



OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY

District Attorney Susan K. Treadaway
Blue Ridge Judicial Circuit, Cherokee County
90 North Street, Canton GA

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Notice of Verdict & Sentencing **Four Consecutive Life Sentences for Man Guilty of Raping a 10-Year-old** ***State vs. Juan Gregorio Francisco***

CANTON, GA (October 23, 2026) – District Attorney Susan K. Treadaway announces that on October 23, Superior Court Judge Shannon Wallace sentenced Juan Gregorio Francisco, 66, of Canton, to four consecutive life sentences plus an additional 84 years to serve in prison.

Francisco was convicted on October 22 on all nine counts he faced at trial: enticing a child for indecent purposes, false imprisonment, rape (2 counts), aggravated child molestation, cruelty to children in the first degree, grooming of a minor, trafficking of persons for sexual servitude, and sexual exploitation of children.

Charges stem from a Canton Police Department investigation that began in April 2026 when family members reported that a 10-year-old child had been sexually assaulted by Francisco, who was a neighbor and known to the family. The child disclosed the abuse after her grandmother observed blood on her undergarments.

As part of the investigation, the child participated in a forensic interview, during which she used dolls to show how the defendant hurt her, accurately demonstrating acts consistent with child sexual abuse. The abuse took place over several years, escalating to rape and aggravated child molestation before and after she turned 10 years old.

The defendant initially threatened the child to get her to comply, then later provided her with gifts and money. He also told her he would kill her family if she told anyone.

“This child kept a terrible secret for a long time, one she never intended to share. When her grandmother found the bloody undergarments, the child finally had the courage to tell what was really happening,” said Assistant District Attorney David Bailey, who prosecuted this case on behalf of the State. “What this man did can only be described as evil, and this child is going to have to live with that for the rest of her life.”

While investigating the case, detectives located a video containing child sexual assault material (CSAM) on the defendant’s phone, which showed the defendant raping the little girl.

During the four-day trial, the State called 12 witnesses and presented more than 50 exhibits, including the forensic interview, photographs from the search warrant, phone extraction data, and the CSAM video.

At sentencing, the State read a victim impact statement for the child, who thanked everyone involved in the trial and said, “While this case was open, I was scared but now that it’s closed I feel happy. I feel safe to go out and play with my friends.”

The State emphasized the gravity of the crimes and lasting impact on the victim and urged the court to impose the maximum sentence. The Defense recommended 25 years to serve, followed by probation with sex offender special conditions, which is the minimum sentence in Georgia.

Judge Wallace imposed the maximum sentence as recommended by the State, sentencing Francisco to four consecutive life sentences, the first two to serve without parole, followed by 85 years, with 84 years to serve in prison and one year on probation. She also ordered that he have no contact with the victim or her family and abide by sex offender special conditions of probation.

“At a time when this child should have been playing with her friends and enjoying the carefree joys of childhood, this defendant chose to exploit and terrorize her,” said District Attorney Susan K. Treadaway. “This sentence acknowledges the profound harm he caused and ensures other children are protected from him.”

The case was investigated by the Canton Police Department and prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney David Bailey of the Special Victims Unit, Office of the District Attorney.

INFORMATION ABOUT SEXUAL ABUSE OF CHILDREN

Child abusers often engage in a grooming process that enables them to commit abuse undetected. Common grooming behaviors include:

- Targeting a vulnerable child
- Gaining the trust of the child and caregiver
- Providing attention, gifts, or affection to fill a need
- Isolating the child from others
- Gradually sexualizing the relationship
- Using threats, fear, or guilt to maintain control

To report suspected child abuse, call Child Protective Services at 855-422-4453. If a child is in immediate danger, call 911.

###

The Office of the District Attorney for the Blue Ridge Judicial Circuit is committed to seeking justice, acting with integrity, and collaborating with partner agencies in the criminal justice system in order to protect the citizens of Cherokee County and the State of Georgia.

CONTACT:

Cyndi Crossland

Public Information Officer

cbcrossland@cherokeecountyga.gov