

DIOCESE  
of NEW ULM

Catholic Pastoral Center

# NEWS

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## Statement on 12 Notices of Claim

**NEW ULM, Minn.** – The Catholic Diocese of New Ulm, Minn., has been named in 12 Notices of Claim alleging sexual misconduct involving a minor by four priests of the diocese:

- Fr. Dennis Becker (retired)
- Fr. David Roney (deceased)
- Fr. John Murphy (deceased)
- Fr. Michael Skoblik (deceased)

The parishes at which the alleged abuses took place have also been named in the claims. Below is a list of the parishes named in the claims, the priest named, and the time period of the alleged abuse.

- Church of the Holy Trinity, Winsted (Fr. Becker, 1964-1965)
- Church of St. Francis, Benson (Fr. Roney, 1965-1967)
- Church of St. Mary, Willmar (Fr. Roney, 1967-1968 and 1968-1970)
- Church of St. Paul, Walnut Grove (Fr. Roney, 1959-1963 and 1960-1961)
- Church of St. Joseph, Montevideo (Fr. Murphy, 1968)
- Church of St. Catherine, Redwood Falls (Fr. Murphy, 1973-1974, 1974-1975, and 1978-1982)
- Church of St. George (now the Church of St. Pius X), Glencoe (Fr. Skoblik, 1962-1965)
- Church of St. Joseph (now the Church of the Holy Family), Silver Lake (Fr. Skoblik, 1964-1968)

A Notice of Claim is not a lawsuit; it is a notice stating the time, place, and circumstances of the alleged abuse. Under Minnesota law, the eight parishes are independent religious corporations, as is the Diocese of New Ulm.

Anyone who has suffered sexual abuse by a cleric of the Diocese of New Ulm should immediately report such misconduct to local law enforcement. They are encouraged to contact the Victim Assistance Coordinator or the Bishop's Delegate in Matters Pertaining to Sexual Misconduct, 1421 6th Street North, New Ulm, MN 56073, phone: 507-233-5313, for counseling or assistance, if that is desired.

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The diocese has been diligent in its efforts to establish a safe environment program that educates clergy, diocesan and parish staff, teachers, parents, students, and volunteers who work with minors, and helps them identify and prevent sexual misconduct. We are committed to offering help and healing to anyone who has been a victim of sexual misconduct and to preventing this terrible crime from occurring in the diocese.

“The effects of sexual misconduct on the part of clergy are devastating and last a lifetime for those abused,” the Most Reverend John M. LeVoir, bishop of the Diocese of New Ulm, stated in his October 2014 column of *The Prairie Catholic*. “Please join me in working and praying for healing, reconciliation, and hope in Jesus Christ,” he said.

Fr. Becker was ordained in February 1962. His assignments included the following:

- Church of St. James in Nassau, 1962
- Church of the Holy Rosary in North Mankato, 1962-1963
- Church of the Holy Trinity in Winsted, 1963-1966
- Church of St. Mary in Cottonwood, 1966-1977 (offered one weekend Mass at the Campus Religious Center at Southwest State University starting in 1976)
- Church of St. Isidore in Clarkfield, 1969-1977
- Church of St. Bridget in DeGraff, 1977
- Churches of St. Francis in Benson, St. Bridget in DeGraff, and Our Lady of the Visitation in Danvers, 1978-1987
- Church of St. Anastasia in Hutchinson, 1987-1998
- Church of St. Patrick in Kandiyohi and the Church of St. Thomas More in Lake Lillian, 1998-2000.

Fr. Becker retired from active ministry on July 1, 2000.

Fr. Roney was ordained in August 1945. His assignments included the following:

- Basilica of St. Mary in Minneapolis, 1945-1952
- Church of St. Francis in St. Croix Beach, 1952-1955
- Church of St. John-Assumption in Faxon Township, 1955-1958
- Church of St. Paul in Walnut Grove, 1958-1963
- Church of St. Francis in Benson, 1963-1967
- Church of St. Mary in Willmar, 1967-1980
- Church of St. Gregory the Great in Lafayette, 1980-1993.

He also served as director of the diocesan San Lucas Mission Office and as director of the Office of the Propagation of the Faith. Fr. Roney retired from active ministry in 1993. He died on Jan. 27, 2003, at the age of 82.

Fr. Murphy was ordained in June 1951. His assignments included the following:

- Basilica of St. Mary in Minneapolis, 1951-1957
- Church of St. Theresa in St. Paul, 1957
- Church of St. Willibrord in Gibbon, 1957-1963
- Church of St. John in Ortonville, 1963-1967
- Church of St. Joseph in Montevideo, 1967-1971

- Church of St. Catherine in Redwood Falls, 1971-1981
- Church of the Holy Rosary in North Mankato, 1981-1986
- Church of St. Raphael in Springfield, 1986-1989
- Church of St. Joseph in Lamberton, 1989
- Church of St. John in Appleton and the Church of St. Joseph in Holloway, 1989-1991.

Fr. Murphy retired from active ministry in 1991. Between 1996 and 2000, he volunteered in ministry at the Church of St. John in Little Canada. Fr. Murphy died on April 30, 2001, at the age of 74.

Fr. Skoblik was ordained in June 1939. His assignments included the following:

- Church of the Most Holy Redeemer in Montgomery, 1939-1946
- Church of St. Wenceslaus in New Prague, 1946
- Church of the Most Holy Trinity in Veseli, 1946-1947
- Church of the Immaculate Conception in Lonsdale, 1947-1948
- Church of St. Mary in Bechyn, 1948-1952
- Church of St. George in Glencoe, 1952-1965
- Church of St. Joseph in Silver Lake, 1965-1988.

Between March 1964 and August 1965 he served as superintendent of St. Pius X School in Glencoe. Fr. Skoblik retired from active ministry in 1988. He died on Nov. 22, 1989, at the age of 79.

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