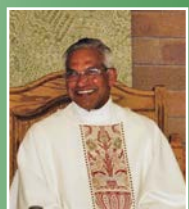




# WYOMING CATHOLIC REGISTER



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[www.dioceseofcheyenne.org](http://www.dioceseofcheyenne.org)

Volume 58 Issue 2

June 2019



## Where sin increases, grace abounds.

*By: Bishop Steven Biegler*

In this issue of the Wyoming Catholic Register, we are making public a list of all Catholic clergy with substantiated allegations of sexual abuse of minors or vulnerable persons for whom we have files and who were in active ministry from 1950 to the present in the Diocese of Cheyenne. Our clergy are expected to be shepherds who guard and protect the flock, especially the least among us. They are called to imitate the Good Shepherd who laid down his life for the sheep. Therefore, sexual abuse by clergy is an appalling sin and a reprehensible crime. It contradicts everything we stand for. Each name on this list represents a betrayal of trust, a violation of the innocent and a human tragedy.



*Bishop Steven*



1. The vessels containing the holy oils await Mass to begin
2. Bishop Steven breathes on the Oil of Chrism
3. Isaiah John solemnly carries the cross during Mass

4. The Eucharistic table is prepared during Mass
5. Most priests and many deacons from around the diocese attended, despite inclement Wyoming spring weather

## Chrism Mass Celebrated February 9

*By: WCR Staff*

Bishop Steven blessed the holy oils to be used in sacraments by priests of our diocese at the annual Chrism Mass, celebrated at St.

Patrick's Catholic Church in Casper on February 9th. These oils include the Oil of the Catechumens, the Oil of the Sick and the Oil of Chrism. The Oil of the Catechumens is used

in infant baptisms and in some preparatory rites for those being initiated into the Church. The Oil of the Sick is used in the sacrament of

See **Chrism Mass**, 23

Recently, I met with a victim of clerical sexual abuse who is making progress on a journey of healing. He told me, "there will always be bad guys," but what is important is "that institutions can be trusted to do the right thing" – that is, the Church and law enforcement – so that those who have been harmed can find hope in honest institutions and the credibility of good leaders. My sense was that he was wounded not only by the sexual abuse, but even more so by how he was treated by institutions that failed to respond to his case with fairness and justice. As a consequence, he felt shunned, isolated, and without recourse.

On behalf of the church, I

See **Grace abounds**, 23

apologize to each victim, not only for the misconduct of those who committed sexual abuse, but also for the failure of any Church leader who did not take appropriate action after having received a report of an allegation. Finally, I pledge to do all that we can to assist with your healing and to learn from errors in our past.

### The purpose of a public listing

Several dioceses and religious orders have published lists of clergy with substantiated allegations of sexual abuse. Nevertheless, some question the purpose for doing this. While this is not a practice of other public institutions like schools and other faith communities, there are good reasons for doing it. Here is my rationale. First, the Catholic Church made a commitment to transparency in the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*, which stated: "Dioceses are to be open and transparent in communicating with the public about sexual abuse of minors by clergy" (cf. Article 7).

In the past, this information was kept confidential, and as a consequence, other children were harmed. Transparency helps prevent future abuse because it makes it almost impossible for those of us in church leadership to backslide on our promise of zero tolerance. It is, we hope, a means of restoring trust with the laity. Credibility depends upon open and honest communication.

In addition, there have been times when church leaders did not believe victims of sexual abuse even when their allegations were true. Sometimes their allegations were not investigated. Other times substantiating evidence was ignored. I pray that publication of this list today is a clear signal that things have changed. Because the Church has been more transparent in recent years, victims have felt that their voices are being heard, and it encourages others who have been abused to come forward. Transparency creates an atmosphere in which victims can breathe a sigh of relief and know that they can speak about this horrible experience.

I know this personally because victims of family sexual abuse have written to me after they learned about the steps that we have taken to address sexual abuse in the Diocese.

Furthermore, in the Church and society Catholic clergy have a unique role. They are mediators between God and people. By the grace of ordination, the priest stands in the place of Christ. Catholics refer to him as an *alter Christus* (another Christ). Little children often view the priest as Jesus. In counseling and the Sacrament of Reconciliation, people open themselves to clergy with profound vulnerability. Catholic clergy are more than public servants, and they should adhere to a higher standard. Their unique role demands a correspondingly elevated response when they commit a scandalous crime.

With zero tolerance and publication of the names of clergy with substantiated allegations, some ask, "Where is mercy?" God's mercy knows no bounds, and abusers who acknowledge their sins are readily forgiven. But there is a difference between divine forgiveness and ecclesiastical reassignment. Mercy must be balanced with responsibility, consequences for one's actions and the protection of others.

Finally, we need to be compassionate to victims. Too often some have expressed concern for merciful treatment of clergy abusers without mention of the victims. That has to change. Our society needs a conversion regarding how we think about those affected by sexual abuse. We need a revolution in our thinking so that the victims are at the center of our hearts.

### The term 'substantiated' allegation

For this publication, we have used the term 'substantiated' allegation. There are a number of factors which could substantiate an allegation: (1)

if the accused has admitted to the conduct in whole or in part; (2) if the victim speaks with consistency while offering information about the alleged offender and other relevant facts; (3) if there is corroborating evidence; (4) if others offer knowledgeable testimony; (5) if multiple, independent allegations manifest similar patterns; (6) if there was prior grooming with sexual content; and other factors. When such elements are present, they help us determine that the allegation is likely true or substantiated. When these elements are absent, the allegation is unconfirmed and lacks substantiation.

There is no official church definition of the term 'substantiated' in regard to allegations of sexual abuse. For our purposes, we are using the following definition: A *substantiated allegation* is one which has been determined to have reasonable probability or even certainty based on a convincing level of proof.

### Process of the file review

I had hoped to be able to share these results earlier. However, the review of each file is a tedious process that requires a diligent and careful study of the facts. To assist the diocese with this effort, we engaged the services of Nussbaum Speir PLLC, a law firm with expertise and experience in conducting similar file reviews for Catholic dioceses. At our request, Nussbaum Speir has provided us with an impartial and comprehensive assessment of 303 files going back to 1950 of Catholic clergy of the Diocese of Cheyenne, including 5 bishops, 253 priests and 45 deacons. Subsequent to that review, the Diocese conducted a further review of particular files in order to clarify some cases by additional investigation.

The date of 1950 was selected with a focus on those victims who

See *Grace abounds*, 3



What should I do if a minor or vulnerable person is being abused or if I have been abused by a representative of the Diocese?

If you know of a minor or vulnerable person in imminent danger, immediately call 911. If you have observed suspicious behavior and fear that someone might be being abused or neglected by a representative of the Diocese, report to local Department of Family Services or law enforcement agencies. Additionally, make a report to the Diocese itself.

If you or someone you know has been the victim of abuse by a member of the clergy, or an employee or volunteer of a parish in the past, and would like to report or discuss this please contact

Victim Assistance Coordinator,  
Mary Adams  
307-220-0485 or adamsmaryj@outlook.com  
or  
Patti Loehrer  
Chancellor  
307-638-1530 (toll free 866-790-0014) or  
ploehrer@dioceseofcheyenne.org

The Diocese encourages your report, no matter when the abuse occurred.



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may still be living, and to reflect the availability of historic files that might contain allegations of abuse. This date also coincides with the earlier study of sexual abuse of minors conducted by the John Jay College of Criminal Justice.

The Church has a responsibility to be transparent about sexual misconduct with minors by those in Church leadership, and I have an obligation to protect those entrusted to my pastoral care. At the same time, I have a responsibility to protect the good names of clergy, who have served with selfless dedication, from having their reputations harmed by sincere but unsubstantiated accusations. It is difficult to discern the truth of an event that allegedly happened decades ago, especially if the accused is deceased or the memories of others, who could have provided helpful information, have faded.

The list that we are providing today is as accurate as we can make it based on the information we now possess. However, in some cases we were not able to ascertain whether or not an allegation was substantiated. If new information comes to light, the list will be updated. In accord with the *Charter*, we observe zero tolerance. If a priest has one substantiated allegation of sexual abuse of a minor or vulnerable adult, then he is not allowed to do any public ministry.

A diocesan bishop does not have the same authority over all priests assigned within the Diocese. They can be: (a) diocesan priests of the local diocese, (b) diocesan priests of another diocese, or (c) priests of a religious order. For those priests in the latter two categories, the bishop assigns them to ministry within the Diocese and has authority over their ministry; however, their own bishop or religious superior has jurisdiction over them in all other matters of religious life and discipline. Our diocesan files are incomplete for such priests because only

a portion of their priestly ministry happened within this Diocese. If they committed sexual abuse elsewhere, then their religious orders or dioceses will decide whether to name them in their own reports. For those reasons, we did not publish names of such priests on this list, unless we received a substantiated allegation that such a priest sexually abused a minor while he served within the Diocese of Cheyenne.

In the next few months, there will be new procedures implemented for allegations against bishops. This was addressed in the May 9, 2019 publication of Pope Francis's *Motu Proprio*, *Vos estis lux mundi* ("You are the light of the world"). Information about the *Motu Proprio* is included elsewhere in this issue of the diocesan paper. The U.S. bishops will be discussing that document and other sexual abuse policies during their meeting in Baltimore the week of June 10.

### **Shining the light on a hidden plague**

I am grateful to members of the media who have brought accusations to light or advocated for greater transparency and justice by the Church and society to address this evil. This is a human problem which needs attention in every arena of public and private life. In addition, I am grateful to the members of our Diocesan Review Board who have dedicated many hours and offered invaluable counsel in evaluating sexual abuse allegations.

In a special way, I want to thank the victims who have come forward with allegations. Your courageous action helps to prevent someone else from being victimized, and I trust that by bringing this into the light it will benefit you on the journey of healing. I regularly pray for the healing of victims/survivors of sexual abuse, and I am willing to meet with them and accompany them on their journey of healing. Victims may also contact the diocesan Victim's Assistance Coordinator, Mary

Adams, who will help them to obtain support for their needs. In addition, we have established the Shalom Fund to provide financial assistance for those who need counseling. Furthermore, I am in the process of consulting professionals with experience in counseling of sexual abuse clients, with the intention of developing a healing ministry for all who have experienced sexual abuse in society.

In God's providence, this painful time has opened a new conversation in the Church and society so that everyone is more aware of the horrible reality of sexual abuse. Now we have a heightened knowledge of the scourge of sexual abuse in families, schools, scouting, athletics, churches, and virtually every corner of society. People are more vigilant about protecting minors or vulnerable persons. And those who were abused are feeling the freedom to speak out. The hidden plague of abuse is being exposed to the light. Thus, God is using this agonizing time as a new dawn.

During the next six months, I ask you to join me in praying for the healing of victims, for the repentance and forgiveness of abusers, and for the Catholic Church to become a place of healing for anyone who has been abused. Also, please pray for me and all bishops, that we may be granted wisdom, counsel, courage and hope. Please make a commitment to pray at least 15 minutes a day. Your family could pray a rosary together, meditate on a Scripture passage or spend the time in adoration of the Blessed Sacrament.

Prayer is the foundation for a renewal in our Church. Nothing is more important because God alone is the source of new life. Prayer moves us from desolation to hope. Instead of being discouraged by sin, we are reminded that God is greater than evil. As St. Paul said, "Where sin increased, grace abounded all the more" (Rom. 5:20).

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **1. What information are you releasing? Whose names are on the list?**

The list contains names of clergy members against whom a substantiated allegation of sexual abuse of a minor or vulnerable person has been received and investigated by the Diocese of Cheyenne. The Diocese is aware of one bishop and ten priests with substantiated allegations. In all cases but one, they were clergy of this Diocese. The one exception is a member of a religious order who committed sexual abuse while serving in the Diocese of Cheyenne.

A "minor" is a young person under the age of 18. "Vulnerable person" means "any person in a state of infirmity, physical or mental deficiency, or deprivation of personal liberty which, in fact, even

occasionally, limits their ability to understand or to want or otherwise resist the offence." (*Vos Estis Lux Mundi*, Pope Francis, May 9, 2019)

### **2. How did you define "child sexual abuse"?**

All sexual touching between an adult and a minor or vulnerable person is sexual abuse. But sexual abuse does not have to involve penetration, force, pain or even touching. If an adult engages in any sexual behavior with a minor or vulnerable person in order to meet the adult's interest or sexual desires even if it does not involve touching, it is sexual abuse. This includes the manufacture, distribution and viewing of child pornography.

For purpose of diocesan policies, the term "sexual abuse" is not necessarily limited to the definitions of sexual abuse under civil or criminal law.

### **3. What do you mean by a substantiated allegation?**

A substantiated allegation is one which has been determined to have reasonable probability or even certainty based on a convincing level of proof. For a broader description of the term "substantiated allegation," please see the article by Bishop Steven in this issue of the Wyoming Catholic Register.

### **4. Does inclusion on the list imply a criminal offense?**

Clergy listed with a substantiated allegation does not necessarily mean they were found guilty of a crime or are liable for civil or criminal claims. Often the determination of a substantiated

See [FAQ, 4](#)

action taken by law enforcement, and it might not have been proven in a civil or ecclesiastical court.

**5. What happens to an allegation of sexual abuse of a minor or vulnerable person by a member of the clergy once it is received?**

The Diocese promptly refers all reports of sexual abuse to civil authorities and child protection agencies as required by applicable state laws and the Diocesan Safe Environment Policy. The Diocese cooperates fully with law enforcement in the process of an investigation. The bishop and other appropriate diocesan officials will also be notified. Any reasonable allegation of sexual abuse will result in the alleged perpetrator's temporary removal from ministry until an investigation is concluded.

The Diocese may engage the services of an independent investigator, who will take into account the rights of all parties. The Diocesan Review Board examines and evaluates all findings of an investigation and advises the Bishop in his determination of the suitability for ministry of priests and deacons accused of sexual abuse of minors or vulnerable persons.

**6. Are any of the men on this list still in active ministry?**

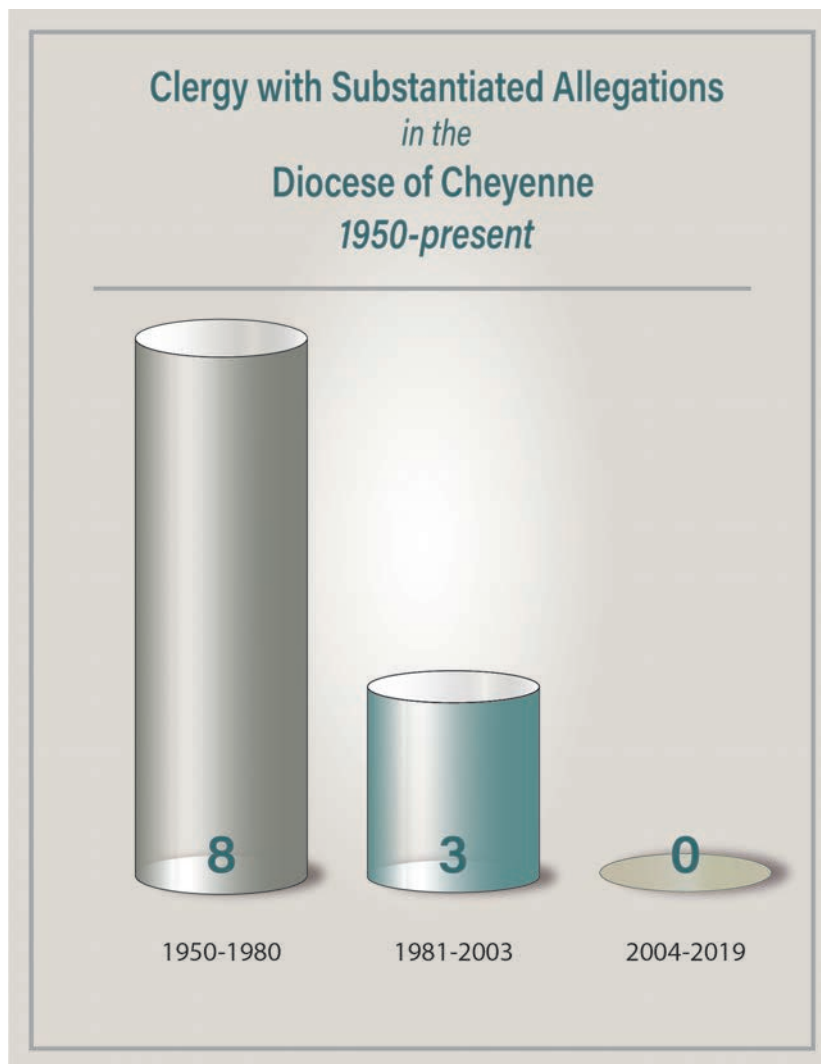
The diocese has a Zero-tolerance Policy. No cleric, indeed, no employee or volunteer with a substantiated allegation of sexual abuse of a minor or vulnerable person serves in public ministry in any way in the Diocese of Cheyenne.

**7. What is the Diocese doing to prevent sexual abuse within the church? What education is provided to clergy, new employees and volunteers?**

The Diocese of Cheyenne has had a Sexual Misconduct Policy in place since 1994 with the latest revision being July, 2018. The Diocese began

employees in 2001 and implemented the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People in 2003.

In addition, the Diocese continues to create and maintain a comprehensive safe environment program that includes all children and youth and adults: clergy,



employees and those volunteers working with minors or vulnerable persons in our parishes and schools.

**For Children and Youth:** All students in grades K-12 in Catholic schools and religious education programs are required to receive safe environment education. This is not sex education. Students are taught about personal safety, awareness and boundaries.

**For Adults:** The following requirements must be met prior to employment or volunteer service for those who interact with minors or vulnerable persons:

- Safe environment education
- State and national background checks, repeated at least every five years

received, have read, and will follow:

- » Norms for Responding to Reports of Sexual Abuse of Minors and Vulnerable Adults
- » Instructions Concerning Interactions with Minors and Vulnerable Adults

In addition, The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops engages an

independent firm that conducts an annual safe environment audit to ensure compliance with the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People. The Diocese has been found in full compliance with the Charter yearly.

As a consequence, there have been no substantiated allegations of sexual abuse of minors against a priest serving in the Diocese of Cheyenne to have occurred after 2003.

**8. What steps has the Diocese taken to ensure that those who apply for seminary are suitable for ministry?**

The application process for

the Diocese of Cheyenne includes interviews, multiple reference national criminal background and national sex offender registry checks and a psychological assessment that includes a psychosexual evaluation. Only a man capable of living a chaste and celibate life required of his moves forward in the application process. While in seminary, men are closely supervised by a formation team and routinely evaluated by the Diocese. The formation integrates the human, pastoral, spiritual and intellectual dimensions of the Program of Priestly Formation. This training for our priests is an important responsibility that we observe with the utmost seriousness.

**9. How does the Diocese ensure that priests or deacons from other dioceses or religious communities, ministering here either short or long-term, are not a threat?**

Prior to being allowed to minister in the Diocese, every cleric from outside of the Diocese must provide a letter from his bishop or religious superior stating that he is a cleric in good standing and suitable for ministry. He must have completed safe environment training under the provisions of the Charter for the Protection for Children and Young People. Bishops and/or religious superiors must attest that there is nothing in his background that would render him unsuitable for ministering; especially with children and young persons.

**10. If a cleric who has a substantiated allegation performed a sacrament for me (Baptism, Confirmation, Marriage, etc.), is that sacrament considered valid? In other words, did it "count"?**

Even if a bishop, priest or deacon has been removed because of a substantiated allegation (under restrictions or dismissal from the clerical state), sacraments that administered are valid. A sacrament is a personal, saving action of Jesus Christ. However worthy or unworthy that ordained person may be, the sacrament is valid as long as the cleric was validly ordained.

# Clergy with Substantiated Allegations

## CHLEBORAD, GERALD

**AFFILIATION:** Diocese of Cheyenne

**BIRTH:** 1934

**ORDINATION:** 1960

**STATUS:** Suspended, Faculties Removed, Retired

**REPORTING VICTIMS:** 3 adolescent males

**EST. TIME OF ABUSE:** 1984-85, 1995, 2003

**ASSIGNMENTS:**

- St. Joseph, Cheyenne
- Holy Name, Sheridan
- St. Mary's, Cheyenne
- St. Matthew, Gillette
- St. Joseph, Lovell
- St. John the Baptist, Buffalo
- St. Patrick, Kemmerer
- St. Margaret, Riverton
- Ss. Cyril & Methodius, Rock Springs
- Our Lady of the Mountains, Jackson
- St. Ann, Saratoga

## MURRAY, JOHN

**AFFILIATION:** Diocese of Cheyenne

**DOB:** 1933

**YEAR OF ORDINATION:** 1960

**STATUS:** Retired; prohibited from active ministry

**REPORTING VICTIMS:** 2 adolescent females

**EST. TIME OF ABUSE:** 1976-77

**ASSIGNMENTS:**

- St. Mary's, Cheyenne
- St. Anthony, Casper
- Ss. Cyril & Methodius, Rock Springs
- Our Lady of Fatima, Casper
- St. Joseph, Cheyenne
- Our Lady of Peace, Pinedale
- St. Anthony, Guernsey
- St. Edmund, Ranchester
- Holy Name, Sheridan
- Holy Rosary, Lander
- St. Patrick, Wheatland
- Our Lady of Sorrows, Rock Springs
- St. Ann, Saratoga
- St. James, Douglas
- St. Patrick, Kemmerer

## PRADO, CLETUS

**AFFILIATION:** Diocese of Cheyenne

**BIRTH:** 1928

**ORDINATION:** 1958

**STATUS:** Faculties Removed; Retired; Deceased

**REPORTING VICTIMS:** 2 adolescent males

**EST. TIME OF ABUSE:** 1958-63, 1977-78

**ASSIGNMENTS:**

- St. Joseph, Rawlins
- Our Lady of Sorrows, Rock Springs
- St. Margaret, Riverton
- St. Barbara, Powell
- St. Paul, Sundance
- St. Anthony, Upton
- Corpus Christi, Newcastle
- Holy Rosary, Lander
- St. John the Baptist, Buffalo
- St. Patrick, Wheatland
- St. Mary Magdalen, Evanston

## COLIBRARO, PHILIP

**AFFILIATION:** Diocese of Cheyenne

**BIRTH:** 1930

**YEAR OF ORDINATION:** 1957

**STATUS:** Deceased

**REPORTING VICTIM:** 1 adolescent male

**EST. TIME OF ABUSE:** 1965

**ASSIGNMENTS:**

- Holy Name, Sheridan
- Our Lady of Sorrows, Rock Springs
- St. Patrick, Kemmerer
- St. Paul, Pine Bluffs
- Ss. Cyril & Methodius, Rock Springs
- St. Mary Magdalen, Evanston
- St. Paul, Pine Bluffs
- St. James, Douglas
- Our Lady of Fatima, Casper

## PERONE (C.S.P.), ROCCO

**AFFILIATION:** Paulist Fathers

**BIRTH:** 1920

**ORDINATION:** 1949

**STATUS:** Deceased

**REPORTING VICTIM:** 1 adolescent male

Others reported elsewhere-see Paulist Fathers website

**EST. TIME OF ABUSE:** 1957

**ASSIGNMENTS:**

- St. Anthony, Casper

## TELLEZ, GEORGE

**AFFILIATION:** Diocese of Cheyenne

**BIRTH:** 1935

**ORDINATION:** 1961

**STATUS:** Resigned from ministry to marry; Laicized; Married

**REPORTING VICTIMS:** 3 adolescent females

**EST. TIME OF ABUSE:** 1966-1971

**ASSIGNMENTS:**

- St. Joseph, Rawlins
- Our Lady of Fatima, Casper
- Corpus Christi, Newcastle
- St. Laurence O'Toole, Laramie
- St. Edmund, Ranchester

## HART, JOSEPH

**AFFILIATION:** Diocese of Cheyenne

**BIRTH:** 1931

**ORDINATION:** 1956

**STATUS:** Retired; Pope Francis imposed restrictions and authorized a penal process

**REPORTING VICTIMS:** 3 adolescent males

**EST. TIME OF ABUSE:** 1977-80

**ASSIGNMENTS:**

- Priest in the Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph
- Auxiliary Bishop of Diocese of Cheyenne
- Ordinary Bishop of Diocese of Cheyenne

## POWER, JAMES

**AFFILIATION:** Diocese of Cheyenne

**BIRTH:** 1915

**ORDINATION:** 1939

**STATUS:** Deceased

**REPORTING VICTIMS:** 5 adolescent males

**EST. TIME OF ABUSE:** 1958-72

**ASSIGNMENTS:**

- St. Thomas, Monarch
- St. Matthew, Gillette
- St. John the Baptist, Buffalo
- St. Patrick, Casper
- St. Rose, Torrington

## Abused in the Diocese of Duluth

### GORMLY, CHARLES

**AFFILIATION:** Diocese of Cheyenne

**BIRTH:** 1910

**ORDINATION:** 1936

**STATUS:** Deceased

**REPORTING VICTIMS:** 1 preadolescent and 4 adolescent females

**EST. TIME OF ABUSE:** 1960-61

**ASSIGNMENTS:**

- Our Lady of Sorrows, Rock Springs
- St. Paul, Pine Bluffs
- Holy Rosary, Lander
- St. Laurence O'Toole, Laramie

## JABLONOWSKI, ANTHONY

**AFFILIATION:** Diocese of Covington (1970 - 1980)

Diocese of Cheyenne (1980 - 2000)

- St. Anthony, Guernsey
- Our Lady of Lourdes, Glendo
- St. Leo, Lusk
- Holy Rosary, Lander
- *Diocese of Steubenville (2000 - 2006)*

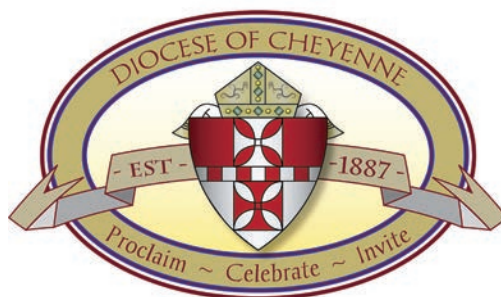
**BIRTH:** 1937

**ORDINATION:** 1970

**STATUS:** Dismissed from clerical state and released from prison

**REPORTING VICTIMS:** 4 adolescent males

**EST. TIME OF ABUSE:** 1983-88



This information is also available  
on the Diocese of Cheyenne  
website at  
[www.dioceseofcheyenne.org](http://www.dioceseofcheyenne.org)

## Abuse of a vulnerable adult

### STOLCIS, RONALD

**AFFILIATION:** Diocese of Cheyenne

**BIRTH:** 1942

**ORDINATION:** 1968

**STATUS:** Retired; Restricted from public ministry

**REPORTING VICTIM:** 1 male

**EST. TIME OF ABUSE:** 1995-1997

**ASSIGNMENTS:**

- St. Barbara, Powell
- St. Anthony, Casper
- St. Margaret, Riverton
- Sacred Heart, Greybull
- St. Mary Magdalen, Worland
- Holy Name, Sheridan

# USCCB President Issues Statement on Pope Francis' Motu Proprio Decree

Cardinal Daniel N. DiNardo, Archbishop of Galveston-Houston and President of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, has issued the following statement regarding the release of Pope Francis's Motu Proprio on May 9. The Motu Proprio, *Vos estis lux mundi* ("You are the light of the world"), is a worldwide order to the Church from the Pope, in response to the evil of sexual abuse. The new law comes three months after a meeting in Rome that brought together all episcopal conference presidents from across the globe to discuss the Church sex abuse crisis.

## Cardinal DiNardo's partial statement follows:

"Today, Pope Francis ordered a worldwide response to the evil of sexual abuse. It calls for the establishment of easily accessible reporting systems, clear standards for the pastoral support of victims and their families, timeliness and thoroughness of investigations, whistleblower protection for those making allegations, and

active involvement of the laity. It also leaves latitude for national bishops' conferences, such as the USCCB, to specify still more to account for their local circumstances. We receive the Motu Proprio *Vos estis lux mundi* ('You are the light of the world') as a blessing that will empower the Church everywhere to bring predators to justice, no matter what rank they hold in the Church. It also permits the Church the time and opportunity to bring spiritual healing.

The Holy Father said a 'continuous and profound conversion of hearts is needed, attested by concrete and effective actions that involve everyone in the Church.' Pope Francis was clear that this responsibility 'falls, above all, on the successors of the Apostles.' As part of this responsibility, bishops also will be held accountable under the authority of this Motu Proprio, which covers sexual abuse of minors or vulnerable persons, sexual acts compelled through the abuse of authority, and any coverup

of such crimes.

I am grateful for the opportunity to build upon the excellent foundation of the USCCB's Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People, the Essential Norms for Diocesan/Eparchial Policies Dealing with Sexual Abuse of Minors by Priests or Deacons, and the Statement of Episcopal Commitment, all of which date back to 2002. The existing framework in the United States including victim outreach, zero tolerance, reporting allegations to civil authorities, and lay expertise on review boards, among other measures - positions us readily to bring the Holy Father's instructions to action. By embracing the painful experience of survivors and working on these new protections, let us pray we continue to grow into a stronger Church."

Please find the respective translations of the *motu proprio* here:

English: <http://bit.ly/motoproprioEnglish>

Spanish: <http://bit.ly/motoproprioSpanish>

## Q&A Regarding Motu Proprio Vos estis lux mundi

### What does the new Motu Proprio do?

The new Motu Proprio *Vos estis lux mundi* is a significant move forward for the universal Church, one that echoes many of the practices established in the Essential Norms and the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People that have been in force in the United States since 2002. For example, it affirms the existing:

- commitment to provide for the spiritual and emotional well-being of victims/ survivors and their families;
- duty to comply with all applicable civil laws with respect to the reporting of allegations of sexual abuse of minors to civil authorities;
- right of any person to report such crimes;
- guarantee of a prompt and objective investigation;
- assurance of lay involvement.

The Motu Proprio also continues to focus on victims by significantly building upon existing local practices, for example by expanding:

sexual abuse of a new classification of "vulnerable persons,"

-the use of violence or other abuse of power to perform or submit to sexual acts,

-any cover up of such conduct by others;

-those who are to be reported for such cases, namely, cardinals, bishops, other clerics, religious superiors, and other members of institutes of consecrated life or societies of apostolic life;

-reporting obligations to include mandatory, internal reporting;

-against retaliation or discrimination by mandating "whistle-blower" protections.

### When do these norms take effect?

-they will take effect on June 1, 2019;

-they will be reviewed by the Holy See after three years and adjusted as needed;

-every diocese and eparchy (either individually or collectively) is to have a publicly accessible means for people to report cases covered under the Motu Proprio by June 1,

2020. In the United States, while this has already been accomplished for cases involving the sexual abuse of minors by priests and deacons, reporting mechanisms will have to be modified to serve the broader categories of the Motu Proprio.

### What about cases of sexual misconduct that do not fall under this Motu Proprio?

-These are generally already covered by existing diocesan or eparchial codes of conduct. With the help of lay and legal experts, bishops are working on ways to ensure that coverage and enhance awareness and reporting mechanisms for such cases.

### How are transparency and confidentiality promoted in this new Motu Proprio?

-The Motu Proprio increases transparency by establishing clear procedures that must be followed, reaffirming the obligation to report to civil authorities, providing for lay involvement in internal investigations, protecting from

possible conflicts of interest, and ensuring that those who report complaints to the Church are also free to report the same information to others and are protected from retaliation. At the same time, because the Motu Proprio involves the investigation of a complaint, it carefully balances the rights of those involved. Confidentiality is needed for the effectiveness of the investigation. It protects victims and witnesses, as well as the presumption of innocence and the seal of the confessional.

### Does this new Motu Proprio interfere or hinder civil law, such as mandatory reporting requirements and civil investigations?

- In no way. The Motu Proprio establishes the canonical (Church law) procedures that are to be followed. Included in these procedures, however, is the obligation to comply with all applicable civil laws.

See *Moto Proprio Q&A*, 7

# NFP Awareness Week Begins July 21st

By: USCCB & Maria Ward

“Love, Naturally! Cooperating with God’s design for married love” is the theme of this year’s Natural Family Planning Awareness Week, a national educational campaign of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) to celebrate God’s vision for marriage and promote the methods of Natural Family Planning.

Natural Family Planning (NFP) is a general title for ethical, natural, safe and effective methods for both achieving and avoiding pregnancy in marriage. NFP methods teach couples how to observe and interpret the wife’s signs of fertility and infertility. In the words of the Catechism of the Catholic Church, NFP methods “respect the bodies of the spouses, encourage tenderness between them and favor the education of an authentic freedom.” (CCC, no. 2370) The Catholic Church invites all the faithful to embrace God’s plan for married love. Learn more about these beautiful teachings which support the use of NFP in marriage at: <http://www.usccb.org/nfp/catholic-teaching>.

The Diocese of Cheyenne Office of Pastoral Ministries joins with the U.S. bishops in highlighting the benefits of NFP as moral methods to help married couples live God’s design for their marriages. The dates of Natural Family Planning Awareness Week are: July 21 – 27, 2019.



WWW.USCCB.ORG/NFP

Please follow the Diocese of Cheyenne Facebook or Instagram accounts and watch for information and events happening that week.

Please join the diocesan NFP team to spread the word about God’s design for married love

and the gift of life as well as the methods of NFP! If you would like to learn NFP or become an instructor in the Diocese of Cheyenne, please contact Maria Ward at 307-638-1530 or [mward@dioceseofcheyenne](mailto:mward@dioceseofcheyenne).

## Motu Proprio Q&A from 6

### Zero tolerance is not mentioned. Is that no longer the policy of the Catholic Church?

-In the United States, zero tolerance has been the policy since 2002, which comes from the Charter and the Essential Norms. The Motu Proprio does not undo this policy. Other episcopal conferences around the world have or will be developing policies appropriate to their legal and cultural situations. The good news here is that what was first thought of as an “American problem” or a “Western problem” is now on everyone’s radar.

### Why does the Motu Proprio focus on the role of the Metropolitan?

-The Motu Proprio uses the Metropolitan because it is a position in the Church that is grounded in tradition and the teaching of Vatican II and is governed by

existing canon law.

-This also allows investigations to be carried out on the local level, where the Metropolitan will have more direct access to information, documents, and lay experts to help investigate, and can collaborate with civil authorities. The Metropolitan, being local, can also take measures to preserve and secure evidence.

-Recent investigations of misconduct by a bishop, such as in West Virginia, have successfully followed this practice.

### What does this mean for the proposals the U.S. bishops considered last November?

-The work of our committees that has already taken place will be examined and adapted to work within the framework of the new Motu Proprio and will be the basis for deliberation over its implementation at the USCCB Plenary Assembly in June.

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