

Assignment Record – Rev. John E. McLaughlin

Summary of Case: A priest of the Boston archdiocese ordained in 1962, McLaughlin was accused by two different adult males in 2002 of having groped them; one who said McLaughlin touched his groin while he was in counseling with the priest, and the other who said McLaughlin groped him at his son's christening. McLaughlin was kept in ministry. In May 2004 an accusation surfaced that McLaughlin had sexually abused a minor in the 1980s. He was subsequently removed from his parish, and officially removed from his position as pastor of the parish in March 2005. In August 2012 the Archdiocese announced that its Tribunal had determined the allegation against McLaughlin that he had sexually abused a minor was "unsubstantiated". McLaughlin was at that point assigned to the status of "Senior Priest, restricted." He died in March 2026.

Ordained: 1962 **Died:** March 14, 2026

Start	Stop	Assignment	Town/ Accusations	State	Position	Notes
1962 Boston archbishop was Richard James Cushing (1944-1970).	1967	St. Joseph's	Holbrook	MA	3/3 , 2/3	Parish had a school with 83-277 boys and 70-253 girls.
1967	1969	St. Bernard's	Concord	MA	3/3	
1969? Cushing was succeeded by Humberto Sousa Medeiros (1970-1983).	1977	St. Joseph the Worker	Hanson	MA	2/2	McLaughlin is indexed but not listed in the Boston archdiocesan pages in the 1970 <i>Directory</i> as at St. Joseph the Worker.

1977 Bernard Francis Law replaced Medieros (1984-2002).	1985	St. Nicholas	Abington-Brockton • McLaughlin was accused in 2004 of having molested a minor in the 1980s.	MA	2/3, 3/3, 2/2 In residence.	
	1985	St. Benedict's	Somerville	MA	2/3, 2/2, 1/2	Parish had a school with 240-202 students.
	1989					McLaughlin is not indexed in the 1990 <i>Directory</i> , nor is he listed as at St. Benedict's in the Boston archdiocesan pages.
		Archdiocesan Union of Holy Name Societies	Boston	MA	chaplain	
1990 Sean Patrick O'Malley succeeded Law (2003-).	May 2004	St. Benedict's	Somerville • In a 2002 lawsuit, an adult male accused McLaughlin of touching his groin when the man sought counseling with McLaughlin in June 2001. • A second man filed a complaint in 2002 that	MA	1/2, 1/3	Parish had a school with 196 students. The 2005 <i>Directory</i> shows a religious education program with 660 students. McLaughlin was kept in ministry after the allegations in 2002 that he sexually

2002 that
McLaughlin
groped him at
his son's
christening.

assaulted two
men.
According to
the
archdiocesan
spokesperson
,
McLaughlin
was not
removed at
that time
because "the
archdiocese
handles
allegations of
sexual abuse
of adults
differently
from
allegations
involving
minors".

McLaughlin
went on
a [leave of
absence](#) from
St.
Benedict's in
May 2004
after an
accusation
surfaced that
he had
sexually
abused a
minor in the
1980s.

May 2004	March 2005					His assignment as pastor of St. Benedict's was officially ended by the archdiocese in March 2005.
March 2005	Aug. 2012	Unassigned				
Aug. 2012	March 2026	Senior Priest/ Restricted	Boston	MA		The archdiocese announced in August 2012 that its Tribunal had determined that the allegation of sexual abuse of a minor against McLaughlin was " unsubstantiated ". He was therefore assigned to the status of "Senior Priest, restricted". McLaughlin died 3/14/2026.

Sources: Official Catholic Directory (New York: P.J. Kenedy and Sons, 1962-2009)

• [Crisis in the Church, Suit Alleges 50-Year Coverup Law, Church Are Cited by Alleged Victims of Abuse](#), By Michael Rezendes, Boston Globe, September 19, 2002

- [Suit Claims Archdiocese Conspired to Hide Abuse](#), By Robin Washington, Boston Herald, September 19, 2002
- [Parish Priest Kicked out for Sex Abuse Allegation](#), By Eric Convey , Boston Herald [Somerville MA], May 16, 2004
- [Group Weighs Whether Priest in Abuse Case Should Continue in Post, By Jared Stearns](#), Boston Globe, May 17, 2004
- [Removed Somerville Priest Had Previous Complaints](#), By Robin Washington, Boston Herald, May 17, 2004
- [Man Defends Cleric Uncle Despite Abuse Settlement](#), By Robin Washington, Boston Herald, May 19, 2004
- [Parishioners Back Accused Pastor](#), By Pat Healy, Boston Globe, May 23, 2004
- [Accused Had Been Named, Diocese Says](#), By Kevin Cullen, Boston Globe [Boston MA], September 15, 2004
- [140 New Victims Have Come Forward in Year since Settlement](#), By Donis Tracy, Archdiocese of Boston, September 17, 2004
- [Official Announcement](#), Archdiocese of Boston, April 1, 2005
- [Boston Archdiocese Posts Sex-Abuse Database Online](#), By Joan Frawley Desmond, National Catholic Register, August 25, 2011
- [Boston Archdiocese: 15 Accused Priests Had Worked in Somerville Parishes](#), By Andy Metzger, Wicked Local Somerville, August 30, 2011
- [Archdiocese of Boston Returns Reverend John E. McLaughlin to Ministry](#), Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Boston, August 11, 2012
- [Charges against Priest Ruled Unsubstantiated](#), By Derek Anderson, Boston Globe, August 11, 2012
- [Former East Somerville Priest Cleared of Molestation Charges by Archdiocese](#), Wicked Local Somerville, August 11, 2012
- [Eaton Funeral Homes 03.14.26](#)

Priests in a Parish: We use the following convention to show a priest's place among the clergy of a parish: 1/2 means that he is the first priest listed in the *Official Catholic Directory* (usually the pastor) and that there is a total of two priests at the parish. The shorthand 3/4 means that the priest is listed third on a four-priest roster. See our [sample page from the Directory](#).

Note: The *Official Catholic Directory* aims to report the whereabouts of Catholic priests in the United States on January 1 of the *Directory's* publication year. Our working assumption is that a priest listed in the *Directory* for a given year was at the same assignment for part of the previous year as well. However, Kenedy and Sons will sometimes accept updates well into the year of publication. Diocesan clergy records are rarely available to correct this information. The *Directory* is also sometimes misleading or wrong. We have tried to create an accurate assignment record, given the source materials and their limitations. Assignment records are a work in progress and we are always improving the records that we post. Please [email us](#) with new information and corrections.

This assignment record collates McLaughlin's career history as it is represented in the *Official Catholic Directory* with allegations as reported in the media. We make no representation regarding the truth of the allegation we report, and we remind our readers that the U.S. legal

system presumes that a person accused of or charged with a crime is innocent until proven guilty. Similarly, individuals who may be defendants in civil actions are presumed not to be liable for such claims unless a plaintiff proves otherwise. Admissions of guilt or liability are not typically a part of civil or private settlements. For more information, see our [posting policy](#).

This assignment record was last updated on March 17, 2026.