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St. Luke's Parishioner Allegedly Molested

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It was revealed at an open meeting that the monsignor accused of violating minors at a Brooklyn church 30 years ago also allegedly abused at least one parishioner during his years at St. Luke's in Whitestone.

The community forum was held at St. Luke's School on Clintonville Street on Wednesday, June 6. Attendees shaken up by the sex abuse accusations against retired Monsignor Nicholas J. Capua expressed outrage at the allegations and at the media coverage that ensued.

Some parishioners said that although they sympathize with those who brought the charges, they are having trouble believing the beloved priest could commit such acts. Others were more willing to accept the news. Throughout the room, there was a feeling of betrayal and sadness.

"This parish is devastated," said one parishioner.

Capua was accused of sexual abuse of minors that occurred 30 years ago when he was in a church in Brooklyn. He was at St. Luke's in Whitestone for 22 years.

It was revealed at the meeting that there has been at least one other accusation from someone in St. Luke's, although it is unclear whether the alleged victim was a minor at the time of the abuse.

Those who brought the allegations against Capua are not connected to one another, according to Sister Ellen Patricia Finn, Brooklyn Diocesan Victims Assistance Coordinator.

The 78-year-old former pastor has denied the accusations.

Throughout the meeting, there were complaints about how the church handled the situation.

During the weekend of May 26-27, a letter from Brooklyn Diocese leader Bishop Nicholas DiMarzio revealing the circumstances was read during each mass - a total of seven. Parishioners felt that it was an inappropriate place to read the letter, especially because there were children present.

Frank Derosa, a spokesperson for the Brooklyn Diocese, said that reading the letter at mass is standard procedure. He explained that there is a section in the letter that addresses those with children and gives them a chance to leave.

"We certainly hope these efforts are helpful to parishioners," said Derosa.

Churchgoers also did not understand how Capua, who allegedly committed these acts in Brooklyn, was moved to St. Luke's in 1983 and nothing was said.

One constant throughout the meeting was the discussion of faith and how to apply it in this situation.

"You don't know who to pray for," said one churchgoer.

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