

Diocese of Cleveland – List of clergy against whom have been made substantiated allegations of child sexual abuse

Cached on August 26, 2022 from <https://www.dioceseofcleveland.org/healing/list-of-clergy>

Background

That the evil of clergy sexual abuse of children has occurred in the Church is a fact that rightly provokes anger, shock, and profound sadness. In an effort to do justice to those who experienced this type of abuse and to protect others from future harm, the Catholic Diocese of Cleveland has, since April of 2002, published on its website the names of those diocesan clerics who were removed from ministry from 2002 through the present as a result of sexual abuse of a child. Expanding on that effort, the Most Reverend Nelson J. Perez announced in October of 2018 that this information would be compiled in a list format and supplemented with the names of any other diocesan clerics who were removed from ministry as a result of sexual abuse of a child or who is already deceased or no longer in ministry for any reason and against whom has been made a substantiated allegation of child sexual abuse.

Below is a list of those diocesan clerics against whom have been made substantiated allegations of child sexual abuse along with two additional lists identifying diocesan clerics currently placed on administrative leave or whose ministry has been restricted due to an allegation of child sexual abuse. In order to understand what these lists represent, and what they do not, please read the following definitions and explanation.

Definitions

Child

A person under the age of 18.

Cleric

An ordained priest or deacon of the Catholic Church.

Diocesan Cleric

A cleric ordained for and incardinated in the Catholic Diocese of Cleveland. This term and the lists below do not include nondiocesan clergy, which includes any cleric who belongs to a religious order.

Substantiated Allegation

An allegation that has been determined to be more likely true than not true. An allegation may be considered substantiated for purposes of the initial list below if one or more of the following is true:

- The cleric has admitted to sexually abusing a child.
- The cleric has been found guilty of sexually abusing a child in a criminal court of law.

- In the case of a cleric who is alive and in ministry at the time an allegation is made, it has been determined by appropriate canonical process that the allegation is true.
- In the case of a cleric who is deceased or no longer in active ministry at the time an allegation is made, a determination is made by the diocese, after reviewing all available evidence, that the allegation is more likely than not to be true.

Removed from the Clerical State

A cleric is removed from the clerical state if the Holy See has returned the cleric to a status essentially equivalent to that of a lay person. Practically speaking, a cleric who has been removed from the clerical state is prohibited from saying Mass, hearing confessions (except in certain extreme circumstances), administering the sacraments, wearing clerical garb, presenting himself as a cleric, using the title “Father” or “Reverend,” or otherwise exercising sacred ministry in the Church. This is sometimes referred to colloquially as being “laicized.”

Prayer and Penance

A cleric who has been sentenced canonically to a life of prayer and penance has been permanently removed from engaging in public ministry and is obligated to live alone in prayer.

Permanently Removed from Ministry

A cleric who has been permanently removed from ministry, while not technically removed from the clerical state, is one prohibited by the diocesan bishop from exercising ministry to the same extent as one whom the Holy See has removed from the clerical state.

The Lists

Below are three lists. The first list includes the names of any diocesan cleric (a) who was removed from ministry as a result of the sexual abuse of a child; and/or (b) against whom has been made a Substantiated Allegation of child sexual abuse.

The second list includes the names of diocesan clerics who are currently on administrative leave pending a final determination of their status by the Holy See.

The third list includes the names of diocesan clerics who are currently removed from ministry for reasons related to an allegation of child sexual abuse that is not, at this time, substantiated.

Please note that if an asterisk (*) appears next to a name on any list, the name of that diocesan cleric previously was published by the diocese.

Process for Determining Who is Named on the First List Below

Prior to the publication of this list, all available clergy files were reviewed with the assistance of an advisory committee convened by the bishop to determine which diocesan clergy, living or deceased, had at any time in the

past, ever been accused of sexually abusing a child. Once this had been done, the files and records of an accused diocesan cleric were reviewed and a determination made as to whether the accusation constituted a Substantiated Allegation in light of the totality of the facts and circumstances.

Limitations

While this list is as comprehensive as possible, because of the inherent limitations resulting from the age of or lack of evidence relating to certain allegations as well as simple human fallibility, it can never be said with certainty that this list contains the names of every diocesan cleric who has ever sexually abused a child in the Diocese of Cleveland. In light of this, there may be those who in fact experienced abuse but who do not see the name of the cleric who abused them on this list. The fact that the name of an accused diocesan cleric does not appear on this list is not a repudiation of the allegation or a denial that the alleged abuse occurred. Likewise, it is possible that there are clerics named on this list who may in fact be innocent of what they have been accused of doing. In light of this, this list will always be a work in progress and the diocese will continue to consider both new allegations as well as new information about old allegations so that, as much as humanly possible, this list will be complete and accurate.

List of clergy against whom have been made substantiated allegations of child sexual abuse

Please note that if an asterisk (*) appears next to a name on any list, the name of that diocesan cleric previously was published by the diocese.

Richard Arko*

Ordained: May 26, 1990

Current Status: Removed from clerical state

George Bailey*

Ordained: May 18, 1963

Current Status: Deceased

Jerome Bals (Deacon)

Ordained: July 22, 1973

Current Status: Permanently removed from ministry

Russell Banner*

Ordained: May 20, 1967

Current Status: Removed from clerical state

Raymond Bartnikowski*

Ordained: May 18, 1963

Current Status: Deceased

Gary Berthiaume*

Ordained: June 1, 1968

Current Status: Removed from clerical state

Kenneth Bogucki

Ordained: June 9, 1984

Current Status: Removed from clerical state

Donald Brickman*

Ordained: June 13, 1981

Current Status: Removed from clerical state

Joseph Brodnick*

Ordained: May 31, 1969

Current Status: Permanently removed from ministry

Allen Bruening*

Ordained: April 28, 1951

Current Status: Deceased

Thomas Burg*

Ordained: May 23, 1964

Current Status: Deceased

John Ciolek

Ordained: April 2, 1938

Current Status: Deceased

John Connor

Ordained: May 23, 1959

Current Status: Deceased

Neil Conway*

Ordained: May 18, 1963

Current Status: Permanently removed from ministry

Joseph Ehrbar

Ordained: May 26, 1945

Current Status: Deceased

Leonard Ferrante*

Ordained: May 23, 1964

Current Status: Removed from clerical state

Patrick Henry*

Ordained: June 6, 1981

Current Status: Removed from clerical state

Matthew Ischay*

Ordained: June 29, 1975

Current Status: Removed from the clerical state

John Jacoby

Ordained: February 28, 1953

Current Status: Deceased

Edward Kickel

Ordained: April 17, 1922

Current Status: Deceased

Liam Kitt

Ordained: June 19, 1943

Current Status: Deceased

Frank Klamet

Ordained: June 10, 1978

Current Status: Deceased

Joseph Labbe*

Ordained: June 14, 1975

Current Status: Removed from clerical state

Victor M. Lambur

Ordained: February 20, 1937

Current Status: Deceased

Joseph Lang*

Ordained: May 22, 1965

Current Status: Deceased

Joseph Lieberth*

Ordained: May 25, 1968

Current Status: Life of prayer and penance

Martin Louis*

Ordained: May 21, 1966

Current Status: Removed from clerical state

Thomas Luckay*

Ordained: May 22, 1965

Current Status: Removed from clerical state

Daniel McBride

Ordained: April 28, 1951

Current Status: Deceased

John William McCool*

Ordained: October 11, 1973

Current Status: Deceased

James McGonegal

Ordained: May 29, 1971

Current Status: Removed from clerical state

J. Brendan McNulty*

Ordained: June 8, 1974

Current Status: Removed from clerical state

Robert D. McWilliams

Ordained: May 19, 2017

Current Status: Deceased

Nicholas Monaghan

Ordained: December 21, 1907

Current Status: Deceased

John Mueller

Ordained: May 23, 1959

Current Status: Deceased

Frederick James Mulica*

Ordained: May 20, 1967

Current Status: Deceased

Patrick J. O'Connor*

Ordained: January 12, 1985

Current Status: Removed from clerical state

Anthony Rebol*

Ordained: May 19, 1956

Current Status: Deceased

Joseph Romansky*

Ordained: September 20, 1975

Current Status: Deceased

Donald Rooney

Ordained: June 9, 1979

Current Status: Deceased

Edward Rupp*

Ordained: May 28, 1960

Current Status: Deceased

Joseph Seminatore

Ordained: May 31, 1969

Current Status: Permanently removed from ministry

Julius Slapsak

Ordained: June 29, 1925

Current Status: Deceased

James Viall

Ordained: December 18, 1954

Current Status: Deceased

John Vovko

Ordained: May 25, 1968

Current Status: Deceased

David C. Weber*

Ordained: January 15, 1977

Current Status: Removed from clerical state

Carl Wernet

Ordained: May 21, 1932

Current Status: Deceased

Joseph Williams

Ordained: May 31, 1969

Current Status: Permanently removed from ministry

Dennis Wirks*

Ordained: May 31, 1969

Current Status: Removed from clerical state

John Wittreich

Ordained: May 31, 1947

Current Status: Deceased

Clerics on administrative leave as a result of an allegation of child sexual abuse

Please note that if an asterisk (*) appears next to a name on any list, the name of that diocesan cleric previously was published by the diocese.

Theodore Lucas*

Ordained: June 9, 1984

Current Status: Administrative leave pending decision of the Holy See regarding removal from clerical state

Anthony Schuerger

Ordained: June 11, 1977

Current Status: Administrative leave pending further investigation of the allegation by the diocesan Review Board

Clerics whose ministry has been restricted as a result of an allegation which has not yet been substantiated

Please note that if an asterisk (*) appears next to a name on any list, the name of that diocesan cleric previously was published by the diocese.

Ronald Tomicky*

Ordained: June 14, 1975

Current Status: Deceased