

Sexual Abuse of Minors by Clergy Diocesan Status Report

As of February 1, 2005, allegations of sexual abuse of minors have been made against 39 clerics in the Diocese of Toledo for the fifty-four year period 1950-2004. All of these allegations have been reported to the appropriate civil authorities.

Of the 39 clerics, 7 are religious order priests (2 of whom are deceased) not under the jurisdiction of the Diocese of Toledo, including John Gallen, SJ and Chet Warren, OSFS, whose cases have been published in the local media.

With regard to the 32 remaining clerics of the Diocese of Toledo:

7 priests are deceased and therefore can neither defend themselves against the accusation nor possibly be a future threat to anyone if the allegation were true;

3 priests were accused and, after an investigation, it was determined that a crime was not committed;

5 priests asked to leave the active ministry and were allowed to return to the lay state. This was before any allegations were made to the Diocese against them. Of these 5 who left priestly ministry, allegations were investigated and have been found not only to be credible but substantiated against the following: Dennis Gray and Herbert Richey;

4 priests left the ministry without requesting that they be allowed to return to the lay state. The allegations made against them range from credible to substantiated to admitted. The 4 priests are the following: John Hemstreet, Michael McLaughlin, Leo Welch, and a former priest whose name has not been made public as it remains under investigation;

9 priests have been barred from public ministry (i.e. they may only celebrate Mass alone with no one present, they may not celebrate the other sacraments, present themselves as priests or wear clerical garb). This is the result of allegations made against them that range from credible to substantiated to admitted. (By "credible" the Diocesan *Sexual Abuse of Minors Policy* states that "under all the circumstances known at the time of determination, a prudent person would conclude that there is a significant possibility that the incident occurred.") The 9 priests are the following: Robert Fisher, Bernard Kokocinski, Neil Lucas, John McCullen, Stephen Rogers, Lawrence Scharf, Joseph Schmelzer, John Shiffler and Robert Thomas. A tenth priest, Thomas Beauregard, who was barred from public ministry as a result of a credible allegation died on February 1, 2005 while awaiting canonical disposition of his case;

1 priest is under investigation;

Finally, 2 Deacons (Glen Shrimplin who has left the ministry and John Michael Tynan who has petitioned to return to the lay state).

The ultimate canonical (church law) disposition of the cases of the 10 priests and 2 deacons named in the last 3 categories will be made according to the following provisions:

When even a single act of sexual abuse by a priest or deacon is admitted or is established after an appropriate process in accord with canon law, the offending priest or deacon will be removed permanently from ecclesiastical ministry, not excluding dismissal from the clerical state, if the case so warrants.

If for reasons such as advanced age or infirmity the penalty of dismissal from the clerical state is not applied for an admitted or established act of abuse, the offending priest will lead a life of prayer and penance and the restrictions mentioned above will become permanent (i.e. they may only celebrate Mass alone with no one present, they may not celebrate the other sacraments, present themselves as priests or wear clerical garb).

If an accusation is proven to be unfounded, every step possible will be taken to restore the good name of the cleric falsely accused.

In accordance with the canonical norms that have been established for clerical sexual abuse of minors, the allegations against the 10 priests and 2 deacons listed above are being sent to the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith in Rome.

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