



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Diocese receives allegation of abuse

GREEN BAY, Wis. (April 13, 2013) – The Diocese of Green Bay has received an allegation of abuse of a minor against Father Justin N. Werner. Father Werner denies the allegation.

In following the Policies of Appropriate Conduct of the Diocese, Father Werner, a senior (retired) priest, has been temporarily restricted from performing any public ministry pending the outcome of a complete review of these matters, which includes an investigation by an independent professional investigator. The abuse is alleged to have happened at St. Edward Parish in Mackville in the 1970s. The Diocese has notified civil authorities of the allegation following its mandatory reporting policy.

The Diocese is pastorally assisting both the person bringing the allegation and Father Werner. The Diocese asks for prayers for both of them, and for all affected.

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, 24,565 background checks have been completed and 28,813 people have completed the “VIRTUS – Protecting God’s Children” program.

If you know of an incident of sexual abuse of a person who is now under the age of 18 by a priest, deacon, employee or volunteer, PLEASE IMMEDIATELY CALL THE CIVIL AUTHORITIES AND THEN THE DIOCESE.

If the person was abused as a minor but is now an adult, please contact:

Jayne Stefanic
Diocesan Assistance Coordinator
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: jstefanic@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: The Catholic Diocese of Green Bay works to spread the Good News of Jesus Christ by helping people in need and by providing academic, leadership and spiritual formation opportunities to parish and school leaders. 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 Amber Backus, communications coordinator, at 920-272-8209 or abackus@gbdioc.org.