Diocese of Cleveland – List of clergy against whom have been made substantiated allegations of child sexual abuse

Cached on August 26, 2022 from https://www.dioceseofcleveland.org/healing/list-of-clergy

Background

That the evil of clergy sexual abuse of children has occurred in the Church is a fact that rightly provokes anger, shock, and profound sadness. In an effort to do justice to those who experienced this type of abuse and to protect others from future harm, the Catholic Diocese of Cleveland has, since April of 2002, published on its website the names of those diocesan clerics who were removed from ministry from 2002 through the present as a result of sexual abuse of a child. Expanding on that effort, the Most Reverend Nelson J. Perez announced in October of 2018 that this information would be compiled in a list format and supplemented with the names of any other diocesan clerics who were removed from ministry as a result of sexual abuse of a child or who is already deceased or no longer in ministry for any reason and against whom has been made a substantiated allegation of child sexual abuse.

Below is a list of those diocesan clerics against whom have been made substantiated allegations of child sexual abuse along with two additional lists identifying diocesan clerics currently placed on administrative leave or whose ministry has been restricted due to an allegation of child sexual abuse. In order to understand what these lists represent, and what they do not, please read the following definitions and explanation.

Definitions

Child
A person under the age of 18.

Cleric
An ordained priest or deacon of the Catholic Church.

Diocesan Cleric
A cleric ordained for and incardinated in the Catholic Diocese of Cleveland. This term and the lists below do not include nondiocesan clergy, which includes any cleric who belongs to a religious order.

Substantiated Allegation
An allegation that has been determined to be more likely true than not true. An allegation may be considered substantiated for purposes of the initial list below if one or more of the following is true:

- The cleric has admitted to sexually abusing a child.
- The cleric has been found guilty of sexually abusing a child in a criminal court of law.
• In the case of a cleric who is alive and in ministry at the time an allegation is made, it has been determined by appropriate canonical process that the allegation is true.
• In the case of a cleric who is deceased or no longer in active ministry at the time an allegation is made, a determination is made by the diocese, after reviewing all available evidence, that the allegation is more likely than not to be true.

Removed from the Clerical State

A cleric is removed from the clerical state if the Holy See has returned the cleric to a status essentially equivalent to that of a lay person. Practically speaking, a cleric who has been removed from the clerical state is prohibited from saying Mass, hearing confessions (except in certain extreme circumstances), administering the sacraments, wearing clerical garb, presenting himself as a cleric, using the title “Father” or “Reverend,” or otherwise exercising sacred ministry in the Church. This is sometimes referred to colloquially as being “laicized.”

Prayer and Penance

A cleric who has been sentenced canonically to a life of prayer and penance has been permanently removed from engaging in public ministry and is obligated to live alone in prayer.

Permanently Removed from Ministry

A cleric who has been permanently removed from ministry, while not technically removed from the clerical state, is one prohibited by the diocesan bishop from exercising ministry to the same extent as one whom the Holy See has removed from the clerical state.

The Lists

Below are three lists. The first list includes the names of any diocesan cleric (a) who was removed from ministry as a result of the sexual abuse of a child; and/or (b) against whom has been made a Substantiated Allegation of child sexual abuse.

The second list includes the names of diocesan clerics who are currently on administrative leave pending a final determination of their status by the Holy See.

The third list includes the names of diocesan clerics who are currently removed from ministry for reasons related to an allegation of child sexual abuse that is not, at this time, substantiated.

Please note that if an asterisk (*) appears next to a name on any list, the name of that diocesan cleric previously was published by the diocese.

Process for Determining Who is Named on the First List Below

Prior to the publication of this list, all available clergy files were reviewed with the assistance of an advisory committee convened by the bishop to determine which diocesan clergy, living or deceased, had at any time in the
past, ever been accused of sexually abusing a child. Once this had been done, the files and records of an accused
diocesan cleric were reviewed and a determination made as to whether the accusation constituted a Substantiated
Allegation in light of the totality of the facts and circumstances.

**Limitations**

While this list is as comprehensive as possible, because of the inherent limitations resulting from the age of or lack
of evidence relating to certain allegations as well as simple human fallibility, it can never be said with certainty that
this list contains the names of every diocesan cleric who has ever sexually abused a child in the Diocese of
Cleveland. In light of this, there may be those who in fact experienced abuse but who do not see the name of the
cleric who abused them on this list. The fact that the name of an accused diocesan cleric does not appear on this list
is not a repudiation of the allegation or a denial that the alleged abuse occurred. Likewise, it is possible that there
are clerics named on this list who may in fact be innocent of what they have been accused of doing. In light of this,
this list will always be a work in progress and the diocese will continue to consider both new allegations as well as
new information about old allegations so that, as much as humanly possible, this list will be complete and accurate.

**List of clergy against whom have been made substantiated allegations of child sexual abuse**

Please note that if an asterisk (*) appears next to a name on any list, the name of that diocesan cleric previously was
published by the diocese.

Richard Arko*
Ordained: May 26, 1990
Current Status: Removed from clerical state

George Bailey*
Ordained: May 18, 1963
Current Status: Deceased

Jerome Bals (Deacon)
Ordained: July 22, 1973
Current Status: Permanently removed from ministry

Russell Banner*
Ordained: May 20, 1967
Current Status: Removed from clerical state
Raymond Bartnikowski*
Ordained: May 18, 1963
Current Status: Deceased

Gary Berthiaume*
Ordained: June 1, 1968
Current Status: Removed from clerical state

Kenneth Bogucki
Ordained: June 9, 1984
Current Status: Removed from clerical state

Donald Brickman*
Ordained: June 13, 1981
Current Status: Removed from clerical state

Joseph Brodnick*
Ordained: May 31, 1969
Current Status: Permanently removed from ministry

Allen Bruening*
Ordained: April 28, 1951
Current Status: Deceased

Thomas Burg*
Ordained: May 23, 1964
Current Status: Deceased

John Ciolek
Ordained: April 2, 1938
Current Status: Deceased
John Connor
Ordained: May 23, 1959
Current Status: Deceased

Neil Conway*
Ordained: May 18, 1963
Current Status: Permanently removed from ministry

Joseph Ehrbar
Ordained: May 26, 1945
Current Status: Deceased

Leonard Ferrante*
Ordained: May 23, 1964
Current Status: Removed from clerical state

Patrick Henry*
Ordained: June 6, 1981
Current Status: Removed from clerical state

Matthew Ischay*
Ordained: June 29, 1975
Current Status: Removed from the clerical state

John Jacoby
Ordained: February 28, 1953
Current Status: Deceased

Edward Kickel
Ordained: April 17, 1922
Current Status: Deceased
Liam Kitt  
Ordained: June 19, 1943  
Current Status: Deceased

Frank Klamet  
Ordained: June 10, 1978  
Current Status: Deceased

Joseph Labbe*  
Ordained: June 14, 1975  
Current Status: Removed from clerical state

Victor M. Lambur  
Ordained: February 20, 1937  
Current Status: Deceased

Joseph Lang*  
Ordained: May 22, 1965  
Current Status: Deceased

Joseph Lieberth*  
Ordained: May 25, 1968  
Current Status: Life of prayer and penance

Martin Louis*  
Ordained: May 21, 1966  
Current Status: Removed from clerical state

Thomas Luckay*  
Ordained: May 22, 1965  
Current Status: Removed from clerical state
Daniel McBride  
Ordained: April 28, 1951  
Current Status: Deceased

John William McCool*  
Ordained: October 11, 1973  
Current Status: Deceased

James McGonegal  
Ordained: May 29, 1971  
Current Status: Removed from clerical state

J. Brendan McNulty*  
Ordained: June 8, 1974  
Current Status: Removed from clerical state

Robert D. McWilliams  
Ordained: May 19, 2017  
Current Status: Deceased

Nicholas Monaghan  
Ordained: December 21, 1907  
Current Status: Deceased

John Mueller  
Ordained: May 23, 1959  
Current Status: Deceased

Frederick James Mulica*  
Ordained: May 20, 1967  
Current Status: Deceased
Patrick J. O’Connor*
Ordained: January 12, 1985
Current Status: Removed from clerical state

Anthony Rebol*
Ordained: May 19, 1956
Current Status: Deceased

Joseph Romansky*
Ordained: September 20, 1975
Current Status: Deceased

Donald Rooney
Ordained: June 9, 1979
Current Status: Deceased

Edward Rupp*
Ordained: May 28, 1960
Current Status: Deceased

Joseph Seminatore
Ordained: May 31, 1969
Current Status: Permanently removed from ministry

Julius Slapsak
Ordained: June 29, 1925
Current Status: Deceased

James Viall
Ordained: December 18, 1954
Current Status: Deceased
John Vovko  
Ordained: May 25, 1968  
Current Status: Deceased

David C. Weber*  
Ordained: January 15, 1977  
Current Status: Removed from clerical state

Carl Wernet  
Ordained: May 21, 1932  
Current Status: Deceased

Joseph Williams  
Ordained: May 31, 1969  
Current Status: Permanently removed from ministry

Dennis Wirks*  
Ordained: May 31, 1969  
Current Status: Removed from clerical state

John Wittreich  
Ordained: May 31, 1947  
Current Status: Deceased

**Clerics on administrative leave as a result of an allegation of child sexual abuse**

Please note that if an asterisk (*) appears next to a name on any list, the name of that diocesan cleric previously was published by the diocese.

Theodore Lucas*  
Ordained: June 9, 1984  
Current Status: Administrative leave pending decision of the Holy See regarding removal from clerical state
Anthony Schuerger
Ordained: June 11, 1977
Current Status: Administrative leave pending further investigation of the allegation by the diocesan Review Board

Clerics whose ministry has been restricted as a result of an allegation which has not yet been substantiated
Please note that if an asterisk (*) appears next to a name on any list, the name of that diocesan cleric previously was published by the diocese.

Ronald Tomicky *
Ordained: June 14, 1975
Current Status: Deceased