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## Sister cathy cesnik crime scene photos

Tag: cathy cesnikimage via Netflixin a case that’s becoming more worthy of its own Netflix show every month, police have now determined that DNA from a late priest named as a suspect in Sister Cathy Cesnik’s 1969 murder in Baltimore County doesn’t match with DNA found at the crime scene.Baltimore County police exhumed Father A. Joseph Maskell’s body more than two months ago as part of an investigation of a Baltimore nun’s unsolved 1969 killing, according to media reports.Netflix has released the official trailer for its new documentary series exploring the cover-up of the 1969 murder of Baltimore nun Sister Catherine Cesnik.report this ad From the BALTIMORE SUN/CITY PAPER 45 Years Later, the Search for Answers Goes On. COURTESY THE SETON KEOUGH HIGH SCHOOL COURTESY THE SETON KEOUGH HIGH SCHOOL COURTESY DON MALECKI COURTESY JOHN ROEMER YEARBOOK: (from top) Photographs of Sister Catherine Cesnik, Father A. Joseph Maskell, Joyce Malecki, and Baltimore County Police Capt. Bud Roemer dating from around the time Cesnik and Malecki were murdered. By Tom Nugent The old man sat on a metal folding chair in his Essex garage. His big right hand reached out to a wooden table, to a faded police autopsy photo lying there. “Do you see that hole in the back of her skull?” asked Louis George “Bud” Roemer, a retired homicide detective formerly with the Baltimore County Police Department. Wrinkled and white-haired, he pointed to one side of the yellowing photograph he had dug out of a box of files. “That hole is perfectly round, and about the size of a quarter.”I’ve studied that photo over and over again, trying to imagine how she might have died,” he said. “A hole like that—it looks to me like it could’ve been made with a ball-peen hammer.”He paused for a moment, as he recalled the still unsolved murder of Sister Catherine Ann Cesnik, whose body was discovered 35 years ago this month. “It might have been a hammer,” Roemer continued. “Or maybe a tire iron. Or maybe it was a priest’s ring—one of those heavy gold rings a lot of Catholic priests wear. A priest’s ring would make a hole like that, if he hit her hard enough.” He fell silent, and leaned back in his chair. He was struggling with diabetes, he said, and talking about the Cesnik case always left him feeling fatigued, and frustrated. “Every homicide cop has one case that haunts him to the end of his career, and Sister Cathy is mine,” Roemer said. “I sure do wish we could close this one out, before I kick the bucket.” The body of the 26-year-old nun was found Jan. 3, 1970, in southwest Baltimore County. The circumstances surrounding the case were mysterious and disturbing at the time; in the wake of a City Paper investigation, those circumstances seem even more disturbing now. Years after Cesnik’s murder, a lawsuit documented numerous findings of sexual abuse at the Catholic high school for girls where Cesnik taught shortly before her death. City Paper’s investigation also reveals that a second young murder victim (killed only four days after Cesnik vanished, and only a few miles from where the nun died) attended the same Catholic church where the alleged sex-abuser had been serving as parish priest. The baffling crimes both remain unsolved to this day. And yet the FBI and Baltimore County Police Department—both of which have recently opened formal reinvestigations into the killings—say they haven’t attempted to make any connection between them. Roemer helped to solve more than 150 murders during his 23 years as a county cop before retiring as a major in 1975. But he never found the killer of Sister Catherine Ann Cesnik; he died of complications from diabetes on June 10, at age 79. But in interviews conducted before his death, he found these so-far-unexamined connections deeply upsetting. “The more you look at the Cesnik murder case, the more it looks like somebody was trying to cover something up,” he said. “There was something wrong at the Catholic high school where Sister Cathy taught,” Roemer said while reviewing evidence previously unknown to him. “What you had there was a whole lot of sex going on among priests and students. Can you imagine the scandal, in 1970, if that stuff had ever come out in a trial? Hell, it could have blown the lid right off the Church! It doesn’t make any sense to me. Never did. No, there was something going on at that school, and it all came to a head. And when it did, Sister Cathy wound up on the garbage dump with her skull caved in.” Bud Roemer always drank his coffee black. He was in the middle of his third or fourth cup on the morning of Jan. 3, 1970—a Saturday—when the telephone rang: “Captain Roemer, it’s for you. Halethorpe Precinct.” Roemer picked up the phone. As the commander of the “M Squad”—the Major Crimes Investigative Unit at Baltimore County Police headquarters in Towson—he was in charge of all criminal investigations involving murder, rape, and armed robbery. It had been a busy week. Along with their usual caseload of tavern stabbings and liquor store holdups, the dozen officers in the M Squad had been doing their best to help out with a continuing Baltimore City Police investigation into the strange disappearance of youthful teaching nun, Sister Cathy Cesnik, two months before. In heavily Catholic Baltimore, the apparent abduction of a well-liked, attractive member of the School Sisters of Notre Dame was big news. Day after day, The Sun and News-American had been giving the story prominent play, while running one dramatic headline after the next: “City Police Search for Missing Nun: 26 Officers Combing Area With K-9 Corps Dogs.” Described by students and fellow teachers alike as a dedicated, enthusiastic English and drama teacher, Cesnik had vanished on Nov. 7 during a brief, early evening trip to a shopping center about a mile from the Westgate apartment she shared with another Notre Dame nun, Sister Helen Russell Phillips. For almost two months, state and local police investigators had been unable to find a trace of her. The caller was an excited uniformed police officer in the Halethorpe Precinct of the county police department. Talking fast, the officer told the M Squad captain that two hunters had just called to report what looked like a “woman’s body” lying near a garbage dump off Monumental Avenue, in an isolated, wooded area in the southwest Baltimore County community of Lansdowne. Moments later, Roemer and several members of the M Squad climbed into one of the department’s unmarked black Plymouths for the 20-mile ride to Lansdowne. “It was snowing when we got to the dump, and cold as a sonofabitch,” the detective recalled in the spring of 2004. “The body was pretty much covered by snow, but it didn’t take us long to figure out who she was. When I walked up on that dump, I said, ‘Hello, Cathy Cesnik.’ “She was lying on her back, on the slope of a little hill, with her purse and one shoe a few feet away. As soon as we opened the purse, we found a prescription bottle with her name printed on it. “We worked that crime scene all day long. We called in the medical examiner and we asked for an autopsy right away. We went through our standard procedure, that’s all. I guess we spent four or five hours out there, and it was nearly dark when we finally sent the body off to the morgue.” Like Roemer, retired Baltimore County Police Capt. James L. Scannell says he has never forgotten finding the nun’s body on the frozen field that day. “I remember her blue coat, and the purse nearby,” says the 74-year-old Scannell, who spent 37 years as a county police officer before retiring in 1992. “You gotta remember, she’d been laying out on the dump all this time, and the varmints had gotten to her,” Roemer added. “So whether she was raped or sexually molested, I don’t know. And I don’t think anybody ever will know, because the [Baltimore County] medical examiner reported [in his autopsy] that it was impossible to determine if the nun’s roommate—Sister Helen Russell Phillips—had not called the police after becoming alarmed when Cesnik failed to return from the brief shopping trip by 11 p.m. Instead, Phillips had phoned a Catholic priest living in a Jesuit community known as Manresa, located near Annapolis. Within a few minutes, Jesuit Father Gerard J. (“Gerry”) Koob—accompanied by a second Catholic brother, Peter McKeon—climbed into his car and drove to the Carriage House Apartments. Koob and McKeon questioned Phillips about Cesnik’s shopping trip, and somewhere between midnight and 1 a.m. the three of them called the police and gave them a telephone report describing the nun’s disappearance. After several more hours of conversation, they decided to take a walk around the neighborhood in order to calm their nerves. Around 4 a.m., while walking, they spotted Cesnik’s green Ford Maverick, parked at an odd angle, directly adjacent to the Carriage House parking lot. Roemer listened carefully to all of this and quickly decided that he didn’t like it. “We made the decision that it was time to ‘put the heat on Koob,’” he said in the spring of 2004. During the many hours of interrogation that followed, Roemer asked the Jesuit priest again and again: “What, exactly, was the nature of your relationship with Sister Cathy Cesnik?” At first, Roemer recalled, Father Koob insisted that the two were simply good friends who enjoyed a great deal of purely “platonic affection” for each other. “That’s fine,” he told the priest. “But why would Sister Russell have called you instead of the police after Cathy disappeared that night?” Roemer understood the reason better a few days later, after visiting Father Koob’s residence at the Manresa Jesuit community. There, he said, he came across a letter Cesnik had written to the priest on Nov. 3, only a few days before she disappeared. (In an interview, Koob told City Paper he willingly gave the letter to the detective, in order to help the police with their investigation.) Roemer read the letter, which did not reach Koob until after the nun’s murder, and concluded that the actual relationship between nun and priest had been far from platonic. Interestingly enough, the letter begins with a reference to a song about what might happen if the nun suddenly vanished: My very dearest Gerry, “If Ever I Should Leave You” is playing on the radio. I’m all curled up in bed. My ‘period’ has finally arrived, ten days late. . . . So you might say I’m moody. . . . My heart aches so for you. The letter goes on to outline Cesnik’s struggle with her relationship with Koob: I must wait on you—your time and your need—even more than I had before. . . . I think I can begin to live with that more easily now than I did two months ago, just loving you. . . . within myself. . . . Regardless, Cesnik had a future outside the church with the priest firmly in mind: “I must tell you, I want you within me. I want to have your children. . . .” When Roemer showed the priest the letter, the detective later recalled, Koob “quickly broke down and admitted he was having sex with the nun. That didn’t make any difference to me, of course—that was their business. But it did put me on guard, because it told me that the Catholic Church would have a whole lot to lose, if that letter should ever get out.” But Koob, though a 63-year-old married Methodist minister living in another state, has insists that he never had a physical relationship of any kind with Sister Cathy Cesnik. She lies buried on the side of a steep hill in Sharpsburg, Pa., a threadbare suburban town directly across the Allegheny River from Pittsburgh. Her granite headstone offers the eye only four stone-carved words: sister catherine cesnik ssd 1942-1969. Her father, Joseph Cesnik, a former Pittsburgh postal worker, rests a few feet higher up the slope, along with several of his Slovenian-American ancestors. Cathy Cesnik’s cousin Gregory Cesnik, now 46, attended his aunt’s burial service in January 1970. “I was only 12 years old at the time,” recalls Gregory Cesnik, today a certified public accountant. “But I’ve never forgotten the sorrow everybody felt or the look of anguish on her father’s face.” Shrouded in snow on a recent winter morning, St. Mary’s Cemetery could be seen only dimly from the Lawrenceville section of Pittsburgh, on the other side of the slate-gray river. It was here, in a crowded neighborhood punctuated by half a dozen clattering steel mills, that Catherine Ann Cesnik lived out her 1950s childhood. Early each morning during the school year, Cathy and her sisters left their family’s modest bungalow at 10233 Downlook St. and walked half a mile to the tiny parochial school that adjoined St. Mary’s Assumption on 57th Street. There she absorbed a thoroughly typical 1950s Catholic grade-school education—the kind of prayer-laced, deeply reverent tutelage provided in that era by the School Sisters of Notre Dame teaching order of nuns, who operated the school during Cathy’s childhood. Intensely religious, Cathy was deeply impressed by some of her dedicated Notre Dame teachers—so impressed that by the time she moved on to St. Augustine Catholic High School in 1956 she was already thinking about entering the Notre Dame convent and becoming a School Sister herself. After graduating, Cathy entered the Baltimore Province convent of the School Sisters of Notre Dame on Sept. 29, 1960, as a “postulant,” or candidate for the sisterhood. After seven years of study, she professed her “final vows” on July 21, 1967. The youthful nun had already begun her teaching career in 1965 at the newly opened Archbishop Keough High School for Girls on Caton Avenue in Southwest Baltimore. During the next four years, she would teach English and drama to several hundred students from the mostly working- class, Irish-American community nearby. Gemma Hoskins, who would later enjoy a 30-year career as a public-school teacher—she was “Maryland Teacher of the Year” in 1992—remembers Cesnik as a deeply inspirational figure and a “terrific” teacher. “Catherine Cesnik is the reason I became a teacher,” says Hoskins, 52, today. “I still regard her as the finest teacher I ever had.” More than a dozen other former Keough students described Cesnik as an outstanding teacher. “She was our ‘Pied Piper,’” said one, “the kind of teacher you never forget.” Although Cesnik loved teaching, she appeared to be struggling with some inner turmoil during the spring of 1969. “To me, she seemed stressed out, perhaps even on the edge of a nervous breakdown,” one former student who asked not to be identified says. “She was exhausted and extremely nervous, and she missed a lot of school during the spring months.” One of the possible reasons behind Cesnik’s apparent stress became clearer in June of that year, when she asked permission from her Notre Dame superiors to enter a period of “exclauration,” an experiment in which she would live outside the convent, while also substituting civilian dress—skirts, blouses, dresses—for the traditional nun’s habit. Permission was granted and Cesnik moved into a two-bedroom apartment at the Carriage House on North Bend Road. At the same time, the nun decided on a second experiment: Instead of teaching at Keough during the 1969-70 school year, she would serve as a “missionary” teacher at a public school, Western High. During the first few months of that school year, Cesnik shared her Carriage House apartment with a friend and fellow nun, Sister Helen Russell Phillips, who had also stopped wearing the habit and was also teaching at Western. In interviews with City Paper, two former Keough st dents remembered their frequent visits to Cesnik at her Carriage House apartment, only a few months before she died. “I was also friends with Sister Russell, her friend and roommate, when they moved to the apartment on North Bend Road,” Kathey Payne of Ellicott City recalls. “I visited them there during that summer and I did some sewing for Sister Russell.” Did one or more of the students who were visiting Cesnik’s apartment in the summer and fall of 1969 tell her about the sexual abuse that was taking place at the school? One former student later recounted in a City Paperinterview how she had gone to Cesnik for help after being abused by a priest at Keough, but the most startling evidence comes from now-retired Sister Mary Florita, a former School Sisters of Notre Dame teaching nun. “I knew several of the kids at Keough,” says Marian Weller of Harrisburg, Pa., the former Sister Mary Florita. “And one of them described to me how three or four girls who were being abused by this priest had gone to Sister Cathy for help. There’s no question but that she knew about the abuse that was taking place during the months leading up to her death.” Interviewed at length by City Paper, Koob essentially repeated what he’d told Roemer 35 years ago. He says he and Brother Peter McKeon immediately drove to the Carriage House. He says they talked with Sister Helen and then phoned the police to report Cesnik as a “missing person” somewhere between midnight and 1 a.m. A few hours later, around 4 a.m., Father Koob took a walk with the other priest and blundered into Cesnik’s car near the Carriage House. Koob says that there were no indications that a struggle had taken place in the Ford. “When we discovered the car, I was careful and I told [McKeon] to be careful,” Koob tells City Paper. “I think we both saw a little wastebasket spilled over—but that did not suggest a struggle to me. I believe Cathy would have frozen up and not struggled.” For his part, Roemer was convinced that the absence of signs of struggle in the car clearly suggested that “whoever killed Sister Cathy had to be someone who knew her. That’s the only thing that makes sense, once you remember that her car was returned to her apartment complex after she was killed.” Koob passed two separate lie-detector tests soon after the murder. His alibi—he had eaten dinner and taken in the movie Easy Rider with his priest friend in Annapolis before the call from Sister Helen—proved airtight. According to Baltimore County Police investigators then and now, Koob has never been a suspect in the murder. But some former police detectives continued to believe Koob knows more about what happened that night than he has told investigators. Even more troubling, two retired investigators tell City Paper that while they were “putting the heat” on Koob, Catholic Church officials conferred with high-ranking police officials about the canon. “We thought Koob was about to break,” retired Baltimore City homicide investigator Harry Bannon says. “And then the church lawyers stepped in and they talked to the higher-ups at the police department. And we were told, ‘Either charge Koob with a crime or let him go. Stop harassing him.’ “After that, we had to break away from him,” Bannon continues. “And that was a shame, because I’m sure Koob knew more than he was telling. We never did solve the case, and I think part of the reason was that we had to back away from Koob.” Roemer agreed that his murder investigation “seemed to dry up” after Koob was allowed to walk away from the case. “Nobody ever told me to back off the investigation in order to protect the Catholic Church,” Roemer said. “And if they had, I wouldn’t have done it. But the word did come down from higher levels of the police department that we had to lay off Koob. And I couldn’t help wondering if maybe one of the Catholic officials had gotten to somebody high up in the police.” For his part, Koob continues to insist that he gave the police everything he knew about Cesnik. He also says she never told him about sexual abuse at Keough, or about any alleged threats against students or teachers who spoke out publicly against the abuse. In 1994, former Archdiocese of Baltimore spokesman William Blaul told reporters from The Sun that the church didn’t send lawyers to the Baltimore County Police Department to demand Koob be left alone. Current Archdiocese spokesman Sean Caine confirms that the Archdiocese did not interfere in the investigation. By the time Bud Roemer retired from the Baltimore County Police Department in 1975, the Cesnik murder case had gone completely cold. For the next 20 years, the files and the evidence in the sensational killing would gather dust in a back room at police headquarters in Towson. And then the case suddenly flared up again in 1994 after more than 30 men and women with firsthand knowledge of alleged abuse came forward to offer testimony in a shocking \$40 million lawsuit. The suit sought damages for two former Keough students who claimed to have been injured by rampant sexual abuse at the school. According to the lawsuit, the abuser had been the school chaplain, a Diocesan priest named A. (Anthony) Joseph Maskell. As listed in the plaintiffs’ formal complaint, the abuse included “vaginal intercourse, anal intercourse, cunnilingus, fellatio, vaginal penetration with a vibrator, administration of enemas, . . . hypnosis, threats of physical violence, coerced prostitution and other lewd acts, physically striking Plaintiff, and forcing Plaintiff to perform sexual acts with a police officer.” The list of charges troubled many Catholics in Baltimore. But those dramatic charges were soon eclipsed by testimony from one of the plaintiffs, identified only as “Jane Doe” for her protection, in which she claimed to have been taken to the Lansdowne garbage dump by Father Maskell in late November 1969 and shown the body of a dead nun, as a warning that she should say nothing public about the sexual abuse. The sensational allegations of “Jane Doe” stunned Baltimore, and no one was more shocked than Roemer, who years later still reacted with amazement: “When I heard about the woman who was supposed to have been shown the nun’s body by Maskell, I could hardly believe my ears. If that was true, it meant the priest would have been involved in this thing up to his eyeballs!” Until the lawsuit in 1994, Roemer said, he had never heard of Father Joseph Maskell or of the alleged abuse at Keough. His team of sleuths had completely missed this aspect of the investigation. Although the abuse lawsuit brought in Baltimore County Circuit Court by the two former Keough students (“Jane Doe” and “Jane Roe”) was eventually dismissed on a technicality involving the courtroom admissibility of “recovered memory” evidence in Maryland, the testimony and depositions were so compelling that the Archdiocese conducted its own investigation of Maskell. After reviewing the evidence, church officials formally “revoked the faculties” of the priest and relieved him of his administrative duties as the pastor of St. Augustine’s parish in Elkridge. Maskell, meanwhile, insisted he was completely innocent of all charges, then died at age 62 from the effects of a major stroke on May 7, 2001. The Archdiocese of Baltimore never reinstated him, after finding the evidence against him to be “credible,” according to archdiocesan spokesman Caine. The Archdiocese also confirmed for City Paper longstanding reports that Father Maskell had kept handgans at the parish rectory where he lived: “After his departure from St. Augustine’s in 1994, guns were found in the residence.” Shortly before the lawsuit (Jane Doe et al. v. A. Joseph Maskell, et al.) was filed in 1994, “Doe” began telling police and newspaper reporters alike about her alleged trip with Father Maskell to the garbage dump to view the body of the dead nun. As The Sun reported on June 19, 1994, “in interviews with the police and Sun, [Jane Doe] provided details about the body that were known only to investigators at the time, and detectives have not dismissed her claims.” Former priest Gerry Koob also recalls that investigators of Father Maskell in the mid-1990s told him that Doe had remembered the garbage dump accurately. “I heard nothing about this [the alleged abuse by Maskell and Doe’s trip to the dump] until the mid-1990s,” he says. “It seemed credible when I heard it, because the [police investigator] who told me about it said that the woman who was reporting the sexual abuse said that her abusers had taken her to see Cathy’s body, and that she knew details that had never been publicized.” Although the preponderance of evidence suggests that Father Maskell committed acts of sexual abuse at Keough, many of his former parishioners, family members, and friends continue to defend him—including former police officers. “I knew him for many years, and for about 10 of them he was the Baltimore County Police Department chaplain,” says former Baltimore County Police Capt. James B. Scannell, now 73 and retired. “Father Maskell loved to ride around in our police cars, and more than once he rode with me. He was a wonderful priest and a loyal friend.” Retired Maryland State Police Lt. Col. Jim Jones, former director of personnel, says that Maskell had “done a terrific job” as the chaplain for the State Police for more than decade. “He was a wonderful priest, and he counseled many of our troopers and helped them a great deal.” Other friends and family members point to the fact that Father Maskell’s brother, Lt. Tommy Maskell, had served with distinction as a member of the Baltimore City Police from 1946 to ‘66. But that same information—that Father Maskell maintained close connections with high-ranking state, county, and city police officials throughout his career as a Catholic priest—troubles several former students at Keough. “He used to ride around at night in an unmarked patrol car with a cop,” says one woman who told City Papershe’d been abused. “They had a portable flasher they could stick on top of the car, and they would sneak up on kids who were making out and harass them. I remember feeling very frightened and very angry when I saw how Father Maskell and the police were getting away with that.” On Nov. 13, 1969, six days after Sister Cathy Cesnik vanished, not to be found murdered for two long months, a second young woman—20-year-old Joyce Malecki—was found strangled and stabbed to death in a small creek located on the U.S. Army’s Fort Meade military base in Anne Arundel County, only a few miles from where Cesnik’s body would later turn up. That crime also has never been solved. Malecki, a secretary for a liquor distributor in the Baltimore area, had been abducted from the parking lot of an E.J. Korvette’s department store in Glen Burnie. After disappearing around 7 p.m. on Tuesday, Nov. 11, Malecki resurfaced the following morning with her hands tied behind her back, lying face down in the Little Patuxent River at the military base. According to the autopsy, she had been strangled and stabbed several times in the throat; cause of death was strangulation. Understandably, police investigators and newspaper reporters were intensely interested in the possibility that there might be some connection between the two killings, and their speculations were often reported on the front page in Baltimore. But no such link between the murders has ever been established, according to FBI and Baltimore police officials today. (The FBI held the original jurisdiction on the Malecki case because the body was found on a “government reservation.”) A four-month investigation by City Paper did find some disturbing links between the two crimes: An examination of the 1968-69 Keough yearbook, The Aurora, shows that a gift was made to the school during that year by “The Malecki Family,” the name of which appears on the “Patrons” page. Interviews with remaining family members reveal that the Malecki family, which lived in Lansdowne (less than a mile from where Cesnik’s body was found), attended the nearby St. Clement Church. The Malecki siblings, including Joyce, also attended week-long “retreats” as high school students—during which they spent entire days engaged in religious instruction with priests. Baltimore Archdiocesan records confirm that alleged abuser-priest A. Joseph Maskell served “at St. Clement (Lansdowne) from 1966 to 1968 and at Our Lady of Victory [located on nearby Wilkens Avenue, about three miles distant] from 1968 to 1970.” The official Archdiocesan record continues: “(Father Maskell) lived and assisted at St. Clement (Lansdowne) while serving at Archbishop Keough High School from 1970 to 1975.” Clement Church is located less than a mile from where Cesnik’s body was found, in a very remote area. Says one former high-ranking Baltimore County Police investigator who preferred not to be identified: “Whoever dumped the nun’s body there had to know the area well. That dump was difficult to get to, if you didn’t know your way around, and the nun did not vanish until after dark.” Archdiocesan records make clear that Father Maskell was Joyce Malecki’s parish priest during a two-year period shortly before she was killed. Meanwhile, Archdiocesan records and the Keough yearbook show that he was also serving as a chaplain at Keough from the mid-1960s until 1975. Says Joyce Malecki’s older brother Donald Malecki today: “One thing I can’t understand is why no law-enforcement officials have ever made this connection or asked us about it.” When asked about the possible connection between the killings, Baltimore-based FBI Special Agent Barry Maddox tells City Paper that the Bureau “didn’t actually do the investigation” into Joyce Malecki’s death, but turned all of its information over to the nearby Anne Arundel County Police Department. But a spokesman for the Anne Arundel County Police insists that no investigation of any kind had ever been conducted by his police department and referred the inquiry back to the FBI. For his part, a totally mystified Bud Roemer said he couldn’t understand why “they haven’t all gotten together and run down these leads. If it was me, I’d sure as hell want to check everything out.” Donald Malecki says he visited the FBI’s Baltimore office three years ago and was told only that “we conduct a periodic review of the case, we will contact you if we find anything new.” He added: “They kept me in the lobby and sent down two 25-year-old kids who tried to reassure me, but they wouldn’t show me the files or talk to me about the case. Instead, they told me that my best chance of finding the killer was to talk to the producers of Unsolved Mysteries on television and try to get them interested in the case.” After reviewing the new information uncovered by City Paper, FBI spokesman Maddox concluded: “All of these coincidences certainly rise to the level of possible significance for solving both killings. We haven’t ruled anything out, including Father Maskell, and we have gone back to reinvestigate the Malecki killing and possible links to the Cesnik case.” And 35 years after Sister Cathy Cesnik’s body was found on the garbage dump at Lansdowne, the Baltimore County Police Department’s Cold Case Squad is once again investigating her murder. During a December 2003 interview with City Paper, two detectives on the squad provided a sketchy account of their latest findings. The two detectives, who preferred not to be identified, acknowledged, “We don’t know what happened to Sister Cathy.” But they go on to say that, having initially reopened the case as part of a periodic review, they don’t consider Father Maskell to be a suspect, based on “early interviews with witnesses” and “signs of struggle” in her car. They said they were operating on a theory that Cesnik was abducted by “a stranger or maybe by someone who knew her” on the night she disappeared. They said they were exploring a theory that an intruder forced his way into her car, drove her to the dump and killed her, then simply returned the car to her apartment complex because he needed transportation in order to get back home. They said they didn’t believe Father Maskell was involved because of earlier interviews by other investigators with him in 1994 (after “Jane Doe” came forward), although they gave no specifics about those interviews, and because “Jane Doe got some of the details wrong” when she described her alleged visit to Cesnik’s body at the dump. But they cannot account for the fact that Baltimore County Police officials in 1994 were quoted as saying that “Doe” had described details about the dump that had never been made public before. They also confirmed that they had called Bud Roemer in October 2003 and discussed the case with him. They describe Roemer as a “fine detective, reliable and trustworthy.” “We’re sure that whatever he told you is straight, to the best of his memory.” Only a few weeks before his death last June, Roemer said that he still hoped the murder of Sister Cathy would be solved some day. “If all of these new findings are accurate, it looks to me like we’ve got two murders, four days and a few miles apart. And both of the victims seem to be tied directly to the school and the church,” he said. “I just hope they’ll figure it out. I hope we can get closure on Sister Cathy, before I go to meet my maker.” Story courtesy of BALTIMORE SUN/City Paper

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