

ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF LITTLE ROCK

FEBRUARY 6, 2019

Overview: Thank you for the opportunity to assist you in reviewing the personnel files of living and deceased priests and deacons of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Little Rock (Diocese); as well as personal information pertaining to other priests and deacons who are known to have ever conducted ministry in the Diocese.

Although the Diocese was established in 1843, the earliest records we reviewed were dated 1886 and the latest records were dated October 2018. In conducting this work, we had complete access to available records. One of the key objectives of our work was to identify from existing documentation clerics who had ever been accused of sexually abusing minors or vulnerable adults. We also conducted a limited review of publicly-available information on those clerics.

In reviewing the ways in which the Diocese of Little Rock responded to allegations of abuse, we found information in some, but not all, of the files that reflected a variety of actions consistent with the most common activities of other dioceses in the United States relative to alleged offenders during that time period, i.e., referrals for evaluation; arranging for psychological treatment; and reprimands/administrative action and return to ministry. It is important to note that the Diocese of Little Rock has had a policy against sexual abuse of minors since 1994, with consequences for any such acts. The documentation with regard to how cases were addressed in more recent years was found to be more extensive, thorough, and, at appropriate times, utilized the expertise of an independent review board.

Details: Total Number of Files Reviewed:¹ 1385

Total Number of Reviewers/Total Hours of Review (approximate): 10 Reviewers/658 hours

Background of Reviewers: The Review was directed by Kathleen McChesney, Ph.D. – former Executive Director, USCCB Office of Child Protection, FBI Executive and sex-crimes detective. All reviewers had extensive careers as investigators either on the local, state or federal level and included a former FBI criminal profiler, state police major crimes investigator, head of a state police forensic laboratory, a specialist in victim assistance programs, a federal financial crimes investigator.

¹ Number of files reviewed is approximate. For alleged offenders, in particular, there were multiple files reviewed. We also reviewed, but did not necessarily summarize, generic files, or files pertaining to specific reporters of abuse whose information was also found in alleged offender files.