

Report regarding Child Sexual Abuse by Clergy and Safe Environment Measures in the Diocese of Saginaw

This Report provides an overview of clergy sexual abuse of minors in the Diocese of Saginaw. It includes a description of the diocesan website report, *Names of Clergy Accused of Sexual Abuse of a Minor*, dates of the abuse and dates of reporting to the Diocese. Also described are measures the Diocese has undertaken to establish a safe environment for minors and vulnerable adults.

1. Background Information

The Catholic Diocese of Saginaw was established on February 26, 1938. It was initially composed of 16 counties: Alcona, Alpena, Arenac, Bay, Gladwin, Gratiot, Huron, Iosco, Midland, Montmorency, Ogemaw, Oscoda, Presque Isle, Saginaw, Sanilac, and Tuscola.

On July 20, 1971, the Diocese was reconfigured, receiving some territory, by county, from the Diocese of Grand Rapids and transferring other territory to the newly-formed Diocese of Gaylord. Since 1971, the Diocese has been comprised of 11 counties: Arenac, Bay, Clare, Gladwin, Gratiot, Huron, Isabella, Midland, Saginaw, Sanilac, and Tuscola. On July 20, 1971, priests serving in counties in the newly established Diocese of Gaylord became priests of that diocese. For example, a Diocese of Saginaw priest serving a parish in Iosco County became a priest of (incardinated into) the Diocese of Gaylord on July 20, 1971.

Information regarding clergy¹ about whom the Diocese has knowledge of a credible allegation of sexual abuse of a minor and who served in ministry in the Diocese of Saginaw since 1938, are included in this Report. A “credible” allegation, accusation or information means that, under all the circumstances known at the time of the allegation, a prudent person would conclude that it is reasonable and probable that an incident occurred. In determining an allegation to be credible, the Diocese is not making a definitive statement regarding the certainty of the allegation or the guilt of the accused.

2. Names of Clergy, years of sexual abuse of minors and of reporting to the Diocese of Saginaw

The diocesan website identifies the Names of Clergy Accused of Sexual Abuse of a Minor (the “List”), where the allegation has been determined to be credible. In total there are twenty-one known clerics with credible allegations within the Diocese. This includes 11 diocesan priests and one diocesan deacon; this information is found in Section A and B. There are eight priests from other dioceses or religious institutes. Also, one priest, while never having a ministerial assignment in the Diocese, was convicted by law enforcement within the Diocese. This information is reflected in Section C. The final section of the List, Section D, contains names of priests who had served in the Diocese, but whose allegations arise elsewhere.

The List appears at: <https://saginaw.org/names-clergy-accused-sexual-abuse-minor>.

¹ For purposes of this Report, the terms “clergy” and “cleric” describe priests and deacons who have been credibly accused of sexual abuse of a minor and whose name has been placed on the List. “Diocese” and “diocesan” refers to the Catholic Diocese of Saginaw unless the context describes another diocese.

The Bishop places a name on the List following the recommendation of the Diocesan Review Board that an allegation is credible. The Review Board, established in 2003, is an independent group of advisors with pertinent expertise², whose responsibility includes the review of all allegations of sexual abuse of a minor by clergy.

A cleric's name is included on the List even if the cleric was first incardinated or later incardinated into another Diocese or religious institute, left active ministry, served in active ministry for a brief time, or is deceased. By clicking on a name on the website, the viewer will see the pertinent ministerial history of the cleric.

The List was placed on the diocesan website in 2018. It is revised periodically as new information is obtained.

Section A contains the names of clerics of the Diocese of Saginaw who were permanently removed from ministry as a result of canonical proceedings. These individuals are prohibited from presenting themselves as priests or deacons.

Permanently Removed from Ministry

Stanislaus A. Bur - deceased
Robert J. DeLand
Ronald J. Dombrowski
John E. Hammer
Richard L Howard (former deacon)
Jack J. Leipert
Richard T. Szafranski
Leonard F. Wilkuski -deceased

Section B contains the names of diocesan priests against whom at least one credible allegation was presented after the death of the priest.

Posthumous Credible Allegation

Martin Ignatius Kalahar
James Aloysius Mulvey
Neil Francis O'Connor
Thomas William Ryan

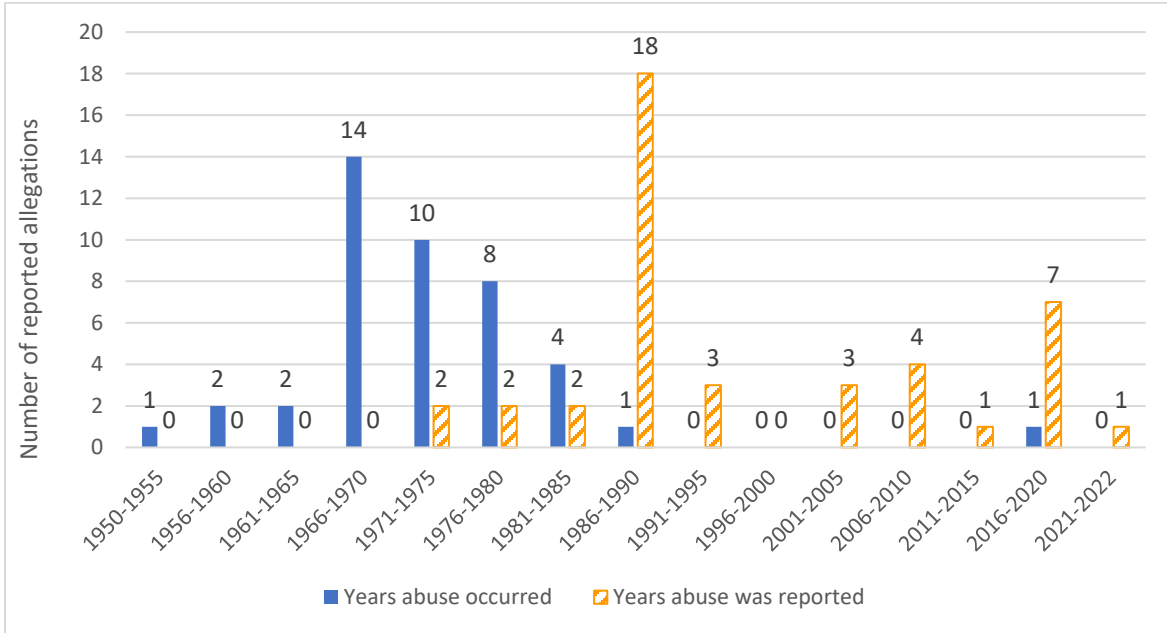
This portion of the Report provides an overview of credible allegations of child sexual abuse by clergy of the Diocese of Saginaw. To provide context, since 1938, there have been 371 priests and 49 permanent deacons ordained or incardinated into the Diocese. Of those, there are eight Diocese

² Current members of the Diocese of Saginaw Independent Review Board include a retired attorney; a retired educator; a social worker (LMSW) with professional experience with minors who have been abused; the lead agent for the sex offenders management unit of the Michigan Department of Corrections; a retired county sheriff; and a diocesan priest. Additional information regarding the Review Board, the Safe Environment educational program, and the Mass of Atonement can be found in Saginaw Faith Magazine <https://www.saginaw.org/faith-saginaw-archives>, May/June 2022.

of Saginaw clerics (seven priests and one deacon) who were permanently removed from the clerical state. An additional four clerics were credibly accused following their death, totaling 12 diocesan clerics.

Of the 12 Diocese of Saginaw clerics identified in **Sections A and B** of the List, there are 43 known victims with credible allegations.³

Reported Victims with Credible Allegations against Clergy of the Saginaw Diocese



Section C contains the names of clergy from religious institutes and other dioceses. These clerics ministered in the Diocese and have one or more credible allegation arising from within this Diocese.

Clergy from religious institutes or other dioceses, who served in the Diocese of Saginaw and against whom a credible allegation of child sexual abuse in the Diocese of Saginaw was presented

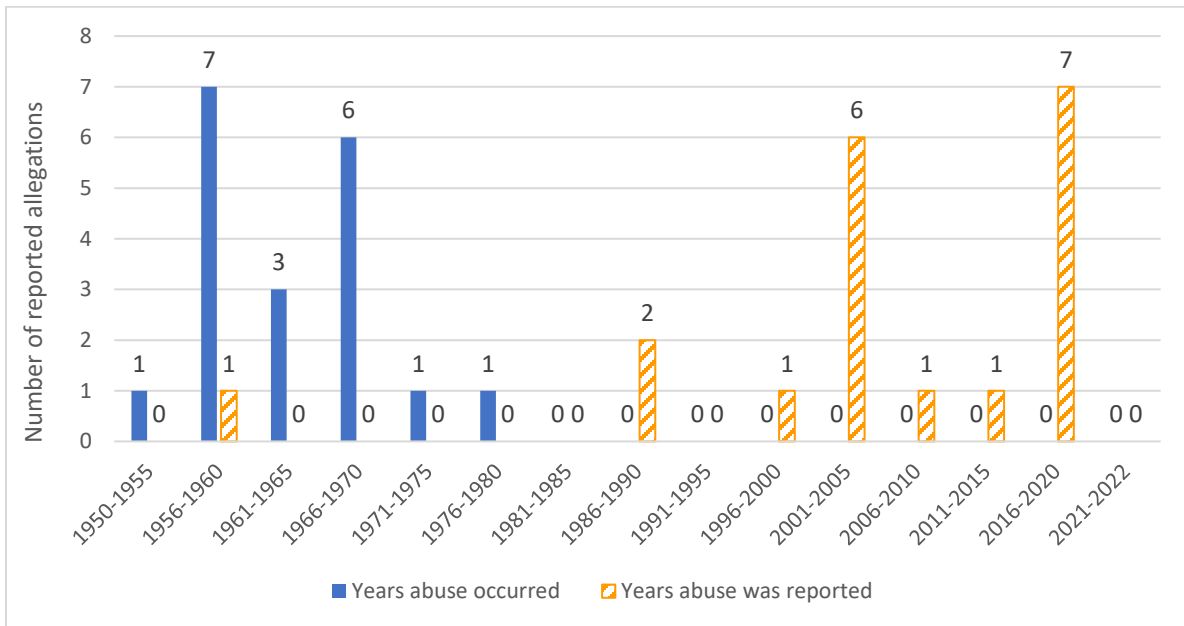
- Camillus Frigo, O.Praem (Norbertine)
- James Marron, C.S.Sp. (Holy Spirit Fathers), deceased
- Francis McHugh, O.Praem (Norbertine), deceased
- Raymond John Pilarski, deceased

³ “Known victim-survivors” are those individuals who have made their abuse known to the Church, and the Review Board has determined that their allegation is credible. The Report does not include in this statistical summary accusations or inquiries by a third party with no direct knowledge of possible abuse. The Report also excludes accusations in which an individual describes a wide discrepancy of the dates and location from the actual dates and location in which a cleric may have been in ministry, confusion about whether abuse occurred, anonymous reports not supported by similar allegations, and similar circumstances in which the Review Board could not find the accusation credible.

John Steven Rabideau, OMV⁴ (Oblates of the Virgin Mary), deceased
 Terrence Andrew Raymond, deceased
 Robert Gordon Smith, deceased
 Ken Stewart, OFM Cap (Order of Friars Minor Capuchin), dispensed from clerical state
 Joseph Szarek, deceased

Section C of the List includes 8 clerics from religious institutes or other dioceses who had a ministerial assignment in the Diocese of Saginaw. Those 8 listed clerics have **19** cumulative allegations by known victim survivors.

Reported Victims with Credible Allegations against Clerics from other Dioceses & Religious Institutions



Section D contains the names of known clergy from religious institutes and other dioceses who had a ministerial assignment in the Diocese, and one or more credible allegations arising from outside the Diocese.⁵ Therefore, the statistical information is not included in this Report.

Clergy from religious institutes or other dioceses, who exercised ministry in the Diocese with a credible allegation of child sexual abuse that occurred outside the Diocese of Saginaw

⁴ John Steven Rabideau, OMV, deceased, was convicted by law enforcement within the Diocese. Since he was not associated with the Diocese and never had an assignment in the Diocese, statistical information is not included in this Report. However, for the purpose of disclosure of all clerics who abused minors in the Diocese, his name is included in the List.

⁵ In sections C and D, typically, a religious superior or a bishop of another diocese, following consultation with his own Review Board, has made a determination of credibility and subsequently informed the Diocese of Saginaw of the determination. Outreach to victims is offered through these religious institutions and dioceses.

Benedict Adams, OFM Cap (Order of Friars Minor Capuchin), deceased
Baldwin Beyer, OFM Cap (Order of Friars Minor Capuchin), deceased
Art Cooney, OFM Cap (Order of Friars Minor Capuchin)
Ronald Vincent Gronowski (Diocese of Gaylord)
Francis M. Landwermyer, SJ, (Jesuits), deceased
James LaRéau, OFM Cap (Order of Friars Minor Capuchin), deceased
Austin Schlaefer, OFM Cap (Order of Friars Minor Capuchin), deceased
Benjamin Van der Schueren, SJ (Society of Jesus), deceased
Elmer Stoffel, OFM Cap (Order of Friars Minor Capuchin), deceased
Chester Vincent Tomaszewski, (Diocese of Lansing), deceased

3. Additional Questions

While it is not possible to anticipate all of the questions individuals might have about this information, the following questions may be uppermost in your minds.

- **Over the years, was law enforcement informed of abuse allegations?**

From the review of diocesan records, law enforcement was often informed, even in the 1970's, but prosecution did not occur. No evidence of diocesan interference with law enforcement investigations was found.

The first policy for the protection of children in the Diocese of Saginaw in 1989 committed the Diocese to encourage victim-survivors, even years after the fact, to report abuse to law enforcement. The manner of reporting to law enforcement was often informal, such as letters written by a victim-survivor that would be submitted to law enforcement.

Now, the Diocese has standardized reporting to law enforcement, which occurs with every reported allegation. There are no exceptions to the Diocese reporting child sexual abuse by clergy. As in the past, victim-survivors are encouraged to report directly to law enforcement, and are assisted in making such reports by the diocesan Victim Assistance Coordinator.

- **Does the Diocese of Saginaw add to the Names of Clergy Accused of Sexual Abuse of a Minor?**

Yes, the List is revised if the Diocese receives a new credible allegation of sexual abuse of a minor by a diocesan cleric. The List is also updated if the Diocese receives notification from another diocese or religious institute that a cleric, who had a ministerial assignment in the Diocese, even for a brief time, has a credible abuse allegation.

- **Were any priests moved among parishes following allegations of child sexual abuse?**

Diocesan records reveal that 3 former diocesan priests, whose abuse of minors had been reported to the Diocese, were moved among parishes until suspended from ministry.

See the following assignments for Stanislaus Bur (<https://www.saginaw.org/stanislaus-albert-bur>), Jack Leipert (<https://www.saginaw.org/jack-j-leipert>), and Leonard Wilkuski (<https://www.saginaw.org/leonard-wilkuski>).

- **Did you find evidence that accusations of sexual abuse of minors had been destroyed?**

While historical records were not kept in the same method that is maintained currently, no evidence of tampering or destruction of such records was found.

4. **Safe Environment Measures through the Years**

Safe Environment is a phrase used by the Catholic Church to describe its commitment to maintain a setting free from threats, specifically of sexual abuse, toward minors. This commitment has evolved over time, as both society and the Church have recognized the prevalence of sexual abuse of minors and the importance of establishing on-going measures to detect and prevent abuse.

There has been an increasing awareness of child sexual abuse, including the reality that abusers are most often known and trusted by the child and family. In recent years, parents and other caretakers have learned from educators and law enforcement about such matters as grooming, child pornography, trafficking, peer-to-peer abuse, minors exposed to pornography, cyberstalking, and the many other ways in which abuse may occur.

On September 14, 1989, Bishop Kenneth Untener (Bishop of Saginaw, 1980-2004) promulgated the first pertinent document related to this subject. *Policies and Procedures in Matters related to Accusations of Child Abuse* required that anyone associated with the Diocese report suspected abuse to the diocesan Office of the Vicar General and to law enforcement, if required by civil law.

In 2002, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) committed the Church to deal more effectively with cases of sexual abuse of minors (defined as below age 18) by clergy. In the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People [Charter]* and the *Essential Norms for Diocesan/Eparchial Policies Dealing with the Allegations of Sexual Abuse of Minors by Priests or Deacons [Essential Norms]*, the Bishops of the United States promised to reach out to those who had been sexually abused as minors by priests and deacons. Also, a policy of “zero tolerance” was approved, requiring permanent removal from ministry of any cleric credibly accused of sexual abuse of a minor.

The Diocese revised its Policy in 2003 to incorporate important components of the *Charter* and *Essential Norms*. Bishop Untener mandated the establishment of a diocesan Review Board to advise the Bishop in assessment of allegations of sexual abuse of minors by clergy and to review relevant diocesan policies. He also appointed a Victim Assistance Coordinator to aid in pastoral outreach.

The 2003 Policy required reporting of abuse of minors to law enforcement and Child Protective Services. The Safe Environment program was soon introduced to provide education and training for adults and children to prevent child sexual abuse.

A second diocesan document, *Standards of Ministerial Behavior for Those Who Work with Children and Young People*, was introduced in 2004, and revised through the years. The *Standards* provided criteria for all adult staff and volunteers in the Diocese, parishes and schools regarding responsibilities to care for minors. Criminal history background checks were initiated for all diocesan, parish, and school employees, as well as for volunteers in regular or frequent contact with minors.

Bishop Robert Carlson (Bishop of Saginaw, 2005–2009) initiated a personnel file review of active, senior, and deceased clergy, including files of priests and deacons from other dioceses and

religious institutes who served temporarily in the Diocese of Saginaw. The purpose of the review was to evaluate the suitability for ministry of all clergy and to become aware of historical concerns pertaining to clergy.

Bishop Carlson initiated canonical proceedings against five diocesan clerics due to credible allegations: Stanislaus Bur, John Hammer, Jack Leipter, Leonard Wilkuski and [Deacon] Richard Howard. The canonical proceedings resulted in their permanent removal from ministry and the clerical state in 2006.

Bishop Carlson collaborated with law enforcement and initiated the use of professional investigators to assist the Review Board with assessment of an allegation. This practice continues to this day.

Bishop Joseph Cistone (Bishop of Saginaw, 2009–2018), with the advice of the Review Board, in April 2014, revised the *Policy for the Protection of Children and Young People*, confirming the responsibilities of mandated reporters, who are required by law to report suspected child abuse. The 2014 Policy documented the practice of verifying the suitability for ministry of priests from other dioceses or religious institutes by the respective bishops and superiors before receiving a pastoral assignment in the Diocese of Saginaw. The Diocese committed to making a report to law enforcement of an allegation made by a now-adult of sexual abuse which occurred when they were minors unless the following two conditions were both met: (1) the alleged adult victim requested in writing that a report to law enforcement not be filed and (2) the alleged offender was deceased.

Under Bishop Cistone, on October 3, 2018, the Diocese provided the Michigan State Police with the names of all clerics who had been accused of child sexual abuse within the Diocese and identified pertinent clergy files. The Diocese continues to collaborate with civil authorities in these matters.

Bishop Walter Hurley (Apostolic Administrator, 2018-2019), in consultation with the diocesan Review Board, authorized placement of the List on the diocesan website. Bishop Hurley also announced an agreement with Catholic Family Service for the services of the Victim Assistance Coordinator. The Diocese extended fingerprinting beyond school employees to volunteer coaches; youth ministers; childcare volunteers; all priests, religious, and deacons assigned to a parish with a school; and clergy with regular or frequent contact with a school. Criminal background checks are renewed on a regular basis.

In April 2020, the Diocese again revised its Policy. The 2020 Policy expanded the persons to be protected to include vulnerable adults. Further, reporting to law enforcement was mandated even if the victim is no longer a minor, the victim would prefer to not have the allegation reported, the clergy member is deceased, and/or the cleric is/was a member of another diocese or religious institute.

In recent months, the *Policy* has again been revised. It expands the responsibilities of the Review Board to evaluate boundary issues and possible ministerial misconduct by clergy toward minors and vulnerable adults, and lists criminal offenses which prohibit someone from serving as an employee or volunteer with minors. And the 2022 *Policy for the Protection of Children, Young People, and Vulnerable Adults* incorporates *Vos estis lux mundi*, which pertains to allegations of

sexual abuse of minors and vulnerable adults by bishops and other ecclesiastical superiors, or negligence or misuse of their authority.

The Review Board recently revised the *Standards*, which was renamed the *Code of Conduct*. Compliance with the *Code of Conduct* is required of all diocesan, parish, and school employees and volunteers (not solely those with contact with minors). It requires the use of employer-authorized communication methods with minors; referral to parents when concerns are outside of the professional competence of personnel, and additional measures to maintain appropriate standards of behavior.

Safe Environment Education

Safe Environment training is a requirement of all employees and of all volunteers with contact with minors throughout the Diocese. Since 2003, 14,541 adults have received Safe Environment training. This training is renewed at 5 year intervals. Criminal background checks, also renewed at 5 year intervals, verify individuals' suitability for contact with minors in the Diocese, our parishes and schools. Safe Environment training is offered frequently throughout the Diocese. Programs for minors are offered through the Catholic schools and parish faith formation programs to help minors protect themselves from those who might harm them.

5. Concluding Thoughts

The Dallas Charter established a "zero tolerance" policy for all dioceses in the United States regarding sex-abuse allegations against clergy. If even one allegation of child sexual abuse is determined credible, the cleric will be permanently removed from ministry.

It is worthy to note that the same standard of *zero tolerance* toward priests and deacons also governs members of the laity and religious institutes. For example, a parish or diocesan lay employee or volunteer is disqualified from employment or volunteer activities if a disqualifying offense has occurred.

The work of Safe Environment protection is never done. There are practices of the Diocese of Saginaw and the broader society which yield a very different picture of child protection as compared to past years. In the future, the Diocese will offer additional resources for families and parish communities to collaborate in this important mission.

The clergy sex abuse crisis will forever be a tragic part of our history, a part that has no place in our present nor our future. We believe steps we have taken over the last few decades have demonstrated that our efforts, in the areas of protection of children, are working. However, we will never grow complacent. We will continue to look for opportunities to improve and make the Diocese of Saginaw the safest place in the world for children.