



REPORT ON CREDIBLE ALLEGATIONS OF SEXUAL ABUSE AGAINST MINORS BY CLERICS

ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE
OF TULSA & EASTERN OKLAHOMA

October 2, 2019

Memorial of the Guardian Angels

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

With a broken and contrite heart, today I have published the names of all clergy and religious who, since the beginning of the Diocese of Tulsa & Eastern Oklahoma in 1973, have been credibly accused of sexual abuse against a minor. Though this might be a difficult path, I believe this is the best path to bring healing and to restore trust.

On behalf of the Church in Eastern Oklahoma, I apologize to all victims and their families. It is difficult to express the sorrow and shame I feel that some of our children were hurt by those who claimed to have stood for the love and grace of Jesus Christ and by we who are leaders who failed to protect them. To the courageous and resilient survivors of child sexual abuse, I applaud your bravery and want you to know the Catholics in Eastern Oklahoma support you on your path to healing and justice.

To the laity, I want to apologize for any derision you have endured due to the egregious sins of others. In such times when the institutional Church falters, the personal holiness of the laity can be a great light in the darkness. To all those who have kept their faith and encouraged their loved ones to do so as well, I am in your debt. I also have on my heart those who do not know Christ and His Church and for whom these scandals have served as an impediment in coming to know Him. Please know I pray for you and hope the love of God can shine through such human failures.

Lastly, to my brother priests and deacons, I reiterate my apology that the sins of others have cast a pall upon the sacred vocation to which you have pledged your lives. It is my deepest hope that this publication will be a substantial step toward the healing of the survivors, their families, and for the Church.

I am fully committed to doing everything within my power to protect our children. Today, the Diocese trains each priest, deacon, seminarian, diaconate candidate, lay employee, and volunteer to recognize the signs of sexual abuse and how to immediately report suspected abuse to local authorities. We seek to employ the best practices in child and youth protection and routinely submit to reviews by independent auditors to ensure complete compliance.

I also reiterate my pledge to follow a strict policy of zero tolerance. I can reassure you that no priest or deacon exercising public ministry in the Diocese has had a credible allegation of sexual misconduct with a minor made against him. Moving forward, if there is a new allegation against a priest or deacon, you have my word that we will cooperate with civil authorities, follow our policies, and, if determined to be a credible allegation, will add their name to this report.

I offer this report in a spirit of transparency and contrition. Please join me in praying for the victims, their families, and the Church, as we work toward eliminating this scourge upon the Church. Jesus has won the victory over our sins, and as we call on him, he will save us from this dark hour.

For Christ & His Church,



Most Rev. David A. Konderla
Bishop of the Diocese of Tulsa & Eastern Oklahoma

REPORT ON CREDIBLE ALLEGATIONS OF SEXUAL ABUSE AGAINST MINORS BY CLERICS

What is the Goal of this Report?

The goal of this report is to make public any credible allegation of sexual abuse against a minor by a bishop, priest, deacon, or religious that has occurred since the founding of the Diocese of Tulsa & Eastern Oklahoma (“Diocese”) in 1973.

How did the Diocese Discover Credible Allegations against Bishops, Priests, Deacons, or Religious?

First, the Chancery underwent an extensive internal audit process to ensure all diocesan personnel files for bishops, priests, deacons, and religious over the last forty-six (46) years were accounted for and catalogued. This process included reviewing all available files of past diocesan administrators (bishops, vicars general, and chancellors), and any other confidential diocesan files to ensure all documents related to any cleric were properly maintained. The goal was to have absolute confidence that a personnel file contained any and all information available on an individual. The Chancery also received and included the personnel file of Fr. David Konderla, now Bishop David Konderla, from the Diocese of Austin.

Second, in total, 544 personnel files were identified and collected representing: deceased priests, living priests, priests who had formerly served in the Diocese, individuals who have been dismissed from the clerical state, deceased deacons, living deacons, and deacons who had formerly served in the Diocese. To create the list of credible allegations, the Diocese engaged the law firm of GableGotwals. All 544 files were provided in their entirety to GableGotwals. No records were withheld. GableGotwals reviewed every note, letter, and document in the personnel files consisting of over 80,850 pages, which took over four-hundred (400) hours to review.

What was the Standard to Determine a “Credible Accusation” or “Credible Allegation”?

If a court of law has made a ruling on an allegation, then the Diocese deferred to the determination of the competent civil authorities. The internal diocesan process for evaluating whether an allegation was credible was not a legal proceeding. Rather, if after all of the reasonably available, relevant information had been reviewed, there remained reason to believe the allegation was true, the allegation was classified as credible. A determination of credibility by the Diocese does not establish that the allegation is substantiated or proven to the Diocese, a court, or other authority. Unless a court has ruled otherwise, the determination of credibility of an allegation does not establish that a crime was committed or that there is any civil liability.

Report Continued on Next Page.

How many Clerics were Found to have Credible Allegations?

Out of the 544 clerics who have served in the Diocese over the last forty-six years, there were eleven (11) persons against whom it was determined a credible allegation had been made:

Diocesan Priests

Name: Fr. Harry Bartnik

Date of Birth: 02-17-1916

Date of Ordination: 06-02-1956

Date of Death: 12-25-2000

Name: Fr. Edmund Byrne

Date of Birth: 12-08-1913

Date of Ordination: 07-10-1938

Date of Death: 05-29-1991

Name: Fr. Lawrence Courtright

Date of Birth: 03-21-1933

Date of Ordination: 05-27-1961

Status: Permanently Removed from Active Ministry on 07-04-2002

Name: Mr. Timothy Daley

Date of Birth: 11-03-1952

Date of Ordination: 08-07-1987

Status: Permanently Removed from Active Ministry on 04-28-1999
Returned to the Lay State on 02-17-2004

Date of Death: 08-02-2004

Name: Mr. Kenneth Lewis¹

Date of Birth: 04-30-1962

Date of Ordination: 05-31-1991

Status: Permanently Removed from Active Ministry on 07-22-2002
Dismissed from the Clerical State on 06-13-2007

Name: Fr. Vincent McGouldrick

Date of Birth: 01-27-1922

Date of Ordination: 05-27-1950

Date of Death: 01-19-1994

Diocesan Deacons

Name: Dcn. Sid Starr

Date of Birth: 12-12-1943

Date of Ordination: 04-30-1993

Status: Permanently Removed from Active Ministry in 2009²

¹ For further information, see the 05-22-2018 Ken Lewis Press Release available on the diocesan website.

² Dcn. Starr was arrested in 2011 on a charge related to conduct with a minor but the charge was dismissed in 2012 without prejudice to re-filing. Thereafter, following an internal diocesan investigation, his permanent removal from active ministry was confirmed.

Name: Dcn. Morris Dale Vanderford
Date of Birth: 01-13-1932
Date of Ordination: 11-22-1977
Status: Removed from Active Ministry on 01-21-1992³
Date of Death: 07-04-1998

Priests from Other Dioceses

Name: Fr. John Jangam
Date of Birth: 08-18-1955
Date of Ordination: 03-12-1980
Status: Returned to India—Unknown⁴

Religious Priests

Name: Fr. James Greenwell, Third Order Franciscans (“TOR”)
Date of Birth: 05-24-1924
Date of Ordination: 07-04-1955
Date of Death: 07-14-2012

Name: Fr. Robert Poandl, Glenmary Home Missioner⁵
Date of Birth: 05-19-1941
Date of Ordination: 05-04-1968
Date of Death: 01-15-2019

How are Allegations Handled Today?

All allegations of sexual abuse against a minor are handled in accordance with state and federal law. The Diocese is committed to a transparent process that is both victim-centered and respectful to the rights of the accused. Bishop Konderla has pledged full cooperation with local law enforcement. Internal investigations are conducted by professional third-party investigators. Moreover, lay involvement is an integral part of the process, as a board of primarily lay persons, the Diocesan Review Board, will retrospectively offer advice on all aspects of these cases. The Board is not investigatory and does not conduct independent investigations. Again, Bishop Konderla has expressed a strict zero tolerance policy on credible allegations of sexual abuse against a minor.

A detailed account of the procedures addressing an allegation of sexual abuse against a minor may be found in the diocesan *Policies & Procedures for the Protection of Children & Young People* (“Policies”)—available on the diocesan website in English and Spanish.

Report Continues on Next Page.

³ Dcn. Vanderford was convicted in 1993 on charges constituting Sexual Abuse of a Minor. He was sentenced to prison where he died on July 4, 1998.

⁴ For further information see “Seeking the Light: Diocese responds to public allegations of sexual abuse of minors by priests,” *Eastern Oklahoma Catholic* (Aug. 18, 2002), available on the diocesan website.

⁵ In 2013, Fr. Poandl, TOR, was charged in federal court with one count of transporting a minor across state lines in relation to an allegation that occurred outside the Diocese. He was later found guilty and served time in federal prison.

What if there is a Credible Allegation in the Future?

Bishop Konderla has promised, “Moving forward, if there is a new allegation against a priest or deacon, you have my word that we will cooperate with civil authorities, follow our policies, and, if determined to be a credible allegation, will add their name to this report.” At the time of publication of this report, there is only one (1) pending investigation, which has been made public and reported to local law enforcement.

Does the Diocese offer Pastoral Support to Victims?

Yes, the Church has a sacred obligation to demonstrate a heartfelt concern for the welfare of the alleged victim and the welfare of his or her family. The Diocese provides counseling and other assistance based on the needs of the individual.

What is the Diocese Doing to Prevent Child Abuse?

The Diocese engages in national best practices to provide a safe environment for all the minors in our care. Each priest, deacon, seminarian, diaconate candidate, lay employee, and volunteer must meet certain requirements before being cleared to interact with minors: an online training video on how to identify and report signs of sexual misconduct, background check, background check questionnaire, a digital signature confirming receipt and understanding of the diocesan *Policies & Procedures for the Protection of Children & Young People*, and a digital signature to the *Code of Ethics Agreement: Child & Youth Protection & General Conduct*. Each parish and diocesan school has a child and youth protection local administrator who, with the support of the full time diocesan Director of Child & Youth Protection, ensures compliance at their local entity. Each year the Diocese is audited by a third-party auditor to ensure compliance with current policies. In addition, seminarians and diaconate candidates undergo rigorous psychological evaluations and routine examinations to ensure a healthy and ordered mental state.

What if I Need to Report an Allegation of Child Abuse?

Allegations of sexual abuse and sexual misconduct should be made to local civil authorities. If you have been abused by someone representing the Church, the Diocese will listen to your needs, support you, and help you make a formal complaint. Please call the Pastoral Response Hotline at 918-307-4970. You will be greeted by a voicemail by which you may leave a message.

Report Continues on Next Page.

Glossary of Important Terms

Chancery is the main administrative body of the Diocese and is composed of those institutes and persons who assist the Bishop in governing the entire diocese, especially in directing pastoral action, in providing for the administration of the diocese, and in exercising judicial power.

Clerics or **Clergy** means an ordained minister of the Roman Catholic Church, i.e., bishops, priests, and deacons.

Diocese means, for this report, the Roman Catholic Diocese of Tulsa & Eastern Oklahoma, a particular Church entrusted to the responsibility of the Bishop of Tulsa established by territory within the Catholic Church. The Diocese is an Oklahoma not for profit corporation sole and is distinct from other separately incorporated Catholic entities in eastern Oklahoma.

Diocesan Review Board functions as a confidential consultative body of primarily lay persons who assist the bishop in discharging his responsibilities in the area of child and youth protection. The duties of the Board include meeting annually to review diocesan policies concerning child and youth protection and advising the bishop of any concerns or recommendations. The Board does not set diocesan policy. If an allegation of sexual abuse against a minor by a cleric does arise, the Board also has the duty to assist the bishop in his assessment of allegations of sexual abuse and in assessing the suitability of accused priests and deacons for ministry. The Board will retrospectively offer advice on all aspects of these cases. The Board is not investigatory and does not conduct its own independent investigations. More information may be found in the *Policies & Procedures for the Protection of Children & Young People*.

Dismissed from the Clerical State means clerical status may be lost (colloquially known as *laicization*) either by a request granted by the Holy See or as a penalty (dismissal) imposed upon conviction in a canonical trial. Ordination once validly received cannot be reversed or undone. A dismissed cleric, however, loses all the rights and obligations of ordination as a priest or deacon and is permanently barred from presenting himself as a priest or deacon.

Minor means a person under eighteen (18) years of age.

Religious means, for the purposes of this report, those clerics who are a member of a religious order, e.g., the Augustinians, the Franciscans, etc., who served in a diocesan role, e.g., the pastor of a parish. The Diocese will have a personnel file on a member of a religious order if the member had a role within the diocese. Religious who did not and do not have a diocesan role do not have a personnel file at the Chancery and, as such, are not within the scope of this report—those personnel files are held with the religious order.

Removed from Active Ministry means that the faculties or permissions for a priest or deacon to engage in ministry in or for the Diocese, or on behalf of a religious order, have been removed or suspended. Removal from ministry occurs before the process to dismiss a cleric from the clerical state begins. The process to dismiss a cleric from the clerical state is not automatically initiated after a man is removed from ministry. A bishop may determine that removal from ministry is warranted in a particular case but dismissal from the clerical state is not, e.g., the cleric is elderly and unable to restart life as a lay person.

Sexual Abuse of a Minor means contacts or interactions between a child and an adult or a child and a minor where the child is being exploited or used as an object of sexual gratification for the adult; the

acquisition, possession, or distribution of pornographic images of minors for the purposes of sexual gratification, by whatever means or using whatever technology.

End of Report

Revised
October 1, 2019

Memorial St. Therese of the Child Jesus, virgin and Doctor of the Church