



DIOCESE OF CHARLOTTE

Communications Office

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Charlotte diocese publishes list of 14 clergy credibly accused of child sexual abuse

- **List aims to promote healing for victims and demonstrate commitment to transparency**
- **Review shows no priest serving today has credible abuse allegation against him**
- **Abuse peaked in 1970s and dropped sharply in 2000s as new protections took hold**

CHARLOTTE, North Carolina — The Catholic Diocese of Charlotte today published a list of 14 clergy who have been credibly accused of child sexual abuse in western North Carolina since the diocese was established in 1972.

The list is the result of a year-long process that included a comprehensive, independent review of more than 1,600 files dating back almost 50 years to ensure a full accounting of credibly accused clergy in the diocese's history.

The file review confirmed that no clergy member serving in the Charlotte diocese today has a credible allegation of sexual abuse against him. Records also show that all 14 clergy named on the list were long ago removed from ministry or died before allegations arose. Most of their names also were made known publicly years ago by the diocese and others.

Reflecting national trends, the review found that instances of alleged abuse in the Charlotte diocese peaked in the 1970s and dropped sharply in the 2000s as new protections were put in place by the Church. In the last 20 years, one credible case of abuse is alleged to have occurred in the diocese.

"It is painful to even try to comprehend such gravely immoral behavior," Charlotte Bishop Peter J. Jugis wrote in a letter published Monday along with the list and other abuse information. "However, in speaking with survivors and hearing their stories, it is clear to me that making known the names of their abusers can promote healing for them and their families."

"This list is the culmination of a process begun more than a year ago in our belief that a full accounting of credibly accused clergy would provide validation for victims and demonstrate our commitment to transparency and accountability," wrote Jugis. On Sunday, the bishop offered prayers for abuse survivors and told parishioners about conclusions of the diocese's file review during Mass at St. Patrick Cathedral in Charlotte.

In addition to its list, the Charlotte diocese published information about credibly accused clergy who served in western North Carolina before the Charlotte diocese was established in 1972, when the Diocese of Raleigh oversaw the Catholic Church across the state. Also identified were clergy who served without documented incident in the Charlotte diocese but were accused of abuse or misconduct elsewhere on lists published by other dioceses and religious orders.

The diocese compiled the information on a new webpage, www.accountability.charlottediocese.org, which also features resources including [a new hotline](#) for reporting sexual abuse operated independently by Red Flag Reporting. The hotline allows people to speak up, anonymously or not, when suspected sexual abuse or other unethical activity is noted.

The accountability webpage is the latest in a series of steps the diocese has taken to prevent child sexual abuse since 2002, when the U.S. bishops adopted the [Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People](#). The Charter mandates a zero-tolerance policy, strict screening and training standards, and protocols for reporting and preventing abuse in all U.S. Catholic churches, facilities and programs.

In the fall of 2018, the diocese set in motion a multi-layered process to publish the names of clergy credibly accused of child sexual abuse. The diocese automatically placed on its list clergy who had admitted to allegations or were charged by law enforcement with child sexual abuse offenses. In addition, the diocese placed on its list all clergy who were determined by its Lay Review Board to have been credibly accused.

To ensure historical allegations were identified in the diocese's files, independent investigators from U.S. Investigative Security Services of Charlotte reviewed 1,600 personnel files of priests, deacons and religious brothers, as well as other archives, for any indication of allegations of sexual abuse of a minor. Their review took more than 1,000 hours and encompassed 150,000 pages of documents. As a result, four credible cases of alleged abuse handled before the Charter protocols took effect in 2002 were surfaced from the files and included on the list.

“As with most organizations, very little attention had been paid to our personnel files going back almost 50 years, but we knew it was important to explore their contents and make relevant information known,” said the Rev. Patrick J. Winslow, a canon lawyer and former promoter of justice who oversaw the file review as the diocese's newly appointed vicar general and chancellor. “Today, we sincerely hope our efforts will provide some validation for abuse survivors and promote a culture that allows people who may be suffering in silence to come forward and seek help.”

The Charlotte diocese has embraced – and built upon – the Charter protocols. Protections today include:

- Immediate required reporting of all abuse allegations to civil authorities.
- Required background checks and Safe Environment training for all personnel and volunteers.
- An independent Lay Review Board to investigate and determine credibility of abuse allegations.
- A rigorous code of conduct that prohibits Church personnel and volunteers from being alone with children, except in rare circumstances that involve parental oversight.
- A local college seminary, founded in 2016, to promote local vocations, reduce reliance on outside clergy and more closely guide the formation of its future priests.

“Please pray with me that this information achieves the goal of bringing healing to victims,” Jugis said in his letter. “With the Lord's help, we can continue fostering a safe and supportive environment in our parishes, schools and ministries so that the Church in western North Carolina can help lead future generations to Him.”

About the Diocese of Charlotte

The Diocese of Charlotte serves the spiritual needs of more than 400,000 Roman Catholics in 92 parishes and missions spanning the 46 counties of western North Carolina. The diocesan website is www.CharlotteDiocese.org.

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MEDIA CONTACT:

Patricia L. Guilfoyle
plguilfoyle@charlottediocese.org, 704-370-3334

Liz Chandler
lchandler@thinklga.com, 704-287-3323