

# Las Cruces Diocese gives AG files on accused priests

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Bishop Gerald Kicanas

Acknowledging that it must “atone for past mistakes,” the Catholic Diocese of Las Cruces on Monday said it has given the state Attorney General’s Office personnel files and other documents connected to 28 priests and other clergy “credibly accused” of sexual abuse of children and minors.

“We have sent these files to the attorney general for his review, and in those files are the allegations against these individuals and how the situation was managed by the diocese,” Bishop Gerald Kicanas told a news conference in Las Cruces. The diocese said roughly 12,000 pages were turned over, although some of the documents were redacted.

Release of the documents comes three days after the AG’s Office arrested and charged former Archdiocese of Santa Fe priest Marvin Archuleta, 81, on first-degree felony counts of criminal sexual penetration of a child under 13 and kidnapping in the rape of a 6-year-old boy in the 1980s at Holy Cross Catholic Church in Santa Cruz, near Española.

And in September, federal agents extradited former Kirtland Air Force Base chaplain Arthur Perrault from Morocco and charged him with six counts of aggravated sexual

abuse and one count of sexual contact in the molestation of an 11-year-old boy in the early '90s. Perrault has pleaded not guilty to all counts.

The Diocese of Las Cruces, meanwhile, has also added the names of 13 priests “credibly accused of sexual misconduct with minors” to the list of 28 individuals released in November. The new names were of priests who had allegations against them but not during their time in the Las Cruces Diocese.

One of the priests, the Rev. Nicholas Galvan, was convicted of sexually assaulting an 11-year-old girl in Colorado in 1990. He pleaded guilty and was sentenced to two years of probation.

“In the past, the Diocese of Las Cruces did not always address allegations of sexual misconduct appropriately. Clearly, grave mistakes were made,” Kicanas said, adding that the mistakes included allowing pedophile priests with credible accusations to continue serving in the church after undergoing treatment at the Servants of the Paraclete treatment center in Jemez Springs.

“Today we have learned, and I hope everyone has learned, that is absolutely not possible,” Kicanas said. “... When a person has abused a child, they cannot be put in a position of trust.”

Attorney General Hector Balderas sent letters in September to all three of New Mexico’s Catholic dioceses – the Archdiocese of Santa Fe and the dioceses of Gallup and Las Cruces – seeking all documents related to potential abuse by priests and other clergy in New Mexico.

The request followed a grand jury investigation in Pennsylvania that concluded that 300 priests there had sexually abused children over seven decades. The grand jury reviewed more than 2 million church documents and reported that at least 1,000 children were victims of sexual abuse by clergy members. It also said several church leaders were involved in a cover-up.

In his letter to bishops in New Mexico, Balderas noted that the Pennsylvania grand jury report revealed ties to New Mexico.

Late Monday, Balderas’ office said in a statement that it “will continue to fight for every survivor of horrific sexual abuse at the hands of the clergy and strongly urges anyone who is a survivor of abuse to come forward to law enforcement.”

“Investigations for criminal acts should be conducted by proper independent authorities to ensure that all culpable actors are held responsible,” spokesman David Carl said in a statement. “The Office of the Attorney General has not received the disclosures outlined in the press release from the Archdiocese of Las Cruces to date but remains disturbed at (the) lack of immediate disclosures as requested September 4, 2018.”

It's unclear whether Balderas will take issue with the diocese's decision to redact some of the files.

According to the diocese, the redactions were made to protect the names of victims who accused priests of sexual abuse. The diocese said it wanted assurance that the names of victims would be kept confidential before releasing the information.

"We've been going back and forth quite a bit," Kicanas said.

Publicizing the lists of credibly accused priests and voluntarily turning over personnel files to the Attorney General's Office are two steps to "uncover and account for past errors and to establish policies which will prevent their repetition," according to the Las Cruces Diocese.

Kicanas said none of the investigations underway now involves children in the Las Cruces Diocese.

A review board that includes parishioners and experts is now responsible for examining all complaints of sexual misconduct. Bishop Kicanas of Tucson is handling the release of the information because the Las Cruces Diocese does not have a replacement yet for Bishop Oscar Cantú, who was reassigned to the much larger Diocese of San Jose in California last fall.

*Material from The Associated Press was used in this report*

The Diocese of Las Cruces has added the following names to its list of credibly abused persons

<b>Name</b>	<b>Assignments in Diocese of Las Cruces</b>	<b>Reason for inclusion</b>
Joseph Angeli	San Jose, La Mesa, OL Guadalupe, Tortugas	Listed by Diocese of San Antonio
Alphonse Boardway	Holy Cross Retreat Center	Listed by Diocese of Lubbock
Lucas Galvan	St. Genevieve	Criminal conviction in Colorado
Sabine Griego	St. Eleanor, Ruidoso	Listed by Archdiocese of Santa Fe
James B. Hay	CC, Alamogordo	Listed by Diocese of El Paso
Austin Peter Keegan	Infant Jesus, Hurley	Listed by Diocese of Santa Rosa
Robert Kirsch	St. Eleanor, Ruidoso	Listed by Archdiocese of Santa Fe
Clive Lynn	St. Rita, Carrizozo	Listed by Archdiocese of Santa Fe
Richard Nesome	OL Purification	Listed by Diocese of El Paso
James Porter	OL Perpetual Help, T. or C.	Listed by Archdiocese of Santa Fe
Emilio Roure	OL Guadalupe, Tortugas	Listed by Diocese of El Paso
Lawrence Schreiber	St. Peter, Roswell	Listed by Diocese of Gallup
Robert Trevino	Holloman AFB	Listed by Diocese of Corpus Christi, The Diocese of Las Cruces

The Diocese of Las Cruces' Sexual Abuse Review Board also voted to include the name Gary Vau, a volunteer teacher at Holy Cross School, on its list of credibly accused persons because of a criminal conviction related to sexual abuse of a minor.

SOURCE: Diocese of Las Cruces