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DIOCESE OF BROOKLYN ANNOUNCES DECISIONS REACHED IN FOUR INVESTIGATIONS



DIOCESE OF BROOKLYN

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DIOCESE OF BROOKLYN ANNOUNCES DECISIONS REACHED IN FOUR INVESTIGATIONS

The Diocese of Brooklyn is announcing the conclusion of several investigations involving four priests who were recently accused of sexual abuse during the 1970s. Sexual abuse is a heinous, sinful crime and the Diocese of Brooklyn is committed to remaining vigilant against such abuse.

These case determinations were made by the Diocesan Review Board (Review Board), which is comprised of lay independent professionals: former law enforcement officers, lawyers with experience in family law and child abuse, healthcare professionals and mental health professionals. Throughout the process, the guidelines set forth by the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People were followed.

REV. CHARLES WHITE

A recent claim of alleged sexual abuse of a minor, dating back to the 1970s against 79-year-old retired Father Charles White, has been investigated and determined by the Review Board to be a **credible** allegation of sexual misconduct against a minor. By “credible” the Diocesan officials believe that the allegations may be true.

As a result of the Review Board’s determination, Father Charles White, who was ordained on May 29, 1965, has been removed from public ministry. That means he is not permitted to celebrate Mass publicly, cannot exercise any public ministry and cannot live in a parish residence.

BACKGROUND

The allegation was called in to the Independent Reporting Line on March 29, 2018, and forwarded to law enforcement that same day. Father White was informed of the allegation, which was referred for investigation on March 30, 2018.

The reported abuse allegedly took place between 1974-1978 while Father White was serving at American Martyrs Church in Queens.

While investigating this claim, another allegation made on February 1, 1999, was discovered. In that case, the Review Board determined in a letter dated April 24, 2004, that the claim of sexual abuse of a minor was not credible.

As a result of the accusation reported in 2018, the allegation reported in 1999 was reopened and the Review Board determined it was also a substantiated, **credible** allegation of sexual misconduct against a minor.

Due to the Review Board’s findings, Father Charles White will be placed on the list of credibly accused priests, which the Diocese published on their website (<https://dioceseofbrooklyn.org/sex-abuse-crisis-response/list/>) earlier this year.

REV. HUGH BYRNE

A recent claim of alleged sexual abuse of a minor, dating back to the 1970s against 86-year-old retired Father Hugh Byrne, has been investigated by the Review Board and found to be a **credible** allegation of sexual misconduct against a minor. By “credible” the Diocesan officials believe that the allegations may be true.

As a result of the Review Board’s determination, Father Hugh Byrne, who was ordained on June 2, 1962, has been removed from public ministry. That means he is not permitted to celebrate Mass publicly, cannot exercise any public ministry and cannot live in a parish residence.

BACKGROUND

The allegation was reported to the Independent Reporting Line on December 20, 2017, and forwarded to law enforcement that same day. Father Byrne was informed of this

allegation, which was referred for investigation on December 31, 2017.

The reported abuse allegedly took place between 1971-1973, when Father Byrne was serving at Holy Ghost Parish in Brooklyn (since renamed Holy Spirit).

As a result of this investigation, another allegation that dated back to 1996 was found. There is no record of a formal investigation for that allegation which was reported to the diocese on June 15, 2006, and was reported to law enforcement on that date as well. The records show after an initial interview, the alleged victim did not pursue the allegation further.

As a result of the 2017 report, the allegation received in 2006 was reopened and investigated concurrently with the allegation made in 2017 and also determined to be **credible** by the Review Board.

Due to the Review Board's findings, Father Hugh Byrne will be placed on the list of credibly accused priests, which the Diocese published on their website (<https://dioceseofbrooklyn.org/sex-abuse-crisis-response/list/>) earlier this year.

REV. JOSEPH NOLAN

An allegation of sexual abuse of a minor dating back to the 1970s against 97-year-old retired Father Joseph Nolan has been investigated and determined by the Review Board to be **not credible**.

The reported abuse allegedly took place between 1976-1979 while Father Nolan was serving at Our Lady of Snows Catholic Church in Queens. Father Nolan served at that parish between 1975-1984.

The allegation was received on Dec 20, 2017, in conjunction with the alleged victim's registration for the Independent Reconciliation and Compensation Program. It was reported to law enforcement that same day. The case was referred for investigation on December 31, 2017.

The Review Board has now presented its findings and has determined there was insufficient evidence to substantiate the claim against Father Nolan as credible. Their investigation found no corroboration of what the victim alleged.

Father Joseph Nolan was ordained on May 31, 1947. Prior to this allegation, Father Nolan had another allegation reported to the diocese on December 20, 2017, through an attorney. After many unsuccessful attempts by the attorney to contact the complainant, the attorney dropped that case.

REV. WILLIAM WITH

An allegation of sexual abuse of a minor dating back to the 1970s against Father William With, pastor at Resurrection Roman Catholic Church in Brooklyn since 2004, has been investigated and determined by the Review Board to be **not credible**.

The reported abuse allegedly took place between 1972-1975 at Our Lady of the Cenacle Roman Catholic Church in Queens. Father With served at that parish between 1972-1976.

The allegation was formally reported to the diocese through the Independent Reporting Line on March 29, 2018. On that same day, it was reported to law enforcement. The Diocese informed Father With of the allegation and an investigation began.

The Diocesan Review Board has now presented its findings and has determined there was insufficient evidence to substantiate that the claim against Father With was credible. Their investigation found no corroboration with what the victim alleged.

A letter was read to parishioners at Resurrection Roman Catholic Church this past weekend (August 10-11) informing them of the conclusion of this investigation.

Father William A. With was ordained on May 27, 1972. Prior to this allegation, there has never been any allegation of misconduct in Father With's 47 years of service in the Diocese of Brooklyn. He has no history of being disciplined due to any complaints.

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