will forgive me."

Dugan assured the family they had no fault in what took place.

"You can't see this stuff. They hide intentionally," she said of child molesters such as Kelley.

“They are often pillars of our community. ... Mr. Kelley is going to have to spend the next 24 years of his life — and he’ll die very likely in prison — trying to figure out what inside him is such a monster.”

The two victims have been described as about 7 years old when the molestations took place between seven and eight years ago.

Kelley was originally charged with six counts of child molestation but pleaded guilty to an amended complaint of nine charges.

Deputy District Attorney Mike Carney, who prosecuted the case, paused at the courtroom door after the sentencing to watch as Kelley, shackles rattling, was escorted away by sheriff’s deputies.

“More than one person has said he is a fraud all the way around,” Carney later said of Kelley’s statement. “Only he knows if he is genuine or not. He has betrayed so many people over the years.”

Under rules for the charges to which he pleaded, Kelley will have to serve at least 20 years and six months of his sentence, Carney said.

“I think a lengthier sentence would have been justified,” Carney said, “But this was the best balance of punishing him while avoiding having the girls go through the trauma of a trial.”

The girl who first reported the incidents went to police July 1. She said a recent event in her life prompted her to tell her mother about Kelley.

Kelley was a 30-year department veteran. He served five years in the U.S. Marines, joined the Riverside Police Department in 1960 and was in the detective bureau for 22 years before he retired in 1990.

In recent years he started a ministry for law enforcement and served as a board member for Riverside Christian Schools. He was suspended and eventually removed after the charges were filed.