

# R.I. diocese names 48 'credibly' accused of abuse

## R.I. diocese lists 'credibly' accused clergy 48 priests, deacons named publicly, some for first time

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GLOBE STAFF

PROVIDENCE — For the first time since the clergy sexual abuse scandal surfaced almost two decades ago, the Roman Catholic Diocese of Providence on Monday announced the names of 48 priests and deacons who have been "credibly" accused of the sexual abuse of minors.

The published list, which covers allegations dating back to 1950, includes 17 priests and two dea-

### ► Names of priests and deacons on the list A6.

cons who are still alive and 29 priests who have died. The diocese, which posted the lists on its website, said all of those still alive have been removed from ministry, but did not disclose when.

While the list of names includes some not previously made public, the number of accused is far fewer than the 125 priests that the diocese said in a decade-old court deposition had been accused of sexual abuse.

Bishop Thomas Tobin, in a letter accompanying the list, called its release "a difficult but necessary moment" in the history of the church. He said publishing the list "is an expression of the transparency we want to encourage, and the accountability we need to accept."

The long-awaited announcement came months

ABUSE, Page A6

### ► ABUSE Continued from Page A1

after Tobin said he would make the names public. He made that pledge last year, after a Pennsylvania grand jury found that more than 300 Catholic priests had abused children over a span of seven decades.

Advocates for abuse victims on Monday questioned why the diocese had not acted earlier to reveal the names of credibly accused priests and said the report still left too many unanswered questions.

Ann Hagan Webb, a psychologist who had testified about being molested by her parish priest, said the printing of names that hadn't previously been reported in public is important for victims who are seeing these names for the first time and realizing that someone else has also made accusations.

But Webb noted that the diocese didn't disclose the number of complaints against each clergy member, when the complaints were made, and whether the accused clergy continued to be moved around.

Lawyer Timothy J. Conlon, who has sued the diocese on behalf of victims, said the list also includes people who the diocese had long publicly denied were subject to complaints. Releasing their names, he said, doesn't excuse the fact the church glossed over having denied that there were allegations.

"I think there is still postur-

ing going on," Conlon said.

A spokeswoman for the Rhode Island attorney general's office said it was reviewing the list and examining it against allegations previously disclosed by the diocese or reported to law enforcement.

"While release of this list is a step forward, we do not view it as the end of the process," the office of Attorney General Peter Neronha said Monday.

The list was developed by the diocese's director of compliance, retired State Police major Kevin O'Brien, who reviewed all of the files compiled over 70 years and, based on his judgment, determined those who'd been credibly accused of sexual abuse.

The diocese said that O'Brien weighed a number of factors, such as whether the allegation was anonymous, the consistency of witness testimony, the accuracy of details in the accusations, the response and credibility of the accused clergy, and the number of allegations. The list of dead priests who were credibly accused includes 25 diocesan priests and four priests from religious orders. It also includes two priests who retired in good standing but were later accused of sexual abuse and were publicly named at legislative hearings. The decades-old allegations against them were investigated but could not be corroborated.

Dr. Herbert "Hub" Brennan, who has said he was sexually

### Names on the list

#### List of credibly accused clergy and deacons who are still alive:

- Joseph Abbruzzese
- Daniel Azzarone
- Paul Charland
- Joseph D'Angelo
- Kevin Fisette
- Edmund Fitzgerald
- Timothy Gorton
- P. Henry Leech
- Roland Lepire
- Robert McIntyre
- Richard Meglio
- Edmund Micarelli
- Joseph Petrocelli
- James Silva
- William Tanguay
- John Torney
- Samuel Turillo
- Laurence Gagnon
- Edward Sadowski

#### List of credibly accused clergy who have died:

- John Allard
- Roger Belhumeur
- Dennis Brodeur
- Robert Carpentier
- Normand Demers
- Alfred Desrosiers

- Louis Diogo
- Charles Dolan
- Louis Dunn
- Oscar Ferland
- John Ferry
- William Gillooly
- Rene Guertin
- Richard Holden
- Michael La Mountain
- Phillip Magaldi
- Robert Marcantonio
- Barry Meehan
- Adrian Menard
- William O'Connell
- William O'Neill
- Hugh Rafferty
- William Raiche
- Peter Scagnelli
- Armand Ventre
- James D. Campbell
- John Aquinas Powers
- Joseph James Rocha
- John Gerard Brendan Smyth, O. Praem

#### List of publicly accused priests who have died:

- Anthony DeAngelis
- Peter Tedeschi

assaulted as a boy at Our Lady of Mercy Church in East Greenwich by a priest on the list, said he was glad to see the church finally make such an acknowledgment.

It "should have believers and nonbelievers alike recognize the unfortunate truth that the Catholic Church, including the Diocese of Providence, has effectively run a child sex ring for decades, if not generations," Brennan said.

The release of the list came as Governor Gina Raimondo

signed legislation that would extend the statute of limitations for child sexual abuse from seven to 35 years, beginning after a victim turns 18. Victims will be able to file lawsuits against individual perpetrators regardless of whether the claim was barred under previous statute of limitation laws. Lawsuits against institutions, municipalities, quasi-public agencies, and the state can be filed only for future offenses.

The legislation also allows

for a seven-year "discovery rule," which means the victim has seven years after they discover — or reasonably should have known — that their injury was caused by abuse, to file suit.

"The statute will clearly on its face allow an action against a perpetrator by someone under the age of 53 the moment governor signs it," Conlon said.

Warwick resident David Silipigni, who said he was raped by a priest when he was a child at St. Aloysius orphanage in Smithfield in 1969, said seeing legislators pass the law "was like watching a grand-slam home run."

Two of the priests on the list — the Rev. Rene Guertin and Robert McIntyre — were directors at St. Aloysius for decades. The orphanage closed in 1994 after multiple complaints of sexual abuse of children, though McIntyre was cleared by a Superior Court jury and left the priesthood.

Monday was the first time that Guertin was publicly named.

As he looked over the list, Silipigni said he was waiting for the governor to sign the bill.

"As soon as the governor signs it, I'm going to sue the diocese, the town of Smithfield, DCYF, and the state," he said Monday. "I've been waiting 50 years for this."

*Edward Fitzpatrick of the Globe staff contributed to this report.*