



## Diocese of Madison

702 S. High Point Rd.  
Suite 225  
Madison, WI 53719  
Phone (608) 821-3033

September 03, 2019

### **Diocese offers update following conclusion of clergy file review; adds name of one priest to list of credibly accused**

MADISON — A review of all clergy files of the Diocese of Madison by an outside firm, and an earlier announced separate investigation now complete, the Diocese of Madison is adding one name to its previous list of seven clergy credibly accused of sexual abuse of minors and disclosing the investigation of an additional priest.

In June, the Diocese of Madison announced a complete clergy file review by Defenbaugh & Associates, an independent security and investigations firm. At that time, the diocese offered the rationale for such a review as follows:

“Through rereleasing names of known past offenders, and adding to that list any names of those previously found by the diocesan Sexual Abuse Review Board to be credibly accused, and conducting a thorough investigation and review of any additional names, the diocese hopes to continue to build trust, to provide healing wherever possible, and to reassure the faithful of the Diocese of Madison that such matters have been and will continue to be dealt with appropriately.”

Now that the file review has concluded, the diocese offers the following public update to the Catholics in the Diocese of Madison, as well as the larger community.

At the time of the June announcement, the diocese released again the names of the seven diocesan priests who have had accusations of sexual abuse of minors made against them and which allegations have been investigated and determined to be credible by the diocesan Sexual Abuse Review Board. All of the priests listed then had already been publicly announced, either individually or as a group (during a 2003 listing). Also announced this June was the opening of an investigation regarding a long-deceased priest.

That investigation, based upon allegations which came to the diocese in the past year, has concluded, and its findings have been presented to the Sexual Abuse Review Board. The review board - which is presently comprised of a retired circuit judge, a child and adolescent psychiatrist, a former law-enforcement officer, a local attorney, and a senior pastor - has determined that more than one allegation of inappropriate touching of a minor, is credible against Fr. John Eberhardy, a priest of the Diocese of Madison, deceased since 1992.

In addition, following the announcement of the file review, an individual was motivated to bring to the diocese's attention information about another priest. The individual has since made a formal accusation of sexual abuse of a minor, occurring over 50 years ago, against Fr. Patrick Doherty, a retired priest of the diocese. While this accusation did not come to light as a direct result of the forensic file review, Doherty's file was reviewed by Defenbaugh & Associates and it was determined that a further investigation was indeed warranted. At this time, the Diocese of Madison is officially beginning an investigation into this accusation against Fr. Doherty. The findings of this investigation will be presented to the diocesan Sexual Abuse Review Board, and their determination as to the allegation's credibility will be presented to Bishop Donald Hying and announced publicly.

Fr. Doherty (85) retired from active ministry in 1993, without faculties to act as a priest, following ongoing scandal to the faithful, involving an admitted problem with alcohol as well as accusations from parishioners to the diocese that there was an adult man living in the rectory. Since he does not reside in Wisconsin, the bishop of the diocese in which he presently lives has been notified of this accusation, despite the fact that Fr. Doherty has not been in active ministry for many years.

In both instances, the accusers came forward desiring that their identities and stories not be shared publicly, a request that the diocese will continue to honor. However, in accord with its own policies, for the sake of full public disclosure, and in order to assist any other potential victims in need of being heard, the Diocese of Madison makes known each of these realities – one a determination of credibility and one an ongoing investigation (respectively). With regard to these and all other allegations involving victims who are no longer minors, the Diocese of Madison has encouraged and offered to be of assistance in bringing these matters to law enforcement.

As was mentioned in the June 11, 2019 release, there remains an open investigation into Fr. William A. Nolan. However, as previously announced, “this investigation is on-hold (and the presumption of innocence must be emphasized) pending the completion of the criminal proceedings against him. Father Nolan has been on ‘Administrative Leave,’ since the allegation was made known to the Diocese of Madison — not directly, but by way of a criminal complaint — in May of 2018.” Court proceedings are anticipated to begin in the coming weeks.

Given the above announcements, at this time the Diocese of Madison adds Fr. John Eberhardy to the list of priests who have had one or more accusations of sexual abuse of minors made against them that were determined to be credible by the diocesan Sexual Abuse Review Board since the time of the diocese’s founding (with two outstanding investigations mentioned above). This is in addition to the seven priests named by the diocese since 2003. Therefore, those priests or former-priests of the Diocese of Madison, with credible accusations of sexual abuse of minors against them are eight: Archie Adams, Curtis Alvarez, J. Gibbs Clauder, Kenneth Klubertanz, Michael Trainor, Lawrence Trainor, Gerald Vosen, and (now) John Eberhardy.

The findings of the Defenbaugh & Associates review have been helpful in cataloguing a number of these issues which have already been investigated, brought for review, and disclosed by the Diocese of Madison in the past. The findings also offered assurances that there are no priests of the Diocese of Madison who have been credibly accused of the crimes of sexual abuse of minors, who have not now been named publicly. The review provides assurances that the diocese is keeping faithfully to its policies and relevant laws for investigation and reporting, and it can be confident that there are no known historical issues in its files regarding the sexual abuse of minors left uninvestigated or undisclosed. Additional information will be made available on the Diocese of Madison website ([www.madisondiocese.org](http://www.madisondiocese.org)) and a new page listing names of all those credibly accused of sexual abuse of minors added. Any future allegations will continue to be handled with care and thoroughness, always in accord with diocesan policies and the dictates of the law.

Bishop Donald Hying, receiving the findings of the review and the decisions of the Sexual Abuse Review Board, offers the following statement. “While on the one hand, I am encouraged by and grateful for past efforts to be thorough and transparent in these matters, the addition of even one priest to the list of those credibly accused of such horrible acts and sins is one too many. I pledge to be open with regard to any future credible allegations of sexual abuse of minors made against clergy, to maintain continued vigilance to ensure the safety of children and vulnerable people in the Church, and to continue to pray and extend compassion to all who have suffered the terrible scourge of abuse.”

---

*As always, any allegation of sexual misconduct should be brought to the attention of law enforcement officials. If allegations involve priests, deacons, or other Church personnel, regardless of when they are said to have occurred, they should also be reported to the Diocese of Madison, by way of the Sexual Misconduct Question and Reporting Line, 608-821-3162. The diocesan policies regarding sexual abuse allegations, and instructions for making a report of sexual misconduct, are available on the diocesan website: [madisondiocese.org/safe-environment](http://madisondiocese.org/safe-environment).*

###