



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Diocese releases list of clergy with substantiated allegations of sexual abuse of a minor

GREEN BAY, Wis. (Jan. 17, 2019) – Based upon the recommendation of the Independent Review Board and following an extensive review of priest and deacon files by Defenbaugh & Associates, Inc., Bishop David L. Ricken today released the list of diocesan clergy with substantiated allegations of sexual abuse of a minor.

Since 1906, the ordination date of the priest with the earliest documented allegation of sexual abuse of a minor, a total of 630 ordained priests have served within the Diocese of Green Bay. Of that number, 47 priests have had a substantiated allegation of the sexual abuse of a minor made against them. Additionally, there are 16 priests and 2 deacons accused of the sexual abuse of a minor who, after investigation, were either exonerated or the allegation against them deemed unsubstantiated and as a result are not included in the list.

The complete list can be found on the diocesan website at www.gbdioc.org/clergydisclosurelist.

“My top priorities, as outlined in of my Seven Action Steps to Accountability remain,” said Bishop Ricken. “To improve our pastoral care, concern and efforts to accompany victims of abuse in their journey of healing; and, to provide as many ways as possible for those who have been victimized to come forward without fear and to share their story of sexual abuse. We need to know as fully as possible the harm that was done, so we can offer care to victims and ensure no perpetrators remain in ministry.”

The Diocese remains committed to the protection of children and vulnerable adults. Its policies include permanently removing from ministry any clergy who have a substantiated allegation of abuse of a minor against them. In addition, the Diocese requires all clergy, employees, and volunteers in all parishes, schools and diocesan offices to complete mandatory background checks and training on keeping children safe. Since 2003, over 42,000 background checks have been completed and over 42,000 people have completed the “VIRTUS – Protecting God’s Children” program. (Data reported October 2018)

If you know of an incident of sexual abuse of a minor currently under the age of 18 by a priest, deacon, employee or volunteer, immediately call the civil authorities and then contact the diocesan victim assistance coordinator. If the person was abused as a minor and is now an adult, please contact the diocesan victim assistance coordinator:

Deacon Dan Wagnitz
Office of Safe Environment
Catholic Diocese of Green Bay
P.O. Box 23825
Green Bay, WI 54305-3825
Telephone: 1-877-270-8174 or 920-272-8174
E-mail: dwagnitz@gbdioc.org

We always encourage you to report the incident to local civil authorities. More information is available on the Diocese’s website (www.gbdioc.org) under the title “Protecting Our Children.”

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Who we are: As friends and followers of Jesus, the Catholic Diocese of Green Bay is devoted to fostering households and communities of discipleship through the mission and ministry of the Catholic Church. We are missionary disciples striving to lead all people to the Kingdom of God. Established in 1868, the diocese is composed of 324,000 Catholics in 16 counties: Brown, Calumet, Door, Florence, Forest, Kewaunee, Langlade, Manitowoc, Marinette, Menominee, Oconto, Outagamie, Shawano, Waupaca, Waushara and Winnebago.

Contact: Justine Lodl, director of communications, at 920-272-8213 or jlodl@gbdioc.org; or Sarah Gietman, communications coordinator, at 920-272-8209 or sgietman@gbdioc.org.