



## THE DIOCESE OF SPRINGFIELD-CAPE GIRARDEAU



To the Faithful of the Diocese of Springfield- Cape Girardeau,

In August of 2018, I wrote a letter to each of our Catholic households, expressing my sorrow for the hurt inflicted upon anyone in the Diocese by the clergy sexual abuse scandal. Again, I take this opportunity to offer my sincere apology. I echoed in that same letter, that, in the spirit of accuracy, transparency, and truthfulness, I directed an independent review of diocesan personnel files of all clergy, diocesan and religious, so that we could have an accurate accounting for the 63-year history of the Diocese of Springfield-Cape Girardeau. With this letter, I fulfill my promise to you for a full report on the process.

Since that time, a thorough and comprehensive review of the files of all active and deceased diocesan clergy has taken place. Taking more than six months to complete, this included a literal review of each and every note, letter, and document that was available in each man's file. There are cases of allegations of abuse and reports of concerns involving clergy that were previously made decades ago that may not have been found, at that time, to meet the standard of a "credible accusation." Prior to the 2002 US Catholic Bishops' "Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People," the procedures for addressing these allegations and reports were much different and far less clear than they are today.

Often times, these allegations and reports of concerns are made with one person's statement after the accused has died and is unable to participate in the investigation. Frequently, the only evidence available in these allegations or reports was the statement of the reporting person—who may or may not actually be the alleged victim/survivor—with varying degrees of details concerning the alleged abuse.

We require, and clearly state in our policies and published and printed materials, that any known or suspected abuse must first be immediately reported to the Child or Adult Abuse and Neglect Hotlines and/or the appropriate legal authorities, even when the victim/survivor may request that no action be taken. We are committed to safe environments for all of our people, and if you've been harmed by anyone: please come forward. The Diocese makes available multiple platforms by which one may report abuse, including telephone, Email, USPS letter, or our Web-based "TIPS" reporting portal on the diocesan Website ([www.dioscg.org](http://www.dioscg.org)). These reports go directly to the Bishop and the Director of Child and Youth Protection.

### **Standards of examination**

When a report of sexual misconduct is received by the Diocese, the Safe Environment Review Board uses a "Semblance of Truth" standard—that is, a "reason to believe or reasonable cause to suspect," rather than the "preponderance of evidence" standard to determine "credibility." This offers a threshold where time, person, place, and plausibility—"Could this have happened?"—is carefully considered by the Safe Environment Review Board to determine actions related to an allegation or reported concern in order to make its final recommendations to the Bishop. Consequently, you will see in our public releases "an allegation has been received" rather than the term "credible accusation," as there is not always sufficient evidence to thoroughly investigate and determine the truth of the allegations or reports.

If you have access to the diocesan Website, you will find there a public list of the names of 16 diocesan priests against whom accusations of the abuse of a minor were deemed to have a semblance of truth. In the interest of transparency and in accordance with my commitment to you, I issue the following list of personnel who have served in the Diocese with allegations of abuse against a minor that have been determined to meet the criteria of a semblance of truth, including religious order priests whose allegations were reported to us by their religious order. All but three of these instances of abuse that are alleged to have occurred before the 1990s, and none involve anyone in active ministry:

## Diocesan priests with allegations

Name	Assignment	Incident Date/Report Date	Status
Brath, John	Webb City	1970s/2015	RFM 2010/ D 2014
Chambers, Leonard	Lebanon	1977/1982, 1998, 2013	RFM 1998/L 2006
Craig, Walter	New Madrid	1950s/2002	D 1971
Deragowski, Eugene	Conway, West Plains [DKCStJ]	1950-60s/2006	D 1981
Donovan, William	Glennonville	1968/2013	D 1975
Ellinger, Wally	Caruthersville	1960s/1994	LP 1975/L 1976/D 2007
Ernstmann, Mark	Springfield	1973-4/2002, 2018	RET 2004/D 2013
Gregovich, Larry	New Madrid	1982-5/1992	RFM 1992/D 2017
Lutz, Fred	Cape Girardeau	1972/2006	RET 2011/MR 2019
McHugh, Paul	Branson	1981-82/2002	D 1983
Rynish, John	Springfield	1970s/2018	D 2001
Schneider, Stephen	Joplin	2006/2006	RFM 2006/D 2016
Shibley, Amel	Sikeston	1980s/1992, 1995	RET 1995/RFM 1998/D 2002
Wells, John	New Madrid	1962/2017	D 1972
Wyrsh, Louis	Poplar Bluff	1960s/2007	LP 1973/L 1989/D 1997

## Diocesan priest restricted in ministry pending investigation of allegation

Marquart, Ernest	Caruthersville	1980s/1980s	RET 2012/MR 2019
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## Religious order priests with allegations

Since the establishment of the DSCG in 1956, we have relied on the generosity of various religious orders to assist in staffing parishes and various Catholic ministries. The names of those for whom such allegations have been received appear below along with their current status.

Name	Assignment	Incident Date/Report Date	Status
Juda, Stephen	(CRResurrectionist) Salem	1972/2004	D 2006
Meyer, Thomas Gregory	(OMI) Carthage	1969-70/2012	D 2012
Parrott, Thomas	(CM-Vincentians) Cape Girardeau	1966/2010	RET 1987/D 1996
Probstfield, Edgar	(OSB-Benedictine) Spfd	1970s/2014	D 2007
Santo, Mark	(OSM-Servites) Ironton	1960s/2018	D 2013
Twardochleb, Emil	(OMI) Carthage	1971-5/2015	D 1976
Vedder, Bernard	(OMI) Carthage	1960s/1995	D 1993

## Order priests who served in DSCG with reported abuse outside of the DSCG

Barron, Wayne	(CMF-Claretian)	1972/2003	RFM 1990s
Boeding, Damian*	(OSB-Benedictine) [Allegations in IA, MN]	1964-8/1992, 1994	RET 1988/D 2003
Charland, Michael	(OMI) [Dio of Belleville, Arch-St. Paul]	1970s/2018	L 1989/ D 2004
Farris, John	(CM-Vincentian) [Dio. of Orange]	1951-4/2003	D 2003
Fitzgerald, J. Vincent	(OMI) [Dio. of Duluth, MN]	1964, 1970s/2010	D 2009
Lause, Richard	(CM-Vincentian) [Lemont H.S. Sem., IL]	1987/1988, 2003	RFM 2003
Munie, Orville	(OMI-Missionary Oblates of Mary Imm.)	1971-5/2015	D 1993
Paiz, William	(CMF-Claretian) [Dio. of FTW]	1982-7/2010	RFM 2010
Ruhl, John	(CM-Vincentian) [Dio. of Orange]	1970-82/1992, 2004	RFM 1992
Schulte, Daniel	(CM-Vincentian) [Chicago]	2006/2006	RFM 2006
Zimmerer, Francis	(OSB-Benedictine) [Dio. of FTW]	1978/2008, 2015	D 1983

\*Former OSB; incardinated into DSCG in 1970

## Order priests who resided in DSCG—removed from ministry by Order, investigation ongoing

Turnbull, John	(OFM-SJBP-Franciscan Friars) Ava; [Indiana]	1970s/2005	RFM 2005/D 2017
Willenborg, Henry	(OFM-SHP-Franciscan Friars) Ava; [Quincy, IL; Ashland, WI]	1970s/2009	RFM 2009

## Priests from other dioceses (extern priests) that have allegations outside of the DSCG

Baskett, John	[US Air Force, DKCStJ]	1975/2018	LP 1975/D 1995
O'Brien, Thomas J.	[DKCStJ]	1950-4/2013	D 2013

## Priest from other diocese that served in DSCG prior to 1956

Wieberg, John	Charleston [ArchStL]	1942-5/2004, 2018	D 1963
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### Codes

ArchStL	Archdiocese of St. Louis	L	Laicized
DJC	Diocese of Jefferson City	LP	Left priesthood
DKCStJ	Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph	MR	Ministry restricted
DSCG	Diocese of Springfield-Cape Girardeau	RET	Retired
D	Deceased	RFM	Removed from ministry

## **Settlements/Finances**

The following is a summary of expenses from 1986 to date. All accounting ledgers for activity prior to 1986 were lost in a flood at The Catholic Center in 1989. As far as we know at this time, there were no claims paid from the creation of the Diocese in 1956 up to the early 1980s.

There were eight claims settled and paid by the diocese at a cost of \$355,000 using unrestricted cash reserves. There were three claims paid by our insurer, Catholic Mutual Relief Society, at a cost of \$92,500. So, settlements total **\$447,500**. Additionally, the Diocese offered victim assistance for prescription costs (\$35,836), counseling (\$28,425), and future funeral expenses (\$7,011), for a total of **\$70,448**. Also of interest may be the legal fees to date, necessary to the handling of claims and discovery related to the review of personnel files and the release of the information noted in this letter, total **\$189,337**. ***Absolutely no funds have come from any parishes or the Diocesan Development Fund or the Capital Endowment Campaign.***

As much as we would like to conclude this process and end of the pain of the victims of clergy sexual abuse, this effort is ongoing, as victims/survivors very likely remain among us who have been reluctant to make a report, perhaps burdened with the injury and suffering beneath the silence, shame, and the guilt associated with their trauma. However, the shame and guilt felt by any survivor/victim, does not belong to them: it belongs to those who abused them and anyone who failed to take appropriate actions once the report was made. We pray for strength and healing for all who have come forward and for those who have yet to do so.

## **Accountability & mandated reporting**

The Safe Environment Procedures for the Diocese of Springfield-Cape Girardeau and relevant policies related to keeping our children and adults safe, are available for review under the Child and Youth Protection ministry tab on the diocesan Website at [www.dioscg.org](http://www.dioscg.org). There are a few key points that I want to mention that I sincerely hope reassure you:

- ◆ We mandate safe-environment training for all clergy, adults (employees and all volunteers), and our youth enrolled in our schools and PSR programming through VIRTUS—many of whom are required to complete monthly updates.
- ◆ All adults (clergy, religious, seminarians, volunteers, and employees) undergo background checks and sign an annual Code of Conduct, which includes adherence to “The Safe Environment Procedures,” “The Guidelines for the Use of Technology, Email and Social Media” and “The Safe Student Policy Addressing Harassment, Discrimination, and Violence by Employees, Other Students, or Third Parties.”
- ◆ The Diocese will place on Administrative Leave and/or suspend any priest, employee, or volunteer, who has been alleged to have abused a child, or an adult for that matter, and complete and/or cooperate with any necessary investigations (internal and external). When deemed necessary, the Diocese will permanently remove the clergy, employee, or volunteer from ministry. We take every allegation seriously, and we hold ourselves to a high standard of behavior.

## **Diocesan Safe Environment Review Board**

I mentioned it before, but I want to reiterate: I am assisted on all matters related to child and youth protection by an independent Safe Environment Review Board comprised of mostly lay men and women, your neighbors in southern Missouri, who volunteer their time to this noble effort and who bring relative vocational experience to this important mission. These members include a retired federal law enforcement investigator who has a law degree; a retired police officer; a retired psychologist; a retired Catholic school principal; an investigator for a federal legal services agency; a currently-licensed and active mental health professional; a current executive director of a large non-profit organization; a university professor; an ethics advisor for a large healthcare agency, and one priest. The Diocese is blessed by their expertise and commitment to the protection of our youth.

The abuse crisis has wounded a great many people in our Church and community. The Church wants to stand with anyone who suffers. We want to minister to you. We pray for all who have been directly and indirectly harmed by a priest or deacon in the Church, or by anyone entrusted with their care. I hope for the Church your forgiveness. The Diocese is holding three upcoming Healing Masses: I encourage you to attend as we come together to support and inspire one another in healing broken hearts, burdens of pain, and promises of grace:

Healing Masses will be held on:

- **Wednesday, April 24**, at 7 p.m., in **St. Francis De Sales Church**, in **Lebanon**.
- **Monday, June 24**, at 7 p.m., in **St. Michael the Archangel Church**, in **Fredericktown**.
- **Monday, August 26**, at 7 p.m., in **St. Mary Church**, in **West Plains**.

It is my hope that this letter assures you and reinvigorates your confidence in our beloved local Church. Please, let us continue to hold one another in prayer. I am,



Sincerely yours in Christ,

+ *Edward M. Rice*

The Most Rev. Edward M. Rice  
Bishop of Springfield-Cape Girardeau

### **A Prayer for Healing Victims of Abuse**

*Holy Spirit, comforter of hearts,  
heal your people's wounds  
and transform our brokenness.  
Grant us courage and wisdom, humility and grace,  
so that we may act with justice  
and find peace in you.  
We ask this through Christ, our Lord. Amen.*

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