

Anger and confusion over concealed list of 25 accused priests in the Diocese of Buffalo

Revelations of the list has angered priest abuse victims and resulted in new calls for leadership change

By: [Charlie Specht](#) , Ed Reilly

Posted at 6:22 PM, Apr 12, 2019 and last updated 3:01 PM, Apr 26, 2019

<https://www.wkbw.com/news/i-team/anger-and-confusion-over-concealed-list-of-25-accused-priests-in-the-diocese-of-buffalo>

BUFFALO, N.Y. WKBW — Reaction to a 7 Eyewitness News I-Team investigation that found the Diocese of Buffalo was concealing the names of 25 priests accused of sexual misconduct or abuse is generating some strong reactions from priest abuse victims and the president of Saint Bonaventure University, Dr. Dennis DePerro, who is calling for Bishop Richard Malone to

step aside so the diocese can begin to heal and move forward.

The Diocese of Buffalo responded with the following statement:

“Bishop Malone is disappointed and dismayed with the comments of Dr. DePerro. We suspect that Dr. DePerro has not fully studied the carefully developed and well-publicized protocols of the Diocese of Buffalo. For example, the name of Fr. Gervase White, OFM, a beloved member of the St. Bonaventure community, was improperly revealed on television even though the allegation against him does not involve child abuse and cannot be investigated because Fr. Gervase died 17 years ago. Following established protocols, the diocese intentionally did not publicize that allegation. The bishop has received helpful input from others, including the President of Canisius College and other members of the Movement to Restore Trust, on how diocesan procedures might be improved. The bishop would have welcomed and still would accept such input from Dr. DePerro, but to criticize the bishop for following established protocols is unjust.”

Internal church records obtained by the 7 Eyewitness News I-Team show the scope of abuse is **much larger** than the public has been led to believe -- even with 121 members of the clergy already accused of sex abuse or misconduct.

Diocese of Buffalo - 6.27.2018 Review Board Agenda (Text)

The **June 27, 2018 agenda of the Diocesan Review Board** – a group of clergy and lay people who review abuse claims for the church -- is jam-packed with allegations reported to the diocese by 138 victims.

Perhaps most shocking: the names and allegations against 25 accused priests – including one recently active in the diocese – are still being shielded from the public.

The 7 Eyewitness News I-Team has spent the last six months using the June 27, 2018 review board agenda -- and **other documents** -- for verification in our reporting. When it became clear that the diocese had no intention of investigating many of the claims made by victims – because the priests were dead or because the diocese was excluding the victims from its compensation program – we began to investigate the claims on our own.

We were able to reach most of the victims who called to report the abuse and to verify many of the basic details of their stories through assignment histories or **other documents**. In the cases of deceased priests, we reached out to the diocese or the religious order and gave them the opportunity to describe the nature of the allegation and why they felt the name should or should not be

reported to the public.

This is what the I-Team found:

(Note: The diocese declined to say whether any of these cases were substantiated or not substantiated. Spokeswoman Kathy Spangler denied that all cases related to sexual abuse, but would not specify which cases to which she was referring. [Click here to read the diocese's full explanation](#). Also, 7 Eyewitness News does not identify sex crime victims without their permission, and only identified abuse victims when they wanted to be identified publicly.)

Fr. Carlton (CJ) Westfield - A diocesan document in Bishop Malone's "black binder" of diocesan secrets shows that in 2012, Westfield was discussed by Bishop Malone and members of the diocesan review board.

In May 2012, a secretary at Northern Chautauqua Catholic School in Dunkirk reported that Westfield “was discussing inappropriate topics with the sixth and seventh grade boys in religious education class,” a confidential memo to Bishop Malone stated. [The memo also said](#) Westfield “had taken pictures of small groups of the boys and girls” and was giving “private lessons” on Catholicism to a seventh grade boy.

During a meeting with Auxiliary Bishop Edward M. Grosz, Westfield “admitted discussing...pornography

and masturbation with the boys” and admitted taking pictures of the children. Westfield stopped teaching at the school, [the memo states](#), and the diocese “arranged for a forensic review of Father Westfield’s computer by the Diocese computer services office.” Nowhere in the memo does it mention calling the police, and the allegations have never been made public.

[Diocese of Buffalo - Fr. Carlton J. Westfield \(Text\)](#)

Kathy Spangler, a diocesan spokeswoman, said, “Although the 2012 matter regarding Fr. Westfield did not involve an accusation of abuse, it was thoroughly investigated and presented to the Review Board.”

In addition, the diocese reviewed an allegation about Westfield from a man in 2018, a different diocesan document confirms. But diocese spokeswoman Kathy Spangler said in an email, “The person who made the allegation in 2018 initially thought that his abuser might be Fr. Westfield and later, after reviewing information and photographs, withdrew the allegation against him. All the information was presented to the Review Board.”

Ordained in 1971, Westfield was pastor of Our Lady of Loreto Parish in Falconer and Our Lady of Victory Parish in Frewsburg. He became pastor of St. Anthony Church in Fredonia in 1999. He is retired and is listed as pastor emeritus of St. Anthony in Fredonia. Westfield did not respond to multiple messages seeking comment.

Fr. James Bartnik – A Florida man told 7 Eyewitness News – and a diocesan document confirms – that he reported an allegation against Bartnik in 2018 to the diocese. The man said roughly 40 years ago, Bartnik had inappropriate sexual contact with him under the guise of “wrestling.” He said he reported the contact almost immediately, and his family was ostracized from St. John Cantius in Buffalo.

The man also described his frustration with trying to report the abuse to the Diocese of Buffalo last summer. He said he called seven times before receiving a call back, and diocesan representatives told him it was “too late for anything to be done,” he said. Bartnik also worked at St. Teresa in South Buffalo. He died in 2013.

Msgr. Ted Berg – When questioned by 7 Eyewitness News, Marc Pasquale of Buffalo said -- and multiple diocesan documents confirm -- that he called the diocese in 2018 to inquire why a priest reported to him years earlier was not on the diocese’s list. Pasquale said he did so because those involved had questioned him about why the 2018 Buffalo Diocese list did not include Berg, and they were concerned there was a cover-up.

Pasquale, while serving as parish administrator of St. Teresa’s in South Buffalo in 1987, said he was told by parish employees that they found child pornography in Msgr. Berg’s room during routine maintenance. Pasquale said he immediately reported the incident to

multiple people and Bishop Head was notified.

But records show the diocese allowed Berg to remain pastor of St. Teresa's until his 2003 retirement. Even after the retirement, he was appointed canonical administrator to three Catholic grammar schools in South Buffalo. He died in 2009.

Fr. Gerald Collins & Fr. Joseph Garin – A Buffalo man told 7 Eyewitness News – and a diocesan document confirms – that he reported an allegation against both priests in 2018 to the diocese. He did not want to be identified and would not go into details of the allegations.

Collins served in churches in the Southern Tier and in Buffalo's Old First Ward from the 1950s through the 1970s, newspaper archives show. He was also assigned to All Saints Church in Buffalo and the Newman Center at Alfred University. Garin served in churches in Buffalo and Niagara Falls before dying in a fire in the Prince of Peace Church rectory in 1965, according to the Niagara Falls Gazette.

Fr. George Cotter – The diocese reviewed an allegation against Cotter from a woman in 2018, a diocesan document shows. 7 Eyewitness News was unable to reach the woman, but a second diocesan record shows that in 2018, she alleged abuse by Cotter in the 1950s and 1960s, when she was between 7 and 19 years old. Cotter was pastor of Our Lady of Blessed

Sacrament Church in the Town of Tonawanda. He is believed to be deceased.

Msgr. Joseph F. Coughlin – A woman told 7 Eyewitness News -- and a diocesan document confirms -- that she reported an allegation against the priest in 2018 to the diocese. The woman said it was the fourth time she or her husband reported the alleged sexual assault (she talked with three bishops and senior administrators of the diocese previously), she said.

The woman said Coughlin, the founding pastor of Our Lady of Blessed Sacrament Church in Depew (he served from 1965 to 1995), sexually assaulted her under the guise of teaching her how to be a Eucharistic minister. She said she was 36 years old in the early 1990s when Coughlin groped her and pinned her down. Years later, Coughlin exhibited “stalking” behavior to her when she moved to another parish, she said.

She was denied compensation from the diocese this year, she said, even though in the late 1990s an auxiliary bishop told her Coughlin had a file that was “two inches thick” with complaints. She said she never reported the incident to police because Coughlin was chaplain of the Erie County Captains and Lieutenants Police Association, the Erie County Police Chiefs Association, the Depew Police Department, and the Cheektowaga Police Department. He died in 2005.

Msgr. Edmund Dietzel - The diocese reviewed an

inquiry about Dietzel from a woman in 2018, a diocesan document confirms. 7 Eyewitness News was unable to reach the woman, but a second diocesan document, titled, “COMPLAINTS OF ABUSE FILED WITH THE VICTIM ASSISTANCE COORDINATOR AND PROCESSED BY BISHOP GROSZ, MARCH 2018,” also confirms the allegation and states the accuser said she was between 3 and 12 at the time of the incident.

Dietzel served as an assistant pastor of St. Rose of Lima, St. Agnes, St. Matthew, Blessed Trinity, St. Nicholas and St. Anthony, all in Buffalo. He was the founding pastor of St. John Vianney of Orchard Park, where he served for 31 years. Dietzel died in 1989.

Fr. John Donnelly – A 57-year-old Buffalo man told 7 Eyewitness News – and a diocesan document confirms – that he reported an allegation against the priest in 2018 to the diocese. The man said Donnelly abused him in the early 1970s when he was a 12-year-old altar boy at St. Monica’s church in the Seneca-Babcock neighborhood. The man did not want to be identified. Donnelly is believed to be deceased.

Fr. John Doyle – A woman told 7 Eyewitness News – and a diocesan document confirms – that she reported an allegation against the priest in 2018 to the diocese. She said Doyle abused her in the 1960s, when she was a fifth-grade student at Our Lady of the Sacred Heart in Orchard Park.

She did not want to be identified but she said she was

disappointed with how the diocese handled her claim.

“What a nightmare,” she said. “The whole thing is just a huge nightmare.”

She said she was excluded from the diocese’s settlement program because she didn’t report the abuse years earlier. Until now, Fr. Doyle’s name has remained secret because of the bishop’s policy.

“And now, I feel totally slapped in the face,” she said, holding back tears. “I think if they weren’t gonna follow through with this, then I think they should have not said anything at all. Because for me, it was reliving it. And it’s not fair...it’s not fair to all the people who got kicked out because it was only one person who said this priest did this.”

She added, “It's important that people know that it is my faith in God and not the church that carried me through. His peace and healing has helped me survive.”

Doyle is believed to be deceased.

Fr. Ralph Federico – A man named Greg told 7 Eyewitness News -- and a diocesan document confirms -- that he reported an allegation against Federico in 2018. Greg was 12 years old in the early 1970s when Federico sexually abused him, he said. Greg was an altar boy at Our Lady of Pompeii in Depew, where Federico was pastor, but the abuse occurred when

Federico took him to a trailer he owned in Mayville.

Greg said he did not tell his grandparents, who raised him, because “they wouldn’t have believed me anyway.” He was disappointed with the way the diocese handled his claim this year, he said. “They just kind of blow you off,” he said. “Of course you’re not going to talk to anyone who’s gonna tell you the truth.”

Greg, who requested his last name be withheld, said he has suffered from the effects of the abuse for decades. Federico was also pastor of St. John in Jamestown and Our Lady of Lourdes in Bemus Point. He spoke out in local newspapers about social issues, including the evils of pornography. He died in 2007.

Fr. John Fox - The diocese reviewed an allegation about Fox from a woman in 2018, a diocesan document confirms. 7 Eyewitness News was unable to reach the woman, but a second diocesan document, titled, “COMPLAINTS OF ABUSE FILED WITH THE VICTIM ASSISTANCE COORDINATOR AND PROCESSED BY BISHOP GROSZ, MARCH 2018,” confirms the woman said she was 15 years old at the time of the incident.

Ordained in 1960, Fox first served as a ministry apostolate at St. Mark in Rushford and an assistant at St. Ambrose in Buffalo, St. Mary in Holley, St. William in West Seneca and St. Aloysius in Cheektowaga. He was pastor of St. Vincent in Attica from 1980 to 1992.

In 1992, he resigned for medical reasons and retired in 1997, his obituary stated. He died in 2015.

Msgr. Francis Growney - The diocese reviewed an allegation about Growney from a woman in 2018, a diocesan document confirms. 7 Eyewitness News was unable to reach the woman, but a second diocesan document, titled, “COMPLAINTS OF ABUSE FILED WITH THE VICTIM ASSISTANCE COORDINATOR AND PROCESSED BY BISHOP GROSZ, MARCH 2018,” confirms the woman said she was six years old at the time of the incident. Growney was pastor of St. William Church in West Seneca from 1937-74. He was known for his outdoor Masses. He died in 1975.

Fr. Cairnan Haggerty – The diocese reviewed an allegation about Haggerty from a man in 2018, a diocesan document confirms. Haggerty, a Franciscan priest, was ordained in 1955 and taught at Bishop Timon High School in South Buffalo. He then went to Archbishop Walsh High School in Olean and served as principal and guardian of Friars. He later served as campus minister at St. Bonaventure University. He died in 1991.

A spokesman for the Franciscan Friars of Holy Name Province said in a statement, “HNP is aware of a number of abuse claims in the Buffalo diocese. The province cannot comment on the specifics of these claims since they are under active investigation...Under the circumstances, with these claims alleging abuse that

took place in the past - in some instances, upwards of 50 years ago, whereby accused and potential witnesses are deceased - HNP nevertheless is investigating these claims to the extent humanly possible, despite the difficulties and challenges they pose.” [Click here to read the full statement.](#)

Msgr. Francis Hanna – The diocese reviewed an allegation about Hanna from a man in 2018, a diocesan document confirms. 7 Eyewitness News was unable to reach the man, but a different diocesan record, titled “PROCESSED CASES OF SEXUAL ABUSE OF MINORS BY CLERGY AND RELIGIOUS,” also confirms the diocese received an abuse allegation against Hanna.

Hanna was chaplain at Emergency Hospital (Sheehan Hospital) in Buffalo in the 1970s and also worked at St. James in Jamestown. It is unclear whether he is alive or deceased.

Fr. James Kasprzyk - The diocese reviewed an allegation about Kasprzyk from a man in 2018, a diocesan document confirms. 7 Eyewitness News was unable to reach the man, but a second diocesan document, titled, “COMPLAINTS OF ABUSE FILED WITH THE VICTIM ASSISTANCE COORDINATOR AND PROCESSED BY BISHOP GROSZ, MARCH 2018,” confirms the man said he was between 10 and 15 years old at the time of the incident.

Ordained in 1965, Kasprzyk served as assistant pastor at Queen of Martyrs, Cheektowaga; St. Ambrose; St. Casimir; Visitation; and St. Luke, all in Buffalo; Queen of Heaven, West Seneca; St. John the Baptist, Lockport; and Most Precious Blood, Angola.

In 1978, Kasprzyk was named pastor of the Sacred Heart of Jesus parish in Bennington Center and Our Lady of Good Counsel Parish in Darien Center. He retired in 1993 for medical reasons, his obituary stated. He died in 2014.

Fr. Francis Kealy – Jack Schintzius told 7 Eyewitness News – and a diocesan document confirms – that he reported an allegation against the priest in 2018 to the diocese. Kealy, a Franciscan priest, worked at Bishop Timon High School in South Buffalo from 1951 to 1958, and Schintzius said the priest made him expose his private parts in a “humiliating” manner. “I never had a normal youth after that,” Schintzius said. Kealy died in 2006.

A spokesman for the Franciscan Friars of Holy Name Province said in a statement, “HNP is aware of a number of abuse claims in the Buffalo diocese. The province cannot comment on the specifics of these claims since they are under active investigation...Under the circumstances, with these claims alleging abuse that took place in the past - in some instances, upwards of 50 years ago, whereby accused and potential witnesses are deceased - HNP nevertheless is investigating these

claims to the extent humanly possible, despite the difficulties and challenges they pose.” [Click here to read the full statement.](#)

Fr. Nelson Kinmartin - A man told 7 Eyewitness News -- and two diocesan documents confirm -- that in 2018 he called the diocese to report that Kinmartin fondled him in 1982. Kinmartin was a guidance counselor at Bishop Turner High School at the time and called the freshman student down to the guidance office to “discuss careers,” the man said, before the priest started fondling him.

Ordained in 1950, Kinmartin also worked at Notre Dame High School in Batavia and was principal of Baker-Victory High School in Lackawanna. In 1969, Kinmartin was named the pastor of Our Lady of Fatima in Elba. He died in 1989.

Fr. William Lanphear – A Buffalo man called to report abuse by Lanphear in the 1990s, his lawyer confirmed. The man did not want to be identified, but the attorney said his client accepted a settlement from the diocese in 2018 for the abuse. The allegation also appears on a diocesan document from June 2018. Lanphear was a diocesan and religious order priest (Oblates of St. Francis de Sales). He worked at DeSales Catholic High School in Lockport New York. He died in 2008.

Br. Michael Latrello - The diocese reviewed an

allegation about Latrello from a man in 2018, a diocesan document confirms. 7 Eyewitness News was unable to reach the man, but a second diocesan document, titled, “COMPLAINTS OF ABUSE FILED WITH THE VICTIM ASSISTANCE COORDINATOR AND PROCESSED BY BISHOP GROSZ, MARCH 2018,” confirms the man made a report and said the incident happened when he was between 18 and 20 years old.

Latrello joined the Brothers of Mercy in 1964 and became a nurse practitioner at the University at Buffalo in 1977. From 1975 to 1976, Latrello worked in surgery unit at a local hospital. He died in 1996. An official at the Brothers of Mercy campus in Clarence referred 7 Eyewitness News to the Diocese of Buffalo when we requested to be put in contact with the religious order about the allegations. The diocese gave no details about the allegations.

Msgr. Richard O’Brien – A Buffalo woman told 7 Eyewitness News -- and a diocesan document confirms

-- that she called the diocese in 2018 to report abuse by O'Brien in the 1940s, when she was 10 years old.

The woman, now 82, said O'Brien was at Annunciation Church in Buffalo when he took her into a room and said, "This is just between you and me...We don't want anyone to get hurt." She said she now considers the statement a threat and has suffered the effects of the abuse for decades.

"He did horrible, horrible things to me," she said. She did not want to be identified and 7 Eyewitness News does not identify victims of sex crimes without their permission.

O'Brien was pastor of Immaculate Conception Church in Wellsville and Annunciation in Buffalo. Born during the Civil War, he was believed to be the world's oldest priest when he died in 1963 at 101, his obituary stated.

Fr. Joseph H. Penkaul - The diocese reviewed an allegation about Penkaul from a man in 2018, a diocesan document confirms. 7 Eyewitness News was unable to reach the man, but a different diocesan record, titled, "COMPLAINTS OF ABUSE FILED WITH THE VICTIM ASSISTANCE COORDINATOR AND PROCESSED BY BISHOP GROSZ, MARCH 2018," states the man reporting the abuse said he was 14 or 15

at the time of the incident.

Msgr. Albert Rung – The diocese reviewed an allegation by a man against Rung in 2018, a diocesan document confirms. 7 Eyewitness News was unable to reach the man, but a different diocesan record, titled “PROCESSED CASES OF SEXUAL ABUSE OF MINORS BY CLERGY AND RELIGIOUS,” also mentions Rung as “accused.” A third diocesan document, written on the letterhead of Auxiliary Bishop Edward M. Grosz and titled, “NEW’ NAMES OF PRIESTS - CASES OF SEXUAL ABUSE OF MINORS,” lists Rung with the explanation: “did not follow up with report of abuse of scout master.” The first two documents reference the same accuser, but the third document is unclear on who made the report.

Fr. Gervase White -- The diocese reviewed an allegation against White from a man in 2018, a diocesan document confirms. 7 Eyewitness News was unable to reach the man, but a spokesman for the Franciscan Friars of Holy Name Province said in a statement, “HNP is aware of a number of abuse claims

in the Buffalo diocese. The province cannot comment on the specifics of these claims since they are under active investigation...Under the circumstances, with these claims alleging abuse that took place in the past - in some instances, upwards of 50 years ago, whereby accused and potential witnesses are deceased - HNP nevertheless is investigating these claims to the extent humanly possible, despite the difficulties and challenges they pose.” [Click here to read the full statement.](#)

UPDATE: After this story was published, St. Bonaventure University officials said, according to its records, no instances of abuse had ever been reported against Fr. Gervase White, O.F.M., during his 47 years as an administrator and teacher at the university.

“Officials at Holy Name Province have informed us that the abuse allegation against Fr. Gervase is being investigated. Until we know with certainty if this allegation is credible, we believe it’s not appropriate to comment further on the case at this time,” said Dr. Dennis R. DePerro, university president. [Click here to read the full statement](#)

A Franciscan priest, White worked at St. Bonaventure

University from 1955 to 2001. He was prefect in the residence halls until 1965, dean of students from 1967 to 1970 and vicar of the local community, his obituary states. He died in 2002 and the scoreboard at St. Bonaventure's basketball arena bears his name.

Msgr. Maurice Woulfe - A woman told 7 Eyewitness News — and a diocesan document confirms — that she contacted the diocese in 2018 to report that she was sexually attacked by a priest from Boston in 1957 while attending a national Catholic youth conference, and that Woulfe allegedly played a part in the cover-up of the attack.

The woman said Msgr. Woulfe, through a friend, urged her to be quiet about the attack and not to say anything to anyone at the conference. The woman said she went through years of depression because of the attack, but has lived a successful life and remains Catholic today. She said she called the diocese to report it because she wants the sexual abuse cover-ups in the Catholic Church to end. She said she was “grateful” that

diocesan staff members responded and were willing to hear her story.

In addition, a second document obtained by 7 Eyewitness News written on the letterhead of Auxiliary Bishop Edward M. Grosz, titled, “NEW’ NAMES OF PRIESTS - CASES OF SEXUAL ABUSE OF MINORS,” lists Woulfe’s name. It is unclear whether this document refers to the same allegation.

Ordained in 1937 in Ireland, Woulfe served in Wyoming before coming to WNY. He was the diocese’s youth director from 1949-62 and received the “Padre of Youth Award” from the National Catholic Youth Organization. He also served as a chaplain for the Erie Council of the Boy Scouts of America.

Woulfe worked at SS. Peter and Paul in Jamestown, Our Lady Help of Christians in Cheektowaga and Immaculate Conception in East Aurora. He was named pastor of Infant of Prague parish in 1961. He died in 1989.

[Diocese of Buffalo - Internal documents \(Bishop Grosz/Connors LLP\) \(Text\)](#)

To Marc Pasquale, a former parish administrator in the diocese, the new list of 25 accused priests proves a theory that he has had from the start: that high-ranking priests who are now deceased were intentionally left off the list because they were “big names” within the

diocese.

“The bigger the position that they have, the more I find myself that those are people that they are going to cover [for],” said Pasquale. “It’s almost like it’s a sin to even mention those people’s names.”

7 Eyewitness News sent multiple emails to Bishop Richard J. Malone’s spokeswoman Kathy Spangler with details of the allegations. We also sought Malone’s input on whether he would consider divulging a more comprehensive list of accused priests like the one in Boston, since survivor advocates say seeing an abuser’s name often gives other victims the courage to come forward.

Bishop Malone -- instead of emailing his lawyers, Terry Connors and Lawlor Quinlan -- appears to have accidentally emailed 7 Eyewitness News with a response to those questions.

In an email sent to Chief Investigator Charlie Specht -- but addressed to Connors and Quinlan -- Malone states, “Please tell them that some things we did are missing on the Boston list, e.g., religious order priests. And tell them we are planning on giving more information.”

A total of 121 priests have been accused of sexual misconduct, not counting the 25 on the review board agenda and other documents. But the diocese only lists

78 accused priests on its official list on its website.

“I would say that the bishop has handled this very, very poorly -- probably as poorly as it could possibly be handled,” Pasquale said. “It’s unfortunate, because he could’ve been a person who was in a position to actually come out a hero. Here’s a guy who when a lot of the abuse was going on...he really wasn’t involved. He really was an innocent person. But when he engaged in the cover-up, when he engaged in...being a person who wasn’t going to be upfront with people, he became just as dirty at that point as everybody else that had preceded him.”

The president of one of Western New York's leading Catholic universities is calling on Buffalo's bishop to resign.

St. Bonaventure University President Dennis R. DePerro said Bishop Richard J. Malone needs to step aside so the Diocese of Buffalo can begin to heal after a year of constant scandals relating to the handling of sexual abuse.

"We are not healing," DePerro said in an interview with 7 Eyewitness News. "We are not restoring trust. And we are not moving forward in a way that's positive for our church."

He said a [7 Eyewitness News I-Team investigative story](#) revealing that Malone has been concealing the

identities of 25 priests accused of sexual misconduct or abuse is yet another blow in the diocese's credibility under Malone's leadership.

"No organization in today's world -- including the Catholic Church -- is exempt from accountability," DePerro said. "I believe that a good leader would recognize that moment and step down."

Given the revelations of the I-Team story -- as well as [other I-Team reports](#) that sparked [state and federal investigations](#) of the diocese -- DePerro said the entire Catholic community has been unable to recover a sense of trust and chart a path forward relating to the handling of sexual abuse in the church.

Allegations against two Franciscan Friars -- Fr. Gervase White and Fr. Cairnan Haggerty -- were revealed Wednesday in diocesan documents obtained by the I-Team, and Holy Name Province has opened investigations into the allegations.

Last year, the diocese included deceased Franciscan Fr. Maurice Scheier on its list of clergy with substantiated abuse allegations, even though there were [doubts about](#)

whether Scheier was misidentified. The diocese has not cleared up the discrepancy, officials said.

"With the disclosure of this list and the number of things that continue to come out, that the diocese has not been transparent with the public, I believe that moment has come," DePerro said. "I know the bishop had come forward with a period of prayer and healing, but those things do not seem to be working as this continues to unfold."