

Fr. Lawrence O. Bourrie

Research Profile — Prepared by Leona Huggins

Identification

Full Name:

Father Lawrence O. Bourrie

Aliases / Spelling Variants:

Rev. L. O. Bourris (Reno Gazette-Journal, 1953); Rev. F. Bourrie (The Province, 1939)

Ordained:

1933

Origin:

Ontario, Canada

Status:

Accused — named publicly on the Diocese of Las Vegas accused clergy list, April 12, 2019

Died:

1996

Dioceses / Jurisdictions

Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Vancouver (RCAV) — 1933/34 to c. 1946

Diocese of Reno, Nevada — c. 1946 to c. 1964

Diocese of Las Vegas, Nevada — c. 1960–1966+

Note: Bishop Accountability lists Bourrie under the Diocese of Las Vegas and notes he was ordained for "another diocese." That other diocese is confirmed as the RCAV.

BC Assignment History (RCAV)

Year	Location	Role	Source
1934	Holy Rosary Cathedral, Vancouver	Assistant	Le Canada ecclésiastique, 1934 (BAnQ); Vancouver Sun, Apr. 9, 1934
1935	Holy Rosary Cathedral, Vancouver	Assistant	Le Canada ecclésiastique, 1935 (BAnQ); Vancouver Sun, Jan. 25, 1935
1936	Lillooet	Pastor	Le Canada ecclésiastique, 1936 (BAnQ)
1937	St. Joseph's, Vancouver	Assistant	Le Canada ecclésiastique, 1937 (BAnQ)

Year	Location	Role	Source
1938–1939	Holy Rosary Cathedral, Vancouver; concurrently Superintendent of Catholic Education, Archdiocese of Vancouver	Assistant / Diocesan Education Official	Le Canada ecclésiastique, 1938 (BAHQ); The Province, Feb. 8, 1939
1940–1941	St. Joseph's, Powell River	Pastor	Le Canada ecclésiastique, 1941 (BAHQ)
1942	Sacred Heart Cathedral, Kamloops	Assistant	Le Canada ecclésiastique (BAHQ)
May 1942 – Jan. 1944	St. Mary's Parish, Vancouver	Pastor	100 Years of St. Mary's Parish: Centennial Booklet (2023)
1944 – c. 1946	RCAV Chancery, Vancouver	Chancery official	100 Years of St. Mary's Parish: Centennial Booklet (2023)
1946	Left the Archdiocese	—	Le Canada ecclésiastique, 1946 (BAHQ) — directory notes "retire"

Nevada Assignment History

Year	Location	Role	Source
c. 1946–1950	Nevada Catholic Welfare Bureau (Reno and Las Vegas offices)	Connected with bureau; served both offices	Nevada State Journal, Feb. 1, 1951
By July 1950	St. Joan of Arc Parish, Las Vegas	Assistant pastor	Nevada State Journal, Jul. 15, 1950
By Sept. 1952	St. Gall's Parish, Gardnerville	Pastor	Nevada State Journal, Sep. 30, 1952
c. Sept. 1952 – Sept. 1953	St. John's Church, Lovelock	Pastor	Nevada State Journal, Sep. 30, 1952; Reno Gazette-Journal, Sep. 1, 1953
Sept. 1953 – c. 1960	Nevada Catholic Welfare Bureau, Reno	Director of Charities	Reno Gazette-Journal, Sep. 1, 1953
c. 1960 – c. 1964	Catholic Community Welfare Program, Las Vegas	Executive Director	Nevada State Journal, May 26, 1962; Elko Daily Free Press, May 25, 1962
By March 1966	Diocese of Reno	Officialis (Chief Judge, Diocesan Tribunal); Board of Consultants, six-year term	Nevada State Journal, Mar. 4, 1966

Background and Institutional Roles

Father Lawrence O. Bourrie was originally from Ontario and ordained in 1933 for the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Vancouver. His BC career spanned over a decade, during which he held parish postings across Vancouver, Lillooet, Powell River, and Kamloops before rising to positions of significant institutional authority.

By 1938–1939, Bourrie held the role of Superintendent of Catholic Education for the Archdiocese of Vancouver — a formal diocesan office placing him in an oversight position over Catholic schools across the archdiocese and providing direct access to children in an institutional capacity. A February 1939 report in *The Province* documented his attendance at a Catholic Women's League meeting, where he demonstrated a new 16mm film projector acquired for Catholic schools, described as the only one of its kind in Canada at the time.

The 2023 centennial history of St. Mary's Parish, Vancouver records Bourrie as pastor from May 1942 to January 1944, noting that he "came to Saint Mary's from Kamloops" and that his time there included "working with the youth of the parish." He departed in January 1944 to work in the RCAF chancery — a further elevation within the archdiocese's administrative structure.

After leaving Vancouver, Bourrie transferred to Nevada, where he served successively as a parish priest, Director of Charities for the Nevada Catholic Welfare Bureau, Executive Director of the Catholic Community Welfare Program in Las Vegas, and ultimately as Officialis — chief judge — of the Diocese of Reno's marriage tribunal. He was elected to the Diocese of Reno's first democratically elected board of consultors in March 1966, serving a six-year term. Each of these roles placed him in positions of authority over vulnerable people.

Bourrie died in 1996. He was named publicly on the Diocese of Las Vegas's list of accused clergy on April 12, 2019. The Las Vegas entry noted he had been ordained for "another diocese" — now confirmed as the RCAF.

Note on ongoing institutional commemoration: The 2023 St. Mary's Parish Centennial Booklet commemorates Bourrie by name as a former pastor, with no reference to his status as an accused cleric on the Diocese of Las Vegas list. This publication post-dates the Las Vegas disclosure by four years.

Timeline

1933	Ordained for the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Vancouver; originally from Ontario.
1934	Assistant, Holy Rosary Cathedral, Vancouver. Injured in auto accident at Kingsway and St. Catharines St.; hospitalized at St. Paul's with fractured arm and shock (<i>Vancouver Sun</i> , Apr. 9, 1934).
1935	Still at Holy Rosary Cathedral. Civil suit for damages from the 1934 accident dismissed by Chief Justice Morrison, BC Supreme Court; jury found for the motorman (H. A. Thompson, 875 Kingsway) and awarded him a \$133 counterclaim against Bourrie for vehicle repairs (<i>Vancouver Sun</i> , Jan. 25, 1935).
1936	Pastor, Lillooet.
1937	Assistant, St. Joseph's, Vancouver.
1938–1939	Assistant, Holy Rosary Cathedral, Vancouver; concurrently serving as Superintendent of Catholic Education for the Archdiocese of Vancouver. Documented demonstrating a 16mm educational film projector — the only one of its kind in Canada — acquired for use in Catholic schools (<i>The Province</i> , Feb. 8, 1939).
1940–1941	Pastor, St. Joseph's, Powell River.
1942	Assistant, Sacred Heart Cathedral, Kamloops.
May 1942 – Jan. 1944	Pastor, St. Mary's Parish, Vancouver. Came from Kamloops; parish history notes his time was occupied by fundraising and "working with the youth of the parish." Departed January 1944 to work in the chancery (St. Mary's Centennial Booklet, 2023).

1944 – c. 1946	Chancery official, RCAV.
1946	Left the Archdiocese of Vancouver; directory notes "retire."
c. 1946–1950	Connected with the Nevada Catholic Welfare Bureau, serving both Reno and Las Vegas offices.
By July 1950	Assistant pastor, St. Joan of Arc Parish, Las Vegas.
By Sept. 1952	Pastor, St. Gall's Parish, Gardnerville, Nevada.
Sept. 1952	Transferred to St. John's Church, Lovelock, as pastor; noted for youth work, catechism classes, and construction of a St. Francis of Assisi shrine (Nevada State Journal, Sep. 30, 1952).
Sept. 1953	Appointed Director of Charities, Nevada Catholic Welfare Bureau, Reno; replaced at Lovelock (Reno Gazette-Journal, Sep. 1, 1953).
c. 1960	Serving as Executive Director, Catholic Community Welfare Program, Las Vegas.
May 1962	Quoted in UPI wire story on Cuban refugees arriving in Las Vegas, acting in his welfare director capacity (Nevada State Journal, May 26, 1962; Elko Daily Free Press, May 25, 1962).
March 1966	Elected Officialis (chief judge of the diocesan marriage tribunal) and to the Diocese of Reno's first democratically elected board of consultors, six-year term (Nevada State Journal, Mar. 4, 1966).
1996	Died.
April 12, 2019	Named publicly on the Diocese of Las Vegas accused clergy list; entry notes ordination for "another diocese," confirmed as RCAV. Listed in Bishop Accountability database: https://www.bishop-accountability.org/accused/bourrie-lawrence-o-1933/
2023	Commemorated by name as former pastor in 100 Years of St. Mary's Parish: A Commemorative Centennial Booklet, with no reference to his accused status — published four years after the Las Vegas disclosure.

Sources

- Le Canada ecclésiastique : almanach-annuaire du clergé canadien, 1934, 1935, 1936, 1937, 1938, 1941, 1943, 1946 — BAnQ Numérique
- The Vancouver Sun, April 9, 1934 — "Father Bourrie Seriously Injured"
- The Vancouver Sun, January 25, 1935 — "Priest's Suit Dismissed"
- The Province (Vancouver), February 8, 1939 — "Catholic Women Plan Downtown Reading Room"
- Nevada State Journal (Reno), July 15, 1950 — "Reno Pastors Assigned New Church Posts"
- Nevada State Journal (Reno), February 1, 1951 — "Nevada Catholic Welfare Bureau Has Handled 30,565 Cases During Last 10 Years"
- Nevada State Journal (Reno), September 30, 1952 — "New Assignments Listed for 19 Nevada Priests"
- Reno Gazette-Journal, September 1, 1953 — "Lovelock Church Gets New Pastor"
- Nevada State Journal (Reno), May 26, 1962 — "Cuban Refugees in Vegas Greeted With Opposition"
- Elko Daily Free Press, May 25, 1962 — "Cubans" (continued from p. 1)

- Nevada State Journal (Reno), March 4, 1966 — "6 Priests Elected to Board"
 - 100 Years of St. Mary's Parish: A Commemorative Centennial Booklet (2023)
 - Diocese of Las Vegas Accused Clergy List, April 12, 2019 — Bishop Accountability:
<https://www.bishop-accountability.org/accused/bourrie-lawrence-o-1933/>
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Prepared by Leona Huggins. Based on publicly available records and institutional directories.