



Diocese of Madison

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Media Release

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For Immediate Release

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Priest's abuse case being sent to Vatican for judgment

(Madison)- The members of the Diocese of Madison's Sexual Abuse Review Board have, after a preliminary investigation into the testimonies and facts surrounding an allegation of child-sexual abuse made against Fr. Joseph Gibbs Clauder, found the allegation to be credible. Considering the Review Board's findings, Bishop Robert C. Morlino, Bishop of Madison, has agreed with their evaluation and has referred this case to the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, in Rome, for judgment.

Fr. Clauder remains on an administrative leave, on which he was placed in 1999 by Bishop William H. Bullock, after the diocese received credible allegations against Fr. Clauder involving sexual misconduct with an adult. Fr. Clauder has been forbidden from performing public priestly ministry since 1999. The current allegation of sexual abuse of a minor, which has been deemed credible, was brought forth earlier this year.

As part of the Catholic Church's promise to protect children and young persons from sexual abuse, we renew our promise to all possible openness and transparency with regard to the communications of these cases. At this time all documentation regarding this case has been sent to the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF) in Rome. Because of the nature of the allegations against Fr. Clauder, and the fact that this matter still awaits final judgment by the CDF, this case necessarily falls under formal seal and no other information is available at this time. As we have in the past, the diocese will notify the public when final judgment is received.

Through the adoption of the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*, the Bishops of the United States have taken proactive steps to address the issue of child sexual abuse. The Diocese of Madison has fully implemented the terms of the *Charter*, which aim at promoting healing and reconciliation of victims, guaranteeing an effective response to allegations of sexual abuse of minors, ensuring the accountability of its procedures and protecting the faithful in the future. Independent national audits have been conducted each year since the *Charter's* adoption (2002) by The Gavin Group, Inc., a Boston-based independent firm headed by William A. Gavin, a retired FBI official, and all have shown the Diocese of Madison to be in full compliance.

Any allegation of sexual misconduct involving priests, deacons, or other Church personnel can be reported to the Diocese of Madison by use of the Sexual Misconduct Question and Reporting Line, 608-821-3162. The diocesan policies regarding sexual abuse allegations, and instructions for making a report of sexual misconduct, are available on the diocesan website: www.madisondiocese.org.

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