

Former Cop Now Convicted Child Molester

Ex-cop gets maximum sentence

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JACKSONVILLE, Fla. -- Richard Cannon asked for mercy as he read a tearful apology on the stand. "Even though I deserve punishment, I'm asking the court to have mercy in deciding my fate," he said.

But the tears came too little, too late. Cannon was given the maximum sentence for his crimes. Thirty years in prison, followed by 15 years probation, for sexually abusing two young girls.

Assistant State Attorney Theresa Simak didn't mince words with Cannon while he was on the stand. She asked him, "Mr. Cannon, you have been molesting children for almost the entirety of your career at JSO, is that correct?"

Cannon spent 25 years working as a police officer with the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office.

Simak said, "The point we're trying to prove is we don't care if you're a sheriff's officer, a teacher, a priest. You are not going to be able to molest children in the city of Jacksonville. We just won't stand for that."

She said he used his badge to intimidate his victims, both of whom were under the age of 12. The girls wrote letters for Simak to read to the judge.

One victim said, "It is harder to trust people because of the abuse."

Another said, "I couldn't stand for anyone to tell me I was beautiful, because he used to. And it immediately made me sick to my stomach."

Simak said Cannon's actions have scarred those girls for life. And now, the man who was once a highly-regarded police officer, can spend the rest of his life regretting what he's done. "My selfish actions have caused countless tears," said Cannon.

Richard Cannon is 50 years old. Friday's sentence amounts to a life sentence.

He was convicted of abusing the two girls but during the investigation, a third victim was discovered. That woman, now 31 years old, said Cannon abused her for years starting when she was just 10.

Cannon was not charged with that crime because of the statute of limitations.

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