



DIocese OF BRIDGEPORT

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OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

June 25, 2016

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

It is with deep regret that I must inform you that I have placed Reverend John Stronkowski on administrative leave and have removed his faculties to exercise any and all forms of public ministry as a priest.

My decision was made after I determined, with the assistance of the Diocesan Sexual Misconduct Review Board, that there is credible evidence of an incident of abuse of a minor on the part of Father Stronkowski more than a decade ago. Upon first learning of this allegation in late September of last year, I immediately notified Father Stronkowski that the Diocese would fully investigate the information brought forward. I also informed him that, pending the outcome of the investigation, his priestly faculties and his ability to exercise any public ministry would continue to be suspended. For reasons not having anything to do with abuse of a minor, Father Stronkowski has been on a leave of absence from ministry since May, 2014.

In accordance with both state reporting mandates and the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People (commonly known as the Dallas Charter), we notified both the police and the Connecticut Department of Children and Families (DCF) of the allegation. Given the limited information available and the amount of time which had passed, neither the police nor DCF took further action. As required by the Charter as well as our own policies, the Diocese then began a lengthy investigation into the allegation. As a result of this extensive and deliberative inquiry, which involved outside investigative resources and Diocesan advisors on such matters, the allegation was found to be credible. Significant supportive resources were made available to the victim throughout this confidential investigation. At the request of the victim and the victim's family, we took every precaution to protect their privacy and we ask for continued respect of their privacy at this difficult time.

As a result of and in accordance with the Dallas Charter, Father Stronkowski is prohibited from any future ministry. Parish clergy and lay leadership where Father Stronkowski served were notified of my action in advance of this letter. We have taken steps to work with Father Stronkowski in this transition and provide him with support. In addition, Diocesan personnel are available through the Safe Environments Office as a resource to those affected. You should be aware that,

other than this one reported incident, we have not received any other allegation of abuse of a minor by Father Stronkowski during his priestly assignments.

I realize that this is distressing news for the faithful and it further wounds the Diocese and our Church as a family of faith. I can only reassure you that we remain committed to a zero tolerance policy for child abuse and total transparency in the handling of cases.

I ask your prayers for all involved and pledge that we as a Diocese will continue to do everything in our power to fulfill the sacred obligation we share to protect children, youth and vulnerable adults in our community.

Sincerely yours in Christ,



Most Reverend Frank J. Caggiano,
Bishop of Bridgeport

SAFE ENVIRONMENTS:

To report suspected abuse involving a minor, recently or in the past, contact: Erin Neil, L.C.S.W., diocesan director of Safe Environments: 203.650.3265; or Michael Tintrup, L.C.S.W., victim assistance counselor: 203.241.0987. Mandated reporters must also directly report any incident of sexual abuse of a minor to the State of Connecticut Child Abuse and Neglect care line: 800.842.2288. Those who are not mandated reporters may also report suspected abuse to the Abuse and Neglect care line at 800.842.2288