



*The Roman Catholic  
Diocese of Phoenix*

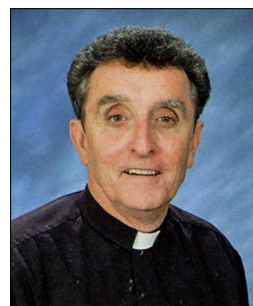
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COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE

**Community Notification Statement  
Re: Fr. John Spaulding**

**October 14, 2011**

On Wednesday, October 12, 2011, Bishop Thomas J. Olmsted accepted the findings of the Diocesan Review Board that three new allegations of sexual misconduct with a minor against Fr. John Spaulding are credible. Fr. Spaulding's faculties had been suspended and he had been placed on administrative leave on June 24, 2011, following Bishop Olmsted's acceptance of the Diocesan Review Board's findings that a prior allegation against Fr. Spaulding of sexual misconduct with a minor was credible. He remains on administrative leave.



The three new claims were made by persons who all allege that Fr. Spaulding engaged in sexual misconduct with them when they were minors. In accordance with its normal practice, and in compliance with the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*, and the *Essential Norms for Diocesan/Eparchial Policies Dealing with Allegations of Sexual Abuse of Minors by Priests, Deacons, or Other Church Personnel*, the Diocese conducted an independent investigation into each allegation. In connection with those investigations, retired law enforcement agents interviewed several witnesses, including Fr. Spaulding.

The first new claim was received shortly after the Diocese notified the community in June of Bishop Olmsted's suspension of Fr. Spaulding's faculties. An adult male called the Office of Child and Youth Protection at the Diocese of Phoenix and alleged that he had been molested by Fr. Spaulding approximately 37 years ago, when he was 13 years old, and when Fr. Spaulding was serving as a priest at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in Glendale. The Diocese advised the person who made the allegation to contact the Glendale police, which he did. It appears from

the police report that the Glendale Police Department does not intend to investigate the allegation, and that it has closed its file on the matter. The Diocese subsequently contacted the person who made the allegation and his attorney to request an interview by an independent investigator, but that request was refused and additional calls have not been returned.

The second and third new claims were received by the Diocese in July of 2011. Two adult males allege that Fr. Spaulding had inappropriate sexual contact with them over 30 years ago, when they were approximately 11 and 13 years old, respectively. The men state that they met Fr. Spaulding at St. Helen Parish in Glendale, and that the misconduct occurred at a private residence. The Diocese advised the men to contact the Glendale police, but they indicated that they have no interest in doing so.

The Diocese presented all of the information collected by the independent investigators to the Diocesan Review Board, and the Diocesan Review Board determined earlier this week that the allegations are credible. Bishop Olmsted accepted the Diocesan Review Board's findings on these three new claims, and he will refer all three cases to the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith in Rome for further proceedings, along with the initial case. It is important to remember that a preliminary finding of credibility by a Diocesan Review Board – or the suspension of a cleric's faculties by Bishop Olmsted – does not mean that the cleric is guilty or innocent of an allegation. It simply means that the allegation has a semblance of truth to it, and that further canonical proceedings are required to determine if the cleric has committed the alleged ecclesiastical crime.

The Diocesan Review Board is comprised of a canon lawyer, civil lawyer/judge, doctor, law enforcement officer, licensed child psychologist, retired teacher and early childhood specialist, two members of the clergy, and the Director of the Office of Child and Youth Protection at the Diocese. The Diocesan Review Board's task, upon receiving an allegation of sexual misconduct and after reviewing any evidence that is collected in connection with that allegation, is to determine if the allegation is credible. Further information regarding the Diocesan Review Board and the procedures that the Diocese follows when an allegation of sexual misconduct is received can be found in the Diocese's *Policy and Procedures for the Protection of Minors*, Articles 14, 16, 17 and 18: [www.bit.ly/protectminors2011](http://www.bit.ly/protectminors2011).

Fr. Spaulding was incardinated in the Diocese of Phoenix in 1971, and has served in a number of parishes since then, including Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in Glendale, Christ the King Parish in Mesa, Santa Teresita Parish in El Mirage, St. Louis the King Parish in Glendale, St. Raphael Parish in Glendale, St. Helen Parish in Glendale, St. Maria Goretti Parish in Scottsdale, St. Thomas the Apostle Parish in Phoenix, St. Gabriel the Archangel Parish in Cave Creek, and St. Timothy Parish in Mesa.

The Diocese obviously takes these matters very seriously and urges anyone who may know of any other such misconduct, or who may have any relevant information regarding Fr. Spaulding, to contact local law enforcement and/or Paul Pfaffenberger at the Diocesan Office of Child and Youth Protection at (602) 354-2396.

As always, Bishop Olmsted and the Diocese of Phoenix encourage anyone who has experienced sexual misconduct or abuse by a member of the clergy or by any employee or volunteer of the Church to make a report to local law enforcement and to contact the Diocesan Office of Child and Youth Protection.

Please keep all who were involved in these cases in your prayers for healing.

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### **Media Contact**

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