

POST-TRIBUNE

Former Gary diocese priest stripped of duties after sexual misconduct

By **MAYA WILKINS** | Post-Tribune

UPDATED: July 28, 2025 at 3:56 PM CDT

<https://www.chicagotribune.com/2025/07/28/former-gary-diocese-priest-stripped-of-duties-after-sexual-misconduct/>

A priest previously in the Diocese of Gary was stripped of ministry duties earlier this year, according to information from the diocese.

Rev. Stephen Titko was restricted from public ministry after sexual misconduct in the 1980s, according to a January news release. He was accused of grooming and manipulative behavior when the victim was less than 18 years old.

According to a list about the 11 diocese priests who have been credibly accused of abusing minors, Titko started working at Marquette High School in Michigan City on Dec. 4, 1984 before he became an instructor at Bishop Noll Institute in Hammond on June 9, 1986. He worked at St. Michael Parish in Schererville in 1988 while continuing work at Bishop Noll Institute. The diocese's information does not say exactly when Titko left Bishop Noll.

In January, the diocese reviewed Titko's case, and the Holy See reviewed the matter and rejected Titko's appeal of restrictions. Diocese of Gary Bishop Robert McClory issued restrictions, including removing priestly faculties, not celebrating mass or other sacraments publicly, and not wearing clerical

attire or using his clerical title.

Any deviation from the restrictions requires written permission from McClory, according to the diocese's statement.

"Please note that the Diocese of Gary has a dedicated Victim's Assistance Coordinator (VAC) whose assigned responsibility is to care for the needs of victims of clergy sexual misconduct," Colleen McGinty-Rabine, director of communications, said in a Monday email. "We offer these services to all victims who are welcome to contact our Victims' Assistance Coordinator at any time, 24/7, at (219) 588-9089."

Between 1979 and 2001, Titko held various positions in Northwest Indiana, starting with an assistant at the Nativity of Our Savior in Portage and ending with an associate pastor at St. Thomas More in Munster.

Titko also held positions in Gary, Hobart, Whiting, St. John, Chesterton, East Chicago and Hammond

In September 2002, Titko took a leave of absence with no ministry, and in March 2005, the Holy See allowed limited ministry. In October 2005, Titko began work at the Byzantine Catholic Eparchy of Parma in Ohio before no longer continuing his ministry in May 2018.

Titko received further ministry restrictions in 2020, according to the Gary diocese, and the Holy See upheld those restrictions in 2024.

Originally Published: July 28, 2025 at 3:25 PM CDT