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Diocesan Actions

Priest restored; another removed

The Evangelist

June 17, 2004

<http://www.evangelist.org/archive/htm5/0617jupi.htm>

One priest has returned to ministry and one has been removed after separate investigations into allegations of sexual misconduct, the Albany Diocese announced June 13.

Bishop Howard J. Hubbard restored to ministry Rev. Alan Jupin, based on the recommendation of the Diocesan Review Board, the panel that investigates sexual abuse allegations against clergy in the Albany Diocese. The Diocese created the Review Board 11 years ago to investigate allegations of sexual misconduct by clergy.

Based on information gathered from the complainant and others, the Review Board concluded that there were not reasonable grounds to believe that Father Jupin had sexually abused two teenagers in Schenectady in the 1970s, as had been alleged.

Father Jupin requested and was granted a leave of absence from ministry in May 2003 when he and others were named in a lawsuit related to the alleged abuse. The lawsuit was dismissed in state Supreme Court in January.

Father Jupin resumed his duties as pastor of Our Lady of Fatima parish in Schenectady on June 12.

Removal

The Diocesan Review Board found there were reasonable grounds to believe an allegation that Rev. James C. McNerney sexually abused a minor in the 1980s.

The Albany Diocese received the complaint in 2003, and the Review Board immediately began an investigation, said a diocesan statement.

Father McNerney has strenuously denied the allegation. Nevertheless, Bishop Hubbard, acting on the Review Board's recommendation, placed Father McNerney on administrative leave, effective immediately.

Father McNerney had served as a priest in Troy since 1996, first as pastor of St. Paul the Apostle Church and, since 2000, as pastor of both St. Peter's and St. Paul's parishes. Parishioners in both churches were advised of his removal at Masses June 12-13. Rev. William Gorman will serve as administrator of the two parishes in the interim.

Father McNerney, who was ordained in 1981, has also served at Our Lady of the Assumption Church in Latham (1981-'83), Pyramid Lake Camp in Paradox (1983), St. Mary's Church in Ballston Spa (1983-'86), Saratoga Catholic Central High School (1985-'86), Crosier Seminary in Minnesota (1986-'87), St. Patrick's Church in Catskill (1988-'92), St. John the Evangelist Church in Schenectady (1992-'94), St. Joseph's Church in Green Island (1994-'96) and Sacred Heart of Mary Church in Watervliet (1995-'96).

Zero tolerance

The Albany Diocese has a zero-tolerance policy for sexual abuse of minors by clergy. No priest can remain in public ministry or can be transferred into, out of, or within the Diocese if the Diocese has found reasonable grounds to believe he sexually abused a minor.

The Diocese urges anyone who as a child was sexually abused by a Catholic priest or deacon to come forward for help. The Diocese investigates all allegations of sexual abuse by clergy.

To report an incident of abuse or to seek help, contact the Diocese's assistance coordinator, Theresa F. Rodrigues, at 453-6646 or by e-mail at victim.assistance@rcda.org.

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