



Diocese of Madison

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Investigative firm begins review of clergy files

MADISON — At the request of diocesan leadership, Defenbaugh and Associates, an independent security and investigations firm, founded by and composed of veteran agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), has been retained to conduct a full review of all personnel files of the Diocese of Madison.

In requesting that a trusted and expert, outside investigation team scrutinize clergy files, the Diocese of Madison reaffirms its commitment to protect children and young people, as well as to be open and transparent with victims, faithful Catholics, and the larger community.

Through rereleasing names of known past offenders, and adding to that list any names of those previously found by the diocesan Sexual Abuse Review Board to be credibly accused, and conducting a thorough investigation and review of any additional names, the diocese hopes to continue to build trust, to provide healing wherever possible, and to reassure the faithful of the Diocese of Madison that such matters have been and will continue to be dealt with appropriately.

Initial steps for this review were taken by Bishop Robert Morlino, who on October 4, 2018, during an interview with EWTN, stated publically his opinion that all dioceses in the United States should undertake such a review. The process of scheduling a review was delayed due to his unexpected death just over one month later.

Convinced of Bishop Morlino's wisdom on this matter, Diocesan Administrator Msgr. James Bartylla directed that the process should continue. Bishop Donald Hying, following his announcement as the next Bishop of Madison, offered his strong encouragement that the diocese stay the course with this important next step of diligence and transparency.

The process, which is underway, is expected to unfold in the coming months.

The review process involves a comprehensive examination of documents from throughout the history of the diocese, dating back to the founding of the Diocese of Madison in 1946. Any findings by the firm which possibly constitute heretofore unknown clergy misconduct will be turned over to diocesan investigators and the diocesan Sexual Abuse Review Board. Any new allegations of criminal behaviors in this regard will be turned over to appropriate law enforcement officials.

To date, the Diocese of Madison has made known to the public all seven diocesan priests who have had one or more accusations made against them that were judged to be credible by the diocesan Sexual Abuse Review Board since the time of the diocese's founding. In 2003, Bishop William Bullock announced the names of five priests: Archie Adams, Curtis Alvarez, Michael Trainor, Lawrence Trainor, and Kenneth Klubertanz, who had one or more accusations against them which either had been (or were in the process of being) judged credible. All of these priests had already been removed from ministry.

Subsequent to that time, accusations were brought forward and judged to be credible against J. Gibbs Clauder and Gerald Vosen, neither of whom continues to exercise ministry.

At present, the diocese has one open preliminary investigation regarding a long-deceased priest. Once the investigation is complete, the credibility of the allegation will be evaluated by the diocese's Sexual Abuse Review Board, at which point the appropriate information, if any, will be made available.

There is a second investigation open into Fr. William A. Nolan, but this investigation is on-hold (and the presumption of innocence must be emphasized) pending the completion of the criminal proceedings against him. Father Nolan has been on “Administrative Leave,” since the allegation was made known to the Diocese of Madison — not directly, but by way of a criminal complaint — in May of 2018.

Any issues identified by means of the file review will be turned over for thorough investigation and will undergo a full review by the diocesan Sexual Abuse Review Board. The diocese is committed to following closely all relevant laws, as well as its own policies and procedures for investigating and reporting such matters.

What is expected from this review?

It has been the policy of the Diocese of Madison to be open and honest in reporting all substantial allegations of sexual abuse of minors made against clergy. Both the Diocese of Madison Communications Policy Dealing with Allegations of Sexual Abuse of Minors and the Diocese of Madison Policy Book Regarding Sexual Abuse of Minors, Sexual Misconduct, and Sexual Harassment are readily available at www.madisondiocese.org

Nevertheless, if any new allegations of sexual abuse of minors or any additional evidence regarding previous allegations come forward through this file review, the reviewers will flag them to be turned over for investigation and reporting in accord with the law and diocesan policies.

In terms of diocesan action, any allegations against currently living priests, deacons, or seminarians will result in immediate removal from ministry, pending the conclusion of investigations. All allegations will go before the diocese’s Sexual Abuse Review Board.

About Defenbaugh & Associates, Inc.

Defenbaugh & Associates, Inc. is a security consultant and investigations company specializing in due diligence, security vulnerability assessments, and investigations. Their Security Study Team (SST) has over 200 years of combined and actual operational and managerial experience in the federal, state, and local public safety sectors. Defenbaugh & Associates prides itself as a security consultant and investigations company specializing in due diligence.

Leading the review of Diocese of Madison files is Danny Defenbaugh. Defenbaugh was employed by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) for almost 33 years, and he has testified as either an expert witness or investigator over 100 times in federal, state, and local courts, to include the U.S. Congress and Military Tribunals. He was the only FBI agent to receive two Attorney General Awards. In 1983, he received the Attorney General’s Award for Excellence in Law Enforcement. In 1998, he received the Attorney General’s Award for Exceptional Service for his management of the Oklahoma City bombing investigation.

Defenbaugh received the Presidential Rank Award of Meritorious Executive in 1999. From 1998 until his retirement in 2002, Defenbaugh was the Special Agent in Charge of the Dallas Field Office of the FBI. FBI Dallas was designated one of the 10 core offices leading the September 11, 2001 investigation of the Pentagon/Twin Towers terrorist attacks.

As always, any allegation of sexual misconduct should be brought to the attention of law enforcement officials. If allegations involve priests, deacons, or other Church personnel, regardless of when they are said to have occurred, they should also be reported to the Diocese of Madison, by way of the Sexual Misconduct Question and Reporting Line, 608-821-3162. The diocesan policies regarding sexual abuse allegations, and instructions for making a report of sexual misconduct, are available on the diocesan website: madisondiocese.org/safe-environment.