Status Report on Clerics Accused of Child Abuse

Church law for the United States is very clear in regards to clerics who have abused children:

When a single act of sexual abuse of a minor by a minister is admitted by a minister after an appropriate process in accordance with canon law, the following steps or actions will be taken permanently from said ministerary, depending on the severity of the crime:

1. Administrative Leave

Administrative leave is the strongest action a diocesan bishop can take against a priest on his own. Priests on administrative leave may not celebrate the sacraments publicly, engage in pastoral ministry, or present themselves as priests in any way. The Archdiocese will announce any change in the status of these priests.

- Thomas Hull
- Thomas Klinski
- Ronald Cooper

2. Permanently Removed from the Clerical State

Permanent removal from the clerical state means that in accord with canon law these priests are no longer incardinable in the Archdiocese of Cincinnati and are unable to function as a priest anywhere.

- Keith Albrecht – was dismissed from the clerical state in 2008 by Pope Benedict XVI.
- Thomas Bruner – voluntarily requested that he be permanently removed from the clerical state. His request was granted by Pope Benedict XVI in 2008.
- George Cookelley – was removed from the clerical state in 1955 as the result of an ecclesiastical trial.
- Lawrence Lintern – voluntarily requested that he be permanently removed from the clerical state. His request was granted by Pope Benedict XVI in 2008.
- Erin Kershaw – voluntarily requested that he be permanently removed from the clerical state. His request was granted by Pope Benedict XVI in 2008.
- Kenneth Schoetemaker – petitioned the Holy Father to be permanently removed from the clerical state. His request was granted by Pope Benedict XVI in 2007.
- Richard Umbr – voluntarily requested that he be permanently removed from the clerical state. His request was granted by Pope Benedict XVI in 2007.

3. Permanently Removed from Priestly Ministry

After initially being put on administrative leave, the following have been permanently removed from priestly ministry at the direction of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith at the Vatican. They are prohibited from wearing clerical clothing and publicly presenting themselves as priests. Exposed to a life of prayer and penance, they are still under the authority of the archbishop and subject to certain priestly responsibilities including chastity.

- Franciscus Missal
- Thomas Hopp
- John Wensinger, died in 2004
- Daniel Peter

4. Other

The case of David Keelley was in process at the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith when he died on June 8, 2009.