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Former priest is laicized

March 17, 2025 | [News](#)

John Whiteley, former priest of the Diocese of Jefferson City, has been dismissed from the clerical state by Pope Francis.

Whiteley was removed from ministry in 1991 following accusations of sexual abuse of minors.

After receiving notice of the laicization, the Diocese of Jefferson City has been working to inform survivors of this action before making this public announcement.

Whiteley had previously been listed among the diocese's credibly accused priests. The list has now been updated to reflect his laicization.

“As a Church, we have a responsibility to remain watchful and to learn from past lessons,” said Bishop McKnight. “Let us all extend our prayers to those who have suffered during this painful time. As we move forward, I pray that our faithful will find hope in our commitment to accountability and our work to build safe communities of faith. May God continue to guide us in this work.”

Anyone who believes they have been a victim of misconduct involving a priest, deacon, or other church personnel is encouraged to contact law enforcement, as well as the Diocese of Jefferson City's victim assistance coordinator, Jacqueline Baldwin, at 573-694-3199 or reportabuse@diojeffcity.org. For more information, visit diojeffcity.org/report-abuse-or-misconduct.