

The Review Board of the Catholic Diocese of Memphis in Tennessee

Report as to Priests Credibly Accused of Sexual Misconduct Involving Minors that have Served within the Diocese of Memphis

Bishop David Talley has asked the Review Board to assist with preparing a list of priests that have served in the Diocese of Memphis whom the Board deems to have credible allegations of sexual misconduct involving minors. This task is challenging. It not only involves listing those priests with claims that the Board has actually evaluated, but also involves compiling names of credibly accused priests from other dioceses or religious orders that may have at one time served within the diocese. And it requires reviewing archives to determine whether there are any other credible allegations that can be discerned from historical documents. The Board has now finished this task.

Nature of the Board

The Review Board consists of nine voting members, including one priest and one deacon. It is purely an advisory body to the Bishop. Members are chosen typically because of some professional or work experience that enables them to provide insight and perspective. Over the years the Board's membership has included executives that operated programs for abused children, physicians, psychiatrists, other health professionals, teachers, parents, attorneys, judges and former prosecutors. The purpose of the Board is twofold, (1) to evaluate allegations of sexual misconduct by clerics involving minors, and (2) to advise the Bishop as to appropriate policies for the protection of children. Formal minutes of the Review Board proceedings have been maintained since 2004.

Standards for Evaluating Credible Claims

On October 18, 2004 upon advice and recommendation of the Review Board, Bishop Steib promulgated rules to govern the working of the Board. These rules provide the framework for evaluating allegations of sexual misconduct by clerics involving minors. First of all, and importantly, they provide definitions. A “minor” is defined as a person under the age of eighteen. A “cleric” is defined as any ordained Roman Catholic clergy. The definition of sexual misconduct is broad and detailed in the Board’s rules. It is derived from Tennessee law and other sources, and generally prohibits, *inter alia*, all sexual contact, solicitation, lewd sexual behavior and conversation involving minors

The Board is charged to determine whether it is more likely than not that the accused cleric engaged in sexual misconduct involving a minor. The cleric is presumed innocent, and if the evidence is equally divided, no finding of sexual misconduct shall be submitted to the Bishop. In evaluating claims of sexual misconduct, while not exhaustive, the Board has considered the following factors:

- The number of complainants that have made allegations against the accused priest;
- The demeanor of the complainant and the accused priest;
- Any potential motive for lying or mental illness which might explain false allegations;
- Any corroborating evidence or witnesses;
- Whether the allegations were verifiably reported to a third party; and
- The length of time that transpires between when the sexual misconduct allegedly occurred and when it was first reported.

When investigating complaints, the Review Board has typically employed professional investigators to interview the complainant, the accused priest, and any other available witnesses. After the investigation is conducted, the matter is set for a hearing, at which both the complainant and the accused priest are invited to attend (separately) and testify before the Board. After the hearing, the Review Board has prepared a detailed written report of its findings and recommendations and sent them to the Bishop.

The Review Board has never considered itself as the ultimate adjudicator of the guilt of an accused priest. Rather, it has always been represented to the Board that a credibility determination is a preliminary process providing advice to the Bishop, followed by a more rigorous canonical process with protections and safeguards to ensure an accused cleric is not wrongfully determined to have engaged in sexual misconduct. In other words, the Board recognizes that some of those accused priests found by the Board to have credible claims against them, might actually be innocent of all wrongdoing—especially if a more stringent standard, such as beyond a reasonable doubt, to a moral certainty, or by clear and convincing evidence is utilized.

Cases not Formally Considered by the Memphis Review Board

The Memphis Review Board has considered all cases involving allegations against a priest of the Diocese of Memphis and reported to the Board since its formation in 2003. The Diocese of Memphis was not established until 1971. Prior to that time, West Tennessee was part of the Diocese of Nashville. Thus, any alleged acts of abuse occurring in West Tennessee prior to January 6, 1971 would fall under the jurisdiction of the Diocese of Nashville, and any such claims were typically referred to Nashville for a determination of credibility.

Likewise, allegations involving priests who were members of religious orders were typically referred to their respective review boards to evaluate. However, on a few occasions the Board additionally reviewed claims involving religious order priests or involving actions that occurred prior to the formation of the Diocese, especially if the accused priest was still involved in ministry in the Diocese of Memphis at the time the allegation was raised, or if the Bishop asked for a particular assessment of a particular claim. Furthermore, there were some priests that were determined by the Diocese of Memphis to have engaged in sexual misconduct with minors prior to the formation of the Review Board. These determinations were not revisited by the Board.

By listing below the findings of credibility undertaken by other review boards, we recognize that these other entities did not necessarily apply the same standards we do. Thus, it is possible that an allegation deemed to be credible by another board may have been found by the Memphis Board not to be credible, or vice versa. Thus, the listing below of credible allegations against priests, as determined by other dioceses or religious orders is not tantamount to an opinion that the same findings would have necessarily been rendered in a particular case by our Board.

References in the Archives

The Bishop also has asked for a review of all diocesan records to determine whether there were any other priests who should be listed as likely having engaged in sexual misconduct with a minor. This process has been more challenging, as there is no complainant coming forward, and typically no accused priest to interview, as most of the references in the records are sparse and involve conduct alleged to have occurred decades ago. Prior to the advent of

the copy machine, few copies of original records were created or preserved. And at that time, often original records were transferred to the location where the priest was currently residing.

There have been three comprehensive reviews of the Diocesan files. First, in 2005 Fr. Robert Ponticello as judicial vicar examined all personnel files at the request of the Review Board. Later, the Review Board requested another review that included a layman. Thus, a second, more thorough review was undertaken in 2008 by then judicial vicar Fr. Michael Joyce, C.M. and by the retired District Attorney General, John Pierotti.

Then, upon his installation in 2019, Bishop David Talley asked for a third review of all the diocesan records. This comprehensive, third review was undertaken separately by three different groups to ensure accuracy and completeness. First, the diocesan files were independently reviewed by (1) a subcommittee of the Review Board consisting of members John McCarroll and Juanita Richardson, and (2) a committee of priests. These committees then separately presented information they believed warranted further examination to the Board. Because the information within these old records was sparse, a professional investigator was employed to try and locate victims referenced in the notes or other helpful information.

Finally, as a safeguard to ensure that nothing was missed, the Memphis investigative firm of Inquisitor Inc. was retained to examine every diocesan file. A team of professional licensed investigators reviewed over 600 diocesan files pertaining to 338 priests and 104 deacons to ensure no credible information was overlooked.

All reviews have been completed, and information in those files has been examined by the full Review Board for a determination of credibility under the same standards employed in all other cases.

Listing of Credible Allegations

1. Priests that the Diocese of Nashville has determined to have credible allegations of sexual misconduct involving minors, that at one time served within West Tennessee:

The following priests were determined by the Diocese of Nashville to have engaged in sexual misconduct with a minor, and to have served at one point in time within West Tennessee in what is now the Diocese of Memphis. The assignments reflected below are only their known assignments in West Tennessee:

- **Rev. Edward James Cleary** (deceased)
Born: April 18, 1914
Ordained: May 18, 1940
Incardinated in Diocese of Memphis: January 6, 1971
Died: November 10, 1997
Assignments in West Tennessee: Immaculate Conception Church in Memphis, St. Paul Church

- **Msgr. William Floyd Davis** (deceased)
Born: August 17, 1929
Ordained: May 26, 1956
Incardinated in Diocese of Memphis: June 1, 1971
Died: October 26, 2011
Assignments in West Tennessee: St. William Church in Millington, St. Louis Church, Teacher at Catholic High School for Boys, St. John Church in Memphis, Blessed Sacrament Church, St. Mary's Church, Savannah and Our Lady of the Lake, Pickwick

- **Rev. Walter Emala** (deceased)
Born: June 14, 1925
Ordained: May 31, 1952
Incardinated in Diocese of Memphis: January 6, 1971
Died: February 20, 2008
Assignments in West Tennessee: St. Anne Church in Memphis, West Tennessee Area Scout Chaplain, Immaculate Conception Church in Memphis, St. Ann Church in Bartlett

- **Paul Frederick Haas** (deceased)
Born: December 14, 1933
Ordained: May 23, 1959

Dismissed from priesthood: May 24, 1977

Died: June 7, 1979

Assignments in West Tennessee: St. John Church in Memphis, Teacher at Catholic High School for Boys, Sacred Heart Church in Memphis

- **Rev. James A. Kemper** (deceased)
Born: February 7, 1915
Ordained: March 21, 1942
Died: November 23, 1993
Assignments in West Tennessee: Holy Rosary Church, St. James Church
- **Rev. James William Murphy Jr.** (deceased)
Born: September 12, 1922
Ordained: April 3, 1948
Incardinated in Diocese of Memphis: January 6, 1971
Died: October 11, 2016
Assignments in West Tennessee: Sacred Heart Church, St. Thomas Church, Director of the Ladies of Charity for West Tennessee, Immaculate Conception Church in Union City, St. Anthony Church, St. James Church
- **Joseph L. Reilly**
Born: December 16, 1928
Ordained: May 26, 1956
Dismissed from priesthood: 1965
Assignment in West Tennessee: St. Michael Church
- **Rev. James Arthur Rudisill** (deceased)
Born: May 16, 1926
Ordained: May 19, 1951
Died: February 8, 2008
Assignments in West Tennessee: Sacred Heart Church in Memphis, Youth Director for West Tennessee, Holy Angels Church in Dyersburg
- **Rev. Paul Wiley St. Charles** (deceased)
Born: June 23, 1939
Ordained: May 21, 1966
Incardinated in Diocese of Memphis: January 6, 1971
Suspended: August 7, 2006
Died: December 27, 2009
Note: Allegations also found credible in a separate investigation by Memphis Review Board
Assignments in West Tennessee: St. John Church, Chaplain for Scouting in the Memphis area, Director of the Catholic Youth Office in the Memphis area, teacher at Catholic High School, Church of the Ascension

- **Rev. Anthony G. Stredny** (deceased)
Born: October 15, 1928
Ordained: June 15, 1957
Incardinated into the Diocese of Galveston-Houston: 1971
Died: 2018
Assignments in West Tennessee: Our Lady of Sorrows, Holy Rosary Church, Blessed Sacrament Church
- **Rev. Edward Albert Walenga** (deceased)
Born: November 2, 1926
Ordained: May 30, 1953
Died: November 27, 1983
Assignments in West Tennessee: Little Flower Church, Sacred Heart Church in Humboldt

2. Priests credibly determined to have engaged in sexual misconduct with minors, prior to the formation of the Review Board:

The following priests of the Diocese of Memphis were determined to have engaged in sexual misconduct involving minors by Diocesan officials prior to the formation of the Memphis Diocesan Review Board:

- **Daniel Dupree**
Born: June 30, 1956
Ordained: July 14, 1984
Suspended: March 3, 1992
Dismissed from clerical state: March 31, 2006
Assignments: Church of the Resurrection, St. Andrew Church in Lexington, St. Regina Church in Parsons, Christian Brothers High School, Associate Director of Jackson Deanery Youth Ministry
- **James Gilbert**
Born: July 11, 1931
Ordained for the Diocese of Natchez (now Jackson): May 25, 1957
Granted dispensations from clerical state: October 10, 1973
Reinstated to clerical state for Diocese of Memphis: July 27, 1978
Suspended: August 13, 1985
Laicised: 2006
Assignments in West Tennessee: Associate Professor of Education at LeMoyne-Owen College, Academic Dean of LeMoyne Owen College, Professor of Education at LeMoyne-Owen College, Teacher at State Technical Institute, Coordinator of Family Life Ministry for the Diocese of Memphis, Adjunct professor at Christian Brothers College, Blessed Sacrament Parish

- **Juan Carlos Duran (formerly O.P.)**
 Born: August 3, 1960
 Ordained: December 28, 1996 (Dominican Order)
 Dismissed from Dominican Order: 2001
 Dismissed from clerical state: 2017
 Assignments in West Tennessee: St. Peter Church, Church of the Ascension

3. Priests determined by the Review Board to have credible allegations of sexual misconduct involving minors.

In addition to Rev. Paul St. Charles (listed in Section 1 above), the following priests were determined by the Memphis Review Board, after one or more formal hearings, to have credible allegations of sexual misconduct with one or more minors:

- **Rev. William Kantner** (deceased)
 Born: May 3, 1944
 Ordained: January 11, 1975
 Died: February 17, 2013
 Assignments: St. Paul Church, St. Louis Church, St. Anne Church, Bishop Byrne High School, St. Joseph Church, Holy Cross Church in Paris, St. Mary's Church in Camden, St. Francis of Assisi Church, Charter Lakeside Hospital (part-time chaplain), Christian Brothers College (in residence), Church of the Incarnation in Collierville; St. Peter Manor and Villa (sacramental minister), St. James Catholic Church
- **Joseph Thinh Duc Nguyen**
 Born: December 14, 1961
 Ordained: June 25, 1994
 Administrative leave: September 2006
 Suspended: July 23, 2007
 Dismissed from the clerical state: May 29, 2012
 Assignments: Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church in Germantown, St. Paul, St. Ann Church in Bartlett, Chaplain at St. Peter Manor and Villa, Sacramental Minister to the Vietnamese Catholic Community

4. References in the archives that the Review Board determined to be credible.

After a review of Diocesan records and employing a professional investigator to assist with attempting to obtain further information, the Review Board has determined that the following priests are deemed to have credible allegations of sexual misconduct with a minor.

- **Rev. Floyd Brey, S.J.** (deceased)
Born: March 24, 1904
Ordained: June 23, 1935 (Society of Jesus)
Died: December 14, 1996
Assignment in West Tennessee: St. Mary's Hospital in Humboldt in 1971

5. Credible allegations of sexual misconduct as determined by other review boards against clerics who served in the Diocese of Memphis.

The following priests were determined to have credible allegations against them by another Diocese (other than Nashville) or religious order and are known to have served within the Diocese of Memphis.

- **Rev. Thomas Joseph Dove, C.S.P.** (Paulist Fathers)
Born: March 2, 1934
Ordained: May 1, 1961
Suspended from ministry: November 2014
Assignment in West Tennessee: St. Patrick Church
[Finding of credibility made by Paulist Fathers]
- **Most Rev. Carroll T. Dozier** (deceased)
Born: August 18, 1911
Ordained a priest: March 19, 1937 (Diocese of Richmond)
Ordained Bishop of Memphis: January 6, 1971
Died: December 7, 1985
Assignment: Bishop of Memphis
[Finding of Credibility made by Diocese of Richmond]
- **Rev. Alfred Longley** (deceased)
Born: September 17, 1913
Ordained: 1939 Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis
Removed from Ministry: 1968
Died: 1974
Assignment: Christian Brothers College 1965-1966* (Note this assignment is reported by the Archdiocese of St. Paul-Minneapolis, though neither the Christian Brothers nor the Diocese of Nashville have any record of Fr. Longley ever having served in West Tennessee.)
[Finding of credibility made by the Archdiocese of St. Paul-Minneapolis]

Adopted in accordance with the Rules of the Diocesan Review Board, this 24th day
of February, 2020.



Patrick Lawler, Chairman