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Diocese of Gaylord



611 W. NORTH STREET – GAYLORD, MI 49735 – 989.732.5147

Clergy Credibly Accused of Sexual Abuse of Minors in the Diocese of Gaylord

In 2002, the Diocese of Gaylord completed a review of all of our priests' files dating back to the establishment of the diocese in 1971. The results of that effort were then reported to the prosecutors in each of our 21 counties. At that time, we pledged to report any future allegations of sexual abuse of a minor involving clergy of our diocese to them, regardless of when the incident was alleged to have occurred, or whether the accused was living or dead. This has been, and will remain, our practice.

Over the past 16 years, we have worked diligently to learn from the past, to compassionately assist victims on a path to healing, and to do all we can to prevent any child from being abused in the future. The Diocese of Gaylord has fully implemented the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People and Essential Norms established by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops in 2002 and updated in 2005 and again in 2018. The Charter and Norms contain a comprehensive set of procedures for addressing allegations of sexual abuse of minors by Catholic clergy along with preventive measures designed to help keep minors safe from harm. Among them are mandatory background checks for employees and volunteers who work with minors as well as training for adults and children to help identify warning signs, maintain appropriate boundaries and what to do should abuse be suspected. Also included are guidelines for reconciliation and healing for victim-survivors and for accountability. An independent annual audit is completed each year which specifically evaluates the diocese's compliance with the Charter and Norms. The Diocese of Gaylord has been found in compliance every year since the Charter was established in 2002.

Though we have publicly released information regarding allegations of sexual abuse of minors involving clergy of our diocese previously, we understand that it may be helpful to the healing process for victim-survivors, and to our continued efforts for increased transparency, to publish and maintain a list of those clergy who are known to have had credible and substantiated allegations of sexual abuse of a minor made against them in the Diocese of Gaylord.

For purposes of this list, a "credible and substantiated allegation" against a priest or deacon who has served in the Diocese of Gaylord is an accusation that, after an investigation and review of available information, appears more likely true than not and has been accepted as credible by the bishop. The most recent credible incident of sexual abuse of a minor involving clergy in the Diocese of Gaylord is alleged to have occurred three decades ago.

The list is below. Under each name is the individual's current clerical status. This list will be updated if additional information comes forward or if there are future determinations of credible allegations.

Diocese of Gaylord ordained or incardinated priests against whom credible and substantiated allegations of sexual abuse of a minor have been made:

Patrick Barrett

Permanently removed from public ministry 2002
Deceased 2006

Ronald Gronowski

Permanently removed from public ministry 2002

Lionel Harnish

Removed from ministry 1986
Deceased 2007

James Holtz

Permanently removed from public ministry 2002

Benedict Marciulionis

Removed from ministry 1981
Deceased 2000

Raymond Pilarski

Permanently removed from public ministry 2006
Deceased 2017

Terrence Raymond

Left priesthood 1985
Deceased 1986

Robert Gordon Smith

Deceased 1990

Priests from Religious Orders against whom credible and substantiated allegations of sexual abuse of a minor have been made while they served in the Diocese of Gaylord:

Laurus Rhode, OFM

Removed from diocese and returned to Religious Order 1993
Deceased 1995

Leo Olschaysken, O. Praem

Removed from diocese and returned to Religious Order 1974
Deceased

The Diocese of Gaylord is committed to continuing our efforts to work in partnership with local agencies to prevent any child from being abused or neglected and to bring about healing where abuse has occurred. To report allegations of sexual abuse of a minor by clergy -- even if it is in the past -- individuals are encouraged to contact the **Victim Assistance Coordinator Larry LaCross** at **989.705.9010**. Victims are also encouraged to contact civil authorities.

In the State of Michigan many professionals, including clergy, teachers, doctors, counselors, etc. -- are **mandated** reporters. These individuals are required by law to make an oral report immediately to the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) if they have reasonable cause to suspect a child is being neglected or abused in any way. Further, the Diocese of Gaylord encourages *anyone* who suspects a child is being abused or neglected to report the matter to local authorities. The MDHHS maintains a statewide reporting hotline that is answered 24 hours a day. That number is: **855.444.3911**.