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## **Priest Cleared of Abuse Charge**

Albany Announcement Draws Complaint from Lawyer for Alleged Victims

By Brian Nearing  
Times Union (Albany, NY)  
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The Albany Roman Catholic Diocese on Wednesday said it has cleared a priest of a decades-old allegation of soliciting sex from teenage boys. The announcement came just hours after the alleged victims' lawyer accused the diocese of dragging out its investigation.

In a written statement, the diocese said it twice found no reasonable grounds to substantiate allegations against the Rev. Robert LeFevre, pastor of St. Peter's Church in Saratoga Springs.

LeFevre "remains a priest in good standing in the Albany Diocese and will remain at his current assignment," the diocese said.

The diocese's Sexual Misconduct Review Board rejected allegations by two brothers who said LeFevre unsuccessfully propositioned them for sex on separate occasions in 1969, while he was a priest at St. Margaret's parish in Rotterdam Junction. The brothers, who asked to remain anonymous, were 15 and 17 at the time.

Their lawyer, John Aretakis, questioned the timing of the diocese's announcement, which came hours after he accused the diocese of doing nothing since the brothers complained, first in 1997 and again in November 2002.

Diocese spokesman Ken Goldfarb said the brothers were informed in 1998 or 1999 that LeFevre was cleared of wrongdoing following an investigation.

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