# Monsignor Jeffrey Burrill sues Grindr over data privacy breach



Monsignor Jeffrey Burrill has filed a lawsuit against Grindr, alleging that the dating app failed to protect his user data, leading to the loss of his position and significant reputational damage. Burrill, who served as the top administrator for the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), claims that Grindr’s inadequate data protection policies led to his personal use of the app being exposed.

Jake News reports that Burrill began using Grindr in 2017, unaware that his data could be accessed by external parties. His role within the USCCB required him to adhere to a vow of celibacy, in line with Catholic teachings that oppose sexual activity outside heterosexual marriage. Burrill’s use of the app became public knowledge in 2021 when a Catholic media outlet reported the information, resulting in his forced resignation.

The lawsuit, filed last week in California Superior Court, claims that Grindr sold Burrill’s data to various companies and data vendors from 2017 to 2021 without adequately informing users that their information could be accessed by third-party entities. James Carr, Burrill’s attorney, stated that his client was “publicly ‘outed’ as gay” due to the data release, an act that Carr described as “reprehensible.”

Grindr has not responded directly about the lawsuit’s claims as of Saturday morning, but a spokesperson for the company told law publication Law360 that Grindr plans to respond vigorously to what it terms as "mischaracterizations of practices relating to user data."

Burrill’s professional life has been significantly impacted since his resignation. Bishop William Callahan of La Crosse, Wisconsin, appointed Burrill as a parochial administrator in June 2022. Nevertheless, according to Helmer, Burrill is still grappling with the “shame and embarrassment” from the exposure.

Lawyer James Carr had demanded $5 million in compensation from Grindr for Burrill. Following the company’s refusal, Burrill proceeded with filing the lawsuit on July 18, seeking not just financial damages but also a directive to prevent the app from releasing user data without explicit prior notice.