



# DIOCESE OF LITTLE ROCK

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## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS** **REGARDING THE CLERGY DISCLOSURE LIST**

*(Please visit our website at [www.dolr.org/clergy-disclosure-list](http://www.dolr.org/clergy-disclosure-list) for a more complete list of FAQs)*

**1. *What if I or someone I know has been sexually abused by a priest, deacon, or other personnel of the Church?***

If you have reasonable cause to suspect that a child has been abused by *anyone*, please first contact the civil authorities by calling the Arkansas Child Abuse Hotline (800-482-5964). If the abuser is a priest, deacon, or member of Church personnel, then please call or email our diocesan contacts: Dcn. Matthew Glover, Chancellor for Canonical Affairs (501-664-0340, ext. 361; [mglover@dolr.org](mailto:mglover@dolr.org)) or Drs. George or Sherry Simon, Victims Assistance Coordinators (501-664-0340, ext. 425).

**2. *Why is this disclosure being made now?***

With the release of the report of the grand jury in Pennsylvania, people began to ask about the existence of such cases in Arkansas. Bishop Taylor believes people have the right to know, so he asked for a review of diocesan files of the priests who have served in Arkansas during the last 70 years, and he is now making the findings of this preliminary review public.

**3. *Why was this disclosure not made earlier?***

Actually, when he was Bishop of Little Rock, now-Archbishop Sartain publicly disclosed similar numbers in 2004 following the 2002 clergy sex abuse crisis in Boston, but without releasing the names of known abusers over what was then the previous 50 years (*see* “A Pastoral report to the people of the diocese,” *Arkansas Catholic* (Feb. 21, 2004)). The reason our numbers in 2018 are so similar is there have been no further cases of abuse of minors reported to have occurred since then. We continue to receive credible allegations of abuse, but so far these have all been for crimes committed prior to 2002.

**4. *How did the bishops of the Diocese of Little Rock handle allegations received in the past?***

Archbishop Sartain (2000-2006), Msgr. Hebert (administrator 2006-2008) and Bishop Taylor (2008 to present) acted decisively whenever allegations were received—and all verified cases of offenses committed since 2002 have involved misconduct with adults or imprudent acts that did not rise to the level of sexual abuse (i.e., not crimes against children). The way allegations were handled by Bishop McDonald (1972-2000) and Bishop Fletcher (1946-1972) is currently under review, especially since they served prior to the 2002 implementation of the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People, and most of the known cases occurred during their tenure.

**5. *What additional investigative efforts is the Diocese undertaking?***

The diocese has hired Dr. Kathleen McChesney and her firm, Kinsale Management Consulting, to conduct an independent review of Diocesan files. That process will occur over the course of this fall, and we hope to make those results public in December. The Diocese will also continue its own internal review and investigation of all clergy personnel files. The Diocese will present the results of that information to the Diocesan Review Board, which will then make recommendations to Bishop Taylor on whether there are additional credible allegations to be published. This list will then be updated with any additional credible allegations.

**6. *Will the Attorney General's office or other civil authorities be investigating?***

The Diocese has already reached out to the Arkansas Attorney General and has communicated this list and our plans for additional external investigations by Kinsale Management Consulting, as well as continued internal investigations. The Diocese has expressed to the Attorney General that it is prepared to cooperate fully with any investigation that she might request.

**7. *Does this list contain all names of clergy who have been credibly accused of child sexual abuse?***

The list contains all the names of those clergy whom we have been able to identify to date. This is a preliminary list, based on our initial preliminary review and examination of files. Over the course of this fall, Kinsale Management Consulting will conduct an independent review of *all* clergy personnel files in conjunction with our own ongoing internal review, and this list will be updated accordingly at the conclusion of that investigation.

**8. *What help does the Diocese of Little Rock provide to known victims?***

The Diocese automatically covers the cost of all counseling and psychological care sought by any victim, including their immediate family members, if it is desired. It also covers other expenses and needs on a case-by-case basis, including needs that are not necessarily directly related to the abuse the victim suffered. In addition, in every case, the diocese offers a pastoral meeting to apologize on behalf of the church and to assist in the healing process.

**9. *What steps has the diocese taken to prevent sexual abuse of minors by church personnel?***

The Diocese of Little Rock has a Safe Environment Program with training, policies, and procedures designed to prevent and recognize signs of sexual abuse of minors (<https://www.dolr.org/safe-environment>). The Diocese conducts criminal background checks of clergy, religious, employees, and volunteers who have routine contact with minors. And these individuals are also required to undergo training to recognize and respond to potential signs of sexual abuse of minors. Finally, in all of our Catholic schools and parish religious education programs, minors are given age-appropriate education so they can know how to help create safe environments for themselves, and what they can do when they feel that a certain environment is not safe.