

Former Megachurch Pastor Convicted of Molesting His Sisters

Former megachurch pastor Geronimo Aguilar, 45, was found guilty of sexually assaulting two sisters in Grapevine and Fort Worth almost 20 years ago.

Aguilar, founder of the Richmond Outreach Center (ROC) in Richmond, Virginia, stepped down from the megachurch in 2013 after being charged with aggravated sexual assault.

The assaults—which were said to have taken place before Aguilar founded ROC in 2001—date back to 1996. The girls were 13 and 11 at the time of the assault. Two of the felonies he faces carry potential life sentences. Four of the counts carry maximum sentences of 20 years.

Aguilar was convicted on all seven counts, including two counts of aggravated sexual assault on a child, three counts of sexual assault of a child under 17, and two counts of indecency with a child.

The former megachurch pastor said he was “very surprised” when the alleged victims, who are now adults, made the accusations, which he called “extremely hurtful.”

“No, absolutely not, absolutely not,” Aguilar said when first accused of the crimes. “There’s obviously going to be some people who judge you from the 30 minutes they see you on television or what they hear in the news. But the people who really matter—the people who I want to love me—love me and believe the best, and those are the ones I focus on.”

Aguilar’s attorney Thomas Pavlinic said he would appeal to conviction.

"People are trying to recall things that happened almost 20 years ago," Pavlinic said. "Presidents engage in extramarital affairs, but that does not make them child molesters. You may not like his moral stance and you may not like what he did, but that's no indication of his guilt."