



RESTORING TRUST

Bishop's Letter to the Faithful

July 31, 2019

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

It has been more than one year since we learned of reports of misconduct involving then-Cardinal McCarrick, quickly followed by the release of the Pennsylvania Grand Jury investigation, which detailed terrible accounts of sexual abuse of minors by clergy. Since that time, I have updated you as I have sought guidance on what our Diocese can do to enhance our efforts to protect minors and emerge as a place of hope and healing. I prayed deeply for guidance from our Lord, sought counsel from many of you in my own flock, and worked to engage in renewed efforts toward protecting children and vulnerable adults in our ministries.

In my last letter to you, I wrote of the Holy Father's *motu proprio*, "*Vos estis lux mundi*", a formal document in which Pope Francis provided new norms for the worldwide response to sexual abuse. While much of what is required in these new norms already has been in place in the Diocese of Manchester for many years, there are several steps I am taking with others locally, regionally, and nationally. For example, since 2003, the Code of Conduct in the Diocese of Manchester has included a mechanism to report concerns involving bishops. Together with my brother bishops from across the country, we met in June and implemented key components of the *motu proprio*, including an agreement to initiate a national third-party reporting system for receiving confidentially, by phone and online, reports of misconduct or abuse by bishops. The bishops of the United States have committed to activating the system no later than May 31, 2020.

Additionally, I wanted to let you know that the Diocese of Manchester has launched a new section on our website designed to provide further transparency to our ongoing commitment to protecting minors. Here we have not only compiled resources for victim-survivors, families, and those who wish to report abuse, but the site also includes a single place to review the names of priests who have been accused of sexual abuse of a minor since 1950. I am publishing names that have already been made public on some level and also including two names more-recently reported and investigated of abuse that occurred more than forty-five years ago. We are now aggregating this information in a readily accessible format at www.catholicnh.org/restoringtrust.

On behalf of my predecessors and the Church in New Hampshire, I am sorry. I seek your forgiveness for the grave sins of abuse and betrayal of trust that representatives of the Church committed. Each and every day, I pray that victim-survivors find healing. I also fervently pray that we never allow such darkness to enter our Church again. With these new efforts, I hope to continue on a path to restoring your trust.

Sincerely in Christ,



Most Reverend Peter A. Libasci
Bishop of Manchester

[Read this in Spanish](#)

06/03/19

Bishop Libasci's Letter to the Faithful - [English](#) | [Spanish](#)

On the topic of the Church's efforts to protect children and vulnerable adults

02/05/19

Bishop Libasci's Letter to the Faithful - [English](#) | [Spanish](#)

Following the Bishops' Retreat at Mundelein Seminary

11/19/18

Bishop Libasci's Letter to the Faithful - [English](#) | [Spanish](#)

On the topic of the General Assembly of United States Conference of Catholic Bishops in Baltimore

10/10/18

Bishop Libasci's Letter to the Faithful - [English](#) | [Spanish](#)

On the topic of Archbishop McCarrick and Pennsylvania Grand Jury Report

Overview



Accountability
RESPONSE TO ALLEGATIONS

- Reporting**
All allegations of sexual abuse of a minor by Church personnel are reported to the FBI Attorney General's Office, to the appropriate diocesan or national agency, and made to the FBI Children, Youth & Families and the local police.
- Investigation**
Allegations are investigated by professionals in a timely fashion.
- Review**
The Diocesan Review Board reviews investigative results and offers advice to the Bishop.
- Compassionate Assistance**
The Office for Healing and Pastoral Care offers pastoral support to victims and their families, including counseling, referrals and spiritual care.
- Financial Compensation**
The Diocese has developed a non-confidential process for victims to seek financial compensation, regardless of when the abuse occurred.
- Confidentiality**
While the Diocese maintains strict confidentiality, those who receive financial settlements for sexual abuse do so in a manner we are required to disclose confidentiality agreements.

LEARN MORE ABOUT CHILD SAFETY AT catholicnh.org/safety



A Culture of Safety
BY THE NUMBERS

- 37,300 TOTAL NUMBER OF ADULTS TRAINED FROM 2011-2018 (2019)
- 34,400 TOTAL NUMBER OF CRIMINAL RECORD CHECKS COMPLETED
- 3,189 CHILDREN WHO RECEIVED PERSONAL SAFETY LESSONS BY CATHOLIC SCHOOLS DURING SCHOOL YEAR 2018-2019
- 8,804 CHILDREN WHO RECEIVED PERSONAL SAFETY LESSONS IN PARISHES DURING SCHOOL YEAR 2018-2019
- \$28,654,550 FINANCIAL COMPENSATION PAID TO VICTIMS (2011-JUNE 2019)
- \$363,219 COUNSELING SUPPORT FOR VICTIMS (2011-JUNE 2019)

LEARN MORE ABOUT CHILD SAFETY AT catholicnh.org/safety



Our Pledge to Heal
OFFICE FOR HEALING AND PASTORAL CARE
HELPING VICTIMS OF ABUSE
(Created Fall 2018 by Healing and PC)

- PROMPT RESPONSE TO REPORTS
- PROVER FOR VICTIMS OF ABUSE
- COMPASSIONATE ASSISTANCE
- PASTORAL MEETING WITH BISHOP
- MASSSES TO PRAY FOR HEALING
- COUNSELING REFERRALS

LEARN MORE ABOUT CHILD SAFETY AT catholicnh.org/safety



Working Together
WITHIN THE CHURCH

- 111 THE PROSECUTOR GENERAL'S OFFICE (STATE AND LOCAL)
- 2 THE FBI CHILD YOUTH & FAMILIES
- 7 INVESTIGATIVE AGENCIES
- 4 PROFESSIONAL NETWORK
- 6 THE DIOCESAN REVIEW BOARD

LEARN MORE ABOUT CHILD SAFETY AT catholicnh.org/safety

F.A.Q.

Frequently Asked Questions Regarding List of Priests Accused of Sexual Abuse of a Minor Since 1950

To date, the Diocese of Manchester has not received any reports of sexual abuse of a minor by a permanent deacon or bishop that meet the criteria set forth herein.

Click on the questions below for more information.

Why is the Diocese releasing the names of these priests now and what is the Diocese hoping to accomplish?

Since 2002, the Diocese of Manchester has notified the New Hampshire Attorney General's office about all reports of sexual abuse of a minor by Church personnel (bishops, priests, deacons, employees, and volunteers), regardless of when the abuse occurred and regardless of whether there was any evidence to support the reports. In addition, the Diocese has periodically issued public notices regarding priests accused of sexual abuse of a minor. After broad consultation with his advisors, Bishop Libasci has decided to publish on the diocesan website a comprehensive list of priests accused of sexual abuse of a minor since 1950 in an effort to help foster the process of healing and restoration of trust in the Church. This list also serves to notify the public about accused priests who have been laicized or dismissed to help address any risk to children that they may currently pose.

Are any of the priests identified on the list still serving in a parish, school, or diocesan ministry?

No. All of the priests identified on the list are either deceased, returned to the lay state, or prohibited from public ministry as a priest.

What is the definition of "sexual abuse of a minor" for the purposes of this list?

The term "sexual abuse" is contact of a sexual nature that occurs between a minor (a person under the age of 18) and an adult. "Sexual abuse" includes any act constituting sexual abuse under New Hampshire law and includes the acquisition, possession, or distribution of pornographic images of minors by whatever means or using whatever technology. Sexual abuse of a minor is a grave delict (a serious crime) against the Sixth Commandment under the *1983 Code of Canon Law* and the *Essential Norms*.

This list does not include the names of priests accused of sexual misconduct involving an adult (i.e., an individual over the age of 18). The decision was made to focus the list on conduct that is a crime under civil and canon law.

What do the terms "laicized," "assigned to a life of prayer and penance," and "absent from ministry" mean?

Priests who have been "laicized" no longer have any rights or obligations of Holy Orders (for example, most sacraments and celibacy), and the Diocese of Manchester no longer has any obligations of sustenance or support, or any responsibility of oversight toward that cleric.

Priests who have admitted to having sexually abused a minor may be "sentenced" by the Holy See in Rome to a life of "prayer and penance" if they are not suited for dismissal due to their age or infirmity. Priests assigned to a life of prayer and penance are permanently restricted from all forms of public ministry and may not wear clerical attire or publicly identify themselves as priests.

Priests who are "absent from ministry" also are restricted from all forms of public ministry and may not wear clerical attire or publicly identify themselves as priests.

How was this list developed?

The list was compiled after a thorough review of all files of priests by two retired police detectives. The list also was reviewed by the Diocesan Review Board, a consultative committee consisting of 7 members, including one pastor, one non-Catholic minister, a person experienced in the treatment of sexual abuse of a minor, and 4 other lay persons, who advise the Bishop in the assessment of complaints of child sexual abuse and on policy matters relating to the protection of children.

Have the priests on the list been reported to the civil authorities?

Yes. All of the priests on the list have been reported to the civil authorities. Since 2002, the Diocese of Manchester reports all allegations

...most of the priests on the list have been reported to the civil authorities. Since 2002, the Diocese of Manchester reports all allegations of sexual abuse of a minor involving church personnel (bishops, priests, deacons, lay employees, volunteers) to the New Hampshire Attorney General's office regardless of when the abuse occurred and regardless of whether the accused person is living or in ministry.

Why does the list include only reports since 1950?

One of Bishop Libasci's goals with respect to publishing the list is to encourage victims to report what happened to them so that the Diocese can have the opportunity to assist them in healing. The date of 1950 was selected with a focus on those victims who may still be living, and to reflect the availability of historic files that might contain information about reports of abuse.

Has the Diocese of Manchester ever been investigated by the New Hampshire Attorney General's Office?

Yes. In February 2002, the New Hampshire Office of the Attorney General initiated a criminal investigation into the conduct of the Diocese of Manchester and its bishops and leaders regarding the manner in which the Diocese responded to allegations of sexual abuse of a minor by priests. The Attorney General's office and the Diocese of Manchester entered into an [agreement](#) in December 2002 to resolve the investigation. The agreement provided that the Attorney General's office would release to the public its investigative file, which the Attorney General's office did in March 2003. In addition, the agreement provided, among other things, for mandatory reporting to the Attorney General's office (which the Diocese continues), annual audits for a period of five years, and a diocesan office for handling matters involving sexual abuse of minors. The audit reports were made public and were posted to the website of the New Hampshire Department of Justice.

What are some of the steps the Diocese of Manchester has undertaken to prevent sexual abuse of a minor in the Church?

The following are among the steps the Diocese has taken since the early 2000's to prevent sexual abuse of a minor:

All clergy and all employees and volunteers who regularly work with minors are required to complete sexual abuse awareness training and to undergo a criminal records check. Training and screening renewals are completed every 4 years. The training currently in use is called *Safe Haven* and may be found [here](#). As part of this training, adults learn about the warning signs of abuse and are informed of their obligations under civil law and diocesan policy to report suspected abuse to the appropriate civil and Church authorities.

On an annual basis, all children enrolled in parish and school religious education programs are provided with a personal safety lesson through the [Circles of Care](#) and [Netsmartz](#) programs. The Diocese offers resources to parents about how to talk to their children about abuse and how to prevent and report abuse.

Every parish, school, and camp has a Safe Environment Coordinator who works with staff and volunteers to ensure that the above safe environment requirements are met. Safe Environment Coordinators also ensure that posters, reporting cards, and other materials are displayed at their locations.

Staff of the diocesan Safe Environment Office make regular visits to all parishes, schools, and camps in order to provide training to coordinators and ensure that the safe environment requirements are properly implemented. The Diocese has developed a "Safe Environment Database" accessible by Safe Environment Coordinators in order to track compliance by clergy, religious, and lay employees and volunteers. The diocesan Office for Ministerial Conduct has also developed many resources and materials for adults and children to raise awareness about abuse and appropriate boundaries in ministry, how to prevent abuse, and how to make reports of abuse and misconduct to law enforcement and the Church.

For more information, please visit our [website](#).

How many reports involve instances of sexual abuse of a minor by priests that occurred after 2002, when the Diocese of Manchester began implementing many of the training and screening programs contained in its Promise to Protect, Pledge to Heal?

None. While the Diocese has received reports of sexual abuse by priests since 2002, the reported abuse took place prior to 2002.

Does the Diocese notify law enforcement whenever it becomes aware of allegations of sexual abuse of a minor when the misconduct took place many years ago?

Yes. Whenever it becomes aware of a report of sexual abuse of a minor by a priest, deacon, or diocesan employee or volunteer, the Diocese ensures that the New Hampshire Attorney General's office is notified, even if the misconduct took place many, many years ago. If the victim is still a minor, the Diocese also ensures that the matter is reported to the New Hampshire Division for Children, Youth & Families ("DCYF") and local law enforcement. The Diocese cooperates in connection with investigations by law enforcement.

Why didn't you include on the list all religious order priests or religious order sisters and brothers or all priests incardinated in other dioceses who were accused of sexual abuse in New Hampshire?

Religious order priests, sisters, and brothers and priests incardinated in other dioceses answer to their own religious superior or bishop; therefore, the Diocese of Manchester often does not have sufficient information or authorization to conduct an investigation. For example, the Diocese of Manchester likely would not have the authority to access the personnel file of a member of a religious order. The Diocese made the decision to include on the list allegations of which it is aware against religious order priests or priests of other dioceses who were assigned by the Bishop of Manchester to ministry, as the Diocese has some basic information about the priest's ministry in the diocese.

Why wasn't the priest I reported included on the list?

A report that you made may not have met the criteria for the list (i.e., sexual abuse of a minor by a priest of the Diocese of Manchester or by a religious order or priest of another diocese assigned by the Bishop of Manchester to ministry in New Hampshire). It is also possible that your report was investigated or reviewed, and it was determined after the review that the report was not supported by sufficient evidence to establish the probability that the accused cleric had sexually abused a minor. If you have questions about why your report is not included on the list, please contact the Diocese of Manchester's Victim Assistance Coordinator, Joseph Naff, MSW, at (603) 663-0125 or jnaff@rcbm.org.

Will the Diocese of Manchester update the list?

Yes. The Diocese of Manchester will update the list if or when it becomes aware of other reports that meet the criteria for the list.

Who do I contact if I think that there is a mistake on the list (for example, a name was not included or the dates or status of the priest is incorrect or not updated)?

The Diocese of Manchester has conducted a thorough review of its files and has checked and double-checked its records. However, it is possible that either the list contains errors or that we do not have records of certain reports, particularly if they were made many years ago. If you think that there are errors in the list, please contact the Bishop's Delegate for Ministerial Conduct, Mary Ellen D'Intino, M.Ed., LSW at (603) 663-0149 or delegate@rcbm.org.

If a priest who is on the list performed a sacrament for me (e.g., Baptism, Marriage, Penance, Anointing of the Sick), is that sacrament considered to be valid?

Sacraments administered by priests on the list are considered to be valid, as long as the priest was validly ordained at the time.

What is the process for reporting sexual abuse of a minor by Church personnel?

If you or anyone you know has been sexually abused as a minor by a bishop, priest, deacon, or Church employee or volunteer, we encourage you to report the abuse to local law enforcement. If the abused person is still a minor, the report is made to the New Hampshire Division for Children, Youth & Families ("DCYF") at (800) 894-5533. To report your abuse to the Church, please contact the Diocese of Manchester's Victim Assistance Coordinator, Joseph Naff, MSW, at (603) 663-0125 or jnaff@rcbm.org.

If you are a member of the clergy or a Church employee or volunteer and suspect that a current minor has been sexually abused by a bishop, priest, deacon, or Church employee or volunteer, you **must** report your suspicions to:

- DCYF: (800) 894-5533 *and*
- Local law enforcement *and*
- The Bishop's Delegate for Ministerial Conduct: delegate@rcbm.org or (603) 663-0149.

What happens when the Diocese of Manchester receives a report of sexual abuse of a minor by a priest?

After receiving a report of sexual abuse of a minor by a priest, and after attempting to obtain as much information as possible from the reporting party, the Diocese reports the matter to the Division for Children, Youth and Families, local law enforcement, and the New Hampshire Attorney General's office (if the victim is a minor) or to the Attorney General's office (if the victim no longer is a minor). The Diocese cooperates with the civil authorities in their investigation of the report.

If the report involves a priest in ministry, the accusation is plausible (has the "semblance of truth"), and doing so does not interfere with any police investigation, the priest is immediately removed from ministry, pending an investigation. The Director of the Office for Healing and Pastoral Care offers outreach and assistance to the victim-survivor and his or her family (see below). If doing so does not interfere with the police investigation, the Diocese retains a professional investigator to conduct an investigation of the report.

Once the investigation is complete, the report and all relevant documentation are shared with the Diocesan Review Board, which examines all the available evidence before advising the bishop on a recommended determination.

No priest who has been found to have sexually abused a minor is eligible for ministry in the Diocese of Manchester.

What resources and assistance does the Church offer to victims of sexual abuse by priests?

The Diocese has established an Office for Healing and Pastoral Care to offer support and assistance to victims, survivors, and their families in an accepting, caring, and compassionate manner. The support offered by the Office for Healing and Pastoral Care includes:

- **Providing prompt, compassionate, professional response and follow-up** to persons who make reports and to

their family and friends;

- **Offering referrals** for counseling services and pastoral care;
- **Facilitating pastoral interviews** with the Bishop of Manchester; and
- **Counseling services**, provided by a therapist of a complainant's own choice, are funded by the Diocese on a time-limited basis with the goal of providing therapeutic support to complement other efforts toward healing and wholeness. A set reimbursement rate has been established for funding these services. When requested, individuals are offered assistance in their search for a licensed mental health professional and/or for a qualified person who can provide pastoral and spiritual care.

Joseph P. Naff, MSW, Director of the Office for Healing and Pastoral Care, may be reached at jnaff@rcbm.org or (603) 663-0125.

In addition, the Diocese has developed a process for victims and survivors of sexual abuse as minors by diocesan priests to apply to the Diocese for financial assistance. Information about this process may be obtained through the Office of the Bishop's Delegate for Ministerial Conduct. Mary Ellen D'Intino, Bishop's Delegate for Ministerial Conduct, may be reached at delegate@rcbm.org or (603) 663-0149.

What resources are available for parents to talk to their children about sexual abuse?

Please visit our website for [resources for parents and concerned adults](#) about how to prevent abuse and keep children safe.

How much has the Diocese of Manchester paid to settle allegations of sexual abuse of a minor by priests? Where is the money coming from?

The Diocese of Manchester has provided to victims over \$28.5 million in financial compensation. In addition, the Diocese has paid over \$360,000 for counseling services for victims.

Funding for financial settlements comes from insurance policies, a specific non-restricted insurance fund, diocesan savings, and diocesan investment income. No parish or school funds were used in these settlements nor can they be used to fund any related claim against the Diocese. In accordance with the civil legal structure of the Diocese and Church law, no parish or school assets, including savings and real estate, may be used to fund claims against the Diocese.

What does the Diocese of Manchester do to establish the suitability of a priest assigned for ministry in the Diocese?

All priests assigned to ministry in the Diocese of Manchester have completed child abuse awareness training and are required to complete refresher training at least once every four years. All have undergone criminal records checks, which are also updated every four years. Non-diocesan priests who assist in our parishes, schools, and institutions are held to the same standards and also must present evidence that they are in good standing in their sending diocese or community. No priest who has admitted or been found to have sexually abused a minor may serve in the Diocese of Manchester in any capacity.

Researchers who have studied the past sexual abuse of minors by priests have recommended that dioceses include human formation programs in their seminarian training programs.¹ The purpose of human formation programs is to ensure that priests are healthy, well-rounded men of God who have the capacity to relate to their fellow human beings in a positive and appropriate manner. The Diocese of Manchester complies with that recommendation in that our seminarians participate in a four-year theological preparation program that includes a human formation component as well as annual psychological evaluation.

¹The Causes and Context of Sexual Abuse of Minors by Catholic Priests in the United States, 1950-2010, John Jay College Research Team.

What can the faithful do to support victims of abuse and ensure a safe environment in the Church?

As Catholics, we turn to Christ's words and examples to guide us. Christ calls us to:

Pray: Prayer is the foundation of our daily life. Pray for the victims and their families, pray for our clergy, and pray to the Blessed Mother, asking her to guide the Church and provide comfort and healing to those who were harmed.

Take Action: There are many actions that we can take to help comfort victims and combat abuse in the Church and society. For example:

- Educate yourself about child abuse and how to prevent it by completing our diocesan [Safe Haven](#) training;
- Teach your children about personal safety;
- Report any concerns you have about abuse of a minor to the New Hampshire Division for Children, Youth & Families ("DCYF") at (800) 894-5533 (if a current minor) and law enforcement, and report any concerns about boundary violations in parish or school ministry to the Delegate for Ministerial Conduct (669-3100);
- Ask what you can do to assist with safe environment efforts at your parish or school;
- Volunteer to work at a community agency dedicated to victims of violence and sexual abuse;
- Incorporate prayer for victims into existing parish prayer groups or Eucharistic Adoration through the [Cry to Heaven](#) prayer program.

When will the sexual abuse crisis in the Church be over?

The sexual abuse of minors and vulnerable persons by clergy has had a profound effect on the body of Christ: the people of God. This is not something that we can or should forget because the terrible reality of what happened has long-lasting repercussions for victims, their families, the communities involved, and our Church as a whole. We must continue to support victims and keep them in our prayers and completely commit ourselves to ensuring a safe environment for children and vulnerable persons. We cannot allow ourselves to forget and become complacent -- our dedication to these causes must be unwavering and must not cease.

Resources

[How to Report Abuse »](#)

[How to Report Bishop Misconduct/Abuse »](#)

[How the Diocese Works to Protect Children »](#)

[Child Protection Measures Timeline »](#)

[Office of Healing and Pastoral Care »](#)

[Resources for Parents and Concerned Adults »](#)

[Training Resources »](#)

[National Bishop's Conference Prevention Website »](#)

List of names of accused priests:

The Diocese of Manchester has compiled a list of the names of priests of the diocese who have been accused of sexual abuse of a minor since 1950. To review the list, [CLICK HERE](#).

The Diocese of Manchester
153 Ash Street
Manchester, NH 03104

T: (603) 669-3100
E: (603) 669-0377

Select Language ▼



Stay Informed

Events, programs and news from the Diocese of Manchester delivered to your inbox.

✉ example@email.com

Subscribe

Copyright © 2019 Diocese of
Manchester

[Sitemap](#) [Privacy](#) [Login](#)
[Policy](#)

[Website Design & Development by Syracuse Design Group](#)