

St. Thérèse of the Child Jesus knew much suffering, as St. Thérèse died from tuberculosis at age 24. I ask her intercession...

Diocese releases names of priests, seminarians with substantiated allegations of sexual abuse of children

Oct. 1, 2019

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

My whole strength lies in prayer and sacrifice, these are my invincible arms; they can move hearts far better than words, I know it by experience," wrote St. Thérèse of Lisieux. She knew much suffering, as St. Thérèse died from tuberculosis at age 24. I ask her intercession as we publish the list of priests and seminarians who have substantiated allegations of the sexual abuse of children.

I apologize to victim survivors of child sexual abuse, especially those who were abused by priests and seminarians of the Catholic Diocese of Dodge City. You have suffered from this terrible sin. I beg your forgiveness. I pray our Lord Jesus will give His healing love to you and your families. We hope in Christ: "... **power came forth from [Jesus] and healed them all**" (Luke 6:19).

I offer my assistance to the victim survivors and their families. If you wish, I will meet personally with you and your support people.

If anyone you know may have been a victim of sexual abuse by clergy, seminarian, employee or volunteer of the Catholic Diocese of Dodge City, please call local law enforcement, the Kansas Department for Children and Families Report Center, or the Kansas Bureau of Investigation. In addition to making a report to the civil authorities, you may contact the representative from our diocesan Review Board for assistance, and he will also offer the help of our Assistance Minister (all contact info is on our website and in the *Southwest Kansas Catholic* newspaper).

I pray for just punishment, remorse, and conversion of the perpetrators and concealers of sexual abuse. I thank law enforcement, attorneys, judges, health professionals and all who help victims of this heinous crime.

I am grateful to Retired Judge Robert J. Schmisser for his careful attention in auditing our clergy and seminarian files.

I affirm all faithful priests, deacons, and seminarians who are true servants of God. It is easy to be discouraged, but we take hope in our Savior. Jesus is with us, and will strengthen us.

I encourage everyone to be involved in our Safe Environment program as we learn and implement ways to keep our children protected. I appreciate the countless staff and volunteers of this ministry. May all organizations that work with minors rededicate themselves to keeping children safe.

St. Thérèse of the Child Jesus, intercede for us as we follow your example of prayer and sacrifice. Let us trust in our Gentle Savior. Jesus "**saw a great crowd, and he had compassion for them and cured their sick**" (Matthew 14:14). Jesus is revealing our sufferings, healing our wounds, and loving us more than we can ask or imagine.

+ Bishop John B. Brungardt

Catholic Diocese of Dodge City

Retired judge completes review/audit of priests, deacons, seminarians

Since 1993, the Dodge City Diocese has had a Review Board and Policies in order to provide a safe environment especially for children and to address sexual abuse by clergy. Over that span of nearly three decades, understanding of the reality of sexual abuse and ways to address it have developed and been refined. Over 8,500 people in the Diocese have participated in training sessions to heighten awareness of signs of abuse, methods and means by which offenders abuse, and steps one can use to prevent child sexual abuse.

The Dodge City Diocese and Bishop Brungardt regret and apologize for the hurt that has been inflicted and the pain caused especially to those who were most vulnerable. We ask forgiveness and seek to help those suffering from sexual abuse.

Retired Kansas District Judge Robert J. Schmisser conducted a comprehensive review and audit of all files in the Diocesan Chancery office related to priests, deacons and seminarians. More than 600 files since the beginning of the diocese in 1951 were reviewed during the four-month audit. The audit included the identification of substantiated allegations of sexual abuse of a minor by a member of the clergy or a seminarian. The findings of the auditor's report have been shared with the Kansas Bureau of Investigation and the Kansas Attorney General's office. The audit did not reveal any allegations of sexual misconduct that had not previously been made known to the Review Board.

Following the audit and the Diocesan Review Board's review, Bishop Brungardt offers this list of substantiated allegations:

PRIESTS WITH ALLEGATIONS ARISING IN THE DODGE CITY DIOCESE

Donald Fiedler (not permitted to function as a priest since 2007)

Ordained for the Wichita Diocese May 1959; became a priest of Dodge City Diocese August 1964. Served in the Dodge City Diocese September 1961- January 1988: St. Rose, Great Bend; St. Joan of Arc, Elkhart; St. Helen, Hugoton; St. Alphonsus, Satanta; St. Dominic, Garden City; Mary, Queen of Peace, Ulysses.

Allegations arising from incidents in the Diocese of Dodge City in the mid-1980s. Allegations determined substantiated.

John Haberthier (deceased)

Ordained for the Wichita Diocese May 1948. He became a priest of the Dodge City Diocese when it became a diocese in 1951.

Served in the Dodge City Diocese August 1950-December 1973: Sacred Heart Church/Cathedral, Dodge City; St. Rose Hospital, Great Bend; St. Theresa, Dighton; St. Michael, LaCrosse; St. Timothy, Satanta; Bob Wilson Hospital, Ulysses; Immaculate Heart of Mary, Windthorst; St. Patrick, Plains.

Served in the Pueblo Diocese in Colorado November 1973-July 1977 and in the San Bernardino Diocese in California April 1979-1987.

Allegations arising in the Dodge City Diocese and the Pueblo Diocese for incidents in the late 1960's thru the mid-1970s determined to be substantiated and public announcements were made in the Dodge City Diocese in December 2006.

Augustine Hanchak, CPPS (deceased)

A member of the Missionaries of the Precious Blood. Served in the Dodge City Diocese August 1963-August 1965 at St. Mary, Garden City.

Recent allegations arising in the Dodge City Diocese for incidents in the 1960's have been reported and determined substantiated.

Cletus ("Jerry") Stein (no longer a priest)

Ordained for the Dodge City Diocese December 1966. Served in the Dodge City Diocese August 1967-September 1972 and April 1975-June 1987: St. Joseph, Ellinwood; Sacred Heart, Pratt; St. John, Hoisington; Sacred Heart Cathedral, Dodge City; St. Rose, Great Bend; St. Joseph, Greensburg; St. George, Bucklin; St. Alphonsus, Satanta; St. Mary of the Plains College, Dodge City.

Served in the Archdiocese of Denver Sept. 1972-July 1974.

Served in the Diocese of Amarillo beginning July 1987 and became a priest of Amarillo in 1993.

Allegations determined substantiated.

Edward Young (deceased)

Ordained for the Dodge City Diocese May 1953. Served in the Dodge City Diocese June 1953-August 1970: Sacred Heart Cathedral, Dodge City; Sacred Heart, Pratt; St. John the Evangelist, Hoisington; Dominican Convent, Great Bend; St. Rose Hospital, Great Bend; St. Rose Parish, Great Bend; St. Helen, Hugoton; St. Timothy, Satanta. He became a priest of the Sioux City Diocese in 1974.

Allegations arising in the Dodge City Diocese in the late 1950s-early 1960s. Allegations determined substantiated.

PRIESTS WHO SERVED IN THE DODGE CITY DIOCESE WITH ALLEGATIONS ARISING OUTSIDE THE DODGE CITY DIOCESE

Orestes Huerta (priest of the Diocese of Boac, Philippines)

Served in the Dodge City Diocese from September 1997 to September 2000 at St. Mary, Garden City and Christ the King, Deerfield.

A report was received of allegations of incidents that occurred in the Boac Diocese after Huerta returned to the Philippines from the Dodge City Diocese. Public announcements were made in the Dodge City Diocese in February 2010. No allegations received from his time in the Dodge City Diocese.

Mario Islas (no longer a priest)

Ordained for the El Paso Diocese May 1970. Served in the Dodge City Diocese December 1988-February 1994: St. John the Baptist, Meade; St. Patrick, Plains; St. Anthony, Liberal; Christ the King, Deerfield; St. Mary, Garden City.

He is on the "list of credible accusations" of the El Paso Diocese. Public announcements were made in the Dodge City Diocese in January 2019. No allegations received from his time in the Dodge City Diocese.

Richard Kolega, CPPS (deceased)

A member of the Missionaries of the Precious Blood. Served in the Dodge City Diocese September 1973-August 1974 and January 1986-October 1991: St. Mary, Garden City; St. Anthony, Lakin; Christ the King, Deerfield; Our Lady of Guadalupe, Dodge City.

He is on the "list of credible accusations" of the San Angelo Diocese. No allegations received from his time in the Dodge City.

Donald Straub (no longer a priest)

Ordained for the St. Louis Archdiocese May 1975. He served in the Dodge City Diocese from September 1990-January 1991 at Sacred Heart Cathedral, Dodge City.

He is on the "list of substantiated allegations" for the Archdiocese of St. Louis. When the Archdiocese determined allegations to be substantiated, public announcements were made in the Dodge City Diocese May 2004. No allegations received from his time in the Dodge City.

Joseph Thiesen (deceased)

Ordained a priest for the New York Archdiocese May 1953. Served in the Dodge City Diocese October 1988-May 1989 at the Dominican Convent and Central Kansas Medical Center in Great Bend.

He is on the "list of credible accusations" for the New York Archdiocese. No allegations received from his time in the Dodge City Diocese.

DODGE CITY DIOCESAN SEMINARIANS

Heleodoro ("Leo") de Hoyos

Allegation from Oklahoma in 1997 when he was a seminarian of the Dodge City Diocese. He was dismissed as a seminarian.

Joel McClure

Dodge City Diocese cooperated with law enforcement and public announcements were made in the Dodge City Diocese August 2015. Due to law enforcement investigation and with the cooperation of the Diocese of Dodge City, he was dismissed as a seminarian in August 2015. He pleaded guilty in federal court to one count of transportation of child pornography in March 2016.

IF YOU SUSPECT ABUSE

If you suspect abuse or neglect of a child in Kansas and the child is in immediate danger, call 911 or local law enforcement.

If you have suspicion a child is being abused or neglected, make a confidential report to Kansas Department for Children and Families Protection Report Center, 800-922-5330 or to the KBI Hotline, 800-KSCRIME (800-572-7463), or by emailing ClergyAbuse@kbi.ks.gov.

If you suspect sexual abuse by Church personnel, in addition to making a report to the proper civil authorities, please contact Mr. Charles Befort, the diocesan Review Board representative who receives and follows up on reports. His contact information is crbefort@cox.net, 620-285-3219. In addition, Mr. Befort will offer the help of the Assistance Minister whose goal is to be a listening ear and to promote healing.

The Review Board is a consultative body of lay Catholics and one priest- representative who advises the Bishop in his assessment of allegations of sexual abuse, reviews diocesan policies for dealing with sexual abuse of minors and offers advice on all aspects of sexual abuse cases retrospectively and prospectively.

The Assistance Minister's role is to aid in the pastoral care of persons who claim to have been sexually abused as minors by clergy or other church personnel, whether the abuse was recent or occurred many years in the past.

All allegations are deemed credible. A substantiated allegation is defined as an allegation that, based upon the facts of the claim, meets one or more of the following thresholds: Is not specifically denied or is acknowledged/admitted to by the accused; is corroborated with other evidence or by another source and/or; involves multiple accusations. The facts and circumstances that substantiate an allegation vary from case to case. A finding that an allegation is substantiated is not the equivalent of a finding of guilt in a criminal proceeding or liability in a civil proceeding.

What is the Diocese of Dodge City doing to Protect Our Children?

As we make public the list of priests and seminarians who have substantiated allegations against them, it is my hope the information on this page will provide some measure of confidence in our efforts to keep children and young people safe in the Diocese of Dodge City.

+ Bishop John

QUESTION. How are the words “credible” and “substantiated” to be understood in terms of the publicized list of priests and seminarians?

• All allegations are deemed “credible.” A “substantiated” allegation is defined as an allegation that, based upon the facts of the claim, meets one or more of the following thresholds: Is not specifically denied or is acknowledged/admitted to by the accused; is corroborated with other evidence or by another source; and/or involves multiple accusations. The facts and circumstances that substantiate an allegation vary from case to case. A finding that an allegation is substantiated is not the equivalent of a finding of guilt in a criminal proceeding or liability in a civil proceeding.

Q. What is the Review Board and what does this Board do?

• The Review Board is a consultative body to the Bishop comprised of at least five persons of outstanding integrity and good judgment who are not employed by the Diocese. The majority of the members are lay persons.

• The responsibilities of the Review Board include advising the Bishop in his assessment of allegations of sexual abuse and in his determination of suitability for ministry, reviewing diocesan policies for dealing with sexual abuse of minors, offering advice

on all aspects of sexual abuse cases both retrospectively and prospectively, and offering advice on other matters the Bishop wishes to bring to the Board for their counsel.

Q. What is an Assistance Minister and what is this person's role?

- The Assistance Ministers is to aid in the pastoral care of persons who claim to have been sexually abused as minors by clergy or other church personnel, whether the abuse was recent or occurred many years in the past. The Assistance Minister will make every effort to reach out to the victims and their families and demonstrate a sincere commitment to their spiritual and emotional well being.

Q. What steps will be taken if an allegation of sexual abuse of a minor is made against a priest or deacon?

- Outreach to the victim and family, including the offer to meet/talk with the Bishop or his representative and/or the Assistance Minister.
- Encourage and, if necessary, assist with reporting the incident to local law enforcement, Department of Children and Families or the Kansas Bureau of Investigation.
- If the accused priest or deacon is active, remove him from the parish and restrict his faculties pending an investigation by law enforcement or authorized by the Review Board.
- The Review Board will be convened to review the allegation, determine and recommend the appropriate next step (such as the manner of obtaining further information).
- If the allegation is determined to be substantiated, an announcement that an allegation has been received involving the priest or deacon will be made at the parishes the priest or deacon has served.

Q. What steps will be taken if an allegation of sexual abuse of a minor is made against a bishop?

- In May 2019 Pope Francis issued an Apostolic Letter entitled "You are the Light of the World" (*Vos estis lux mundi*) and in June 2019 the Bishops of the United States approved Directives to implement the Pope's document in the United States.
- Encourage and, if necessary, assist with reporting the incident to local law enforcement, Department of Children and Families or the Kansas Bureau of Investigation.
- Outreach to the victim and family by the Assistance Minister.
- In the case of an allegation against a bishop, the report will be made to the ranking bishop (called the Metropolitan) of the geographic region (called a Province). In Kansas, an allegation made against the bishop of Dodge City, Salina or Wichita would be reported to the Archbishop of Kansas City, Kansas (presently Archbishop Naumann). An allegation made against the Archbishop of Kansas City would be reported to the senior bishop of the other dioceses of the Province (presently Bishop Brungardt in Dodge City).
- After communication with the Vatican, an investigation will be undertaken.
- Further steps to be taken will be determined by the outcome of the investigation.

Q. What steps will be taken if an allegation of sexual abuse of a minor is made against a lay person?

- Outreach to the victim and family, including the offer to meet/talk with the Bishop or his representative and/or the Assistance Minister.
- Encourage and, if necessary, assist with reporting the incident to local law enforcement, Department of Children and Families or the Kansas Bureau of Investigation.
- If the lay person is an employee of the Diocese, the employee may be placed on leave with pay pending a determination of whether such employee should continue to be employed. If allowed to continue his/her job function pending the completion of the investigation by law enforcement or authorized by the Review Board, restrictions may be placed on the lay employee that would limit or eliminate contact with minors while the employee is at work.

- If the lay person is a volunteer or affiliate of the Diocese, the volunteer may not continue to serve in any capacity which involve contact with minors during the pendency of the investigation by law enforcement or authorized by the Review Board.
- At the conclusion of the investigation, any lay employee, volunteer or affiliate of the Diocese who admits to, does not contest, or whom the Review Board determines committed an act of sexual abuse of a minor, shall be terminated.

Q. What has been done in our diocese to ensure the safety of children?

- Protecting God’s Children (PGC) awareness sessions—train adults to become aware of signs in children and youth that may indicate they have been abused. The session also provides steps we can take to create a safe environment for our youth.
- Completed criminal background check of all employees and adults who volunteer with children and youth. (See “Did you Know?” sidebar)
- In 2007 we began offering age-appropriate safety training lessons to our students. Over the subsequent years, a variety of lesson formats have been made available.

Q. Have monetary gifts of the faithful been used to pay for past settlements?

- No. Past settlements have been paid by insurance and funds from deceased priest’s legacies.

Did you know?

- 493 Protecting God’s Children Awareness sessions have been offered in Spanish and English since July 2003, and over 8,500 adults have been trained as of September 15 of this year.
- In July 2018 we changed to a background check vendor who will review newly completed background checks quarterly.
- The names of everyone who has been trained over the years is checked against the Kansas Sex Offender Registry annually.
- Our Code of Pastoral Conduct-Interaction with Children and Young People addresses specific behaviors an adult will and will not have with a minor. For a copy of the Code of Conduct and other documents, go to <https://www.dcdioocese.org/safe-environment/>
- Every issue of the *Southwest Kansas Catholic* provides information (in English and Spanish) on how to report suspected sexual abuse by clergy, an employee or volunteer in the Diocese of Dodge City.

A Prayer for Victims of Sexual Abuse

Compassionate God, we pray for victims of sexual abuse. We pray for deep comfort. We pray that you will restore what has been stolen and broken. While you do not alter history, you reveal your love in the present and in the future.

What seems hopelessly shattered, in you can be redeemed. For the many millions who have been defiled in sexual abuse, show yourself to be loving and able—as you are willing—to give back life, and life abundant.

Yes, there is great pain in our world. There is injustice. There is evil. We turn to you and cry out for help and healing. We cannot help but wonder why such horrible abuse happens.

But we turn from “why?” and ask instead, “how?” How now will your perfect goodness and love find expression in the shadow of wickedness?

God, you are good and loving and also all-powerful. Yet you have risked giving humans the right to choose how we live.

Some choose evil. For those who are victims of other’s vile deeds, we ask you for grace and healing. For those who have suffered, come to them tenderly an with overwhelming and powerful love. We join with Jesus and borrow his words, “Be freed from your suffering.” Compassionate God, heal the victims of sexual abuse.

(M. Herringshaw)