



DIOCESE OF GRAND RAPIDS

NEWS RELEASE

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Pope Francis Dismisses Retired Priest William Langlois from the Clerical State

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. – Pope Francis has dismissed retired priest, [William Langlois](#) from the clerical state. The dismissal includes a dispensation from all obligations of the clerical state, including celibacy. Langlois may no longer minister as a priest, celebrate the sacraments, wear clerical dress, or present himself as a priest. He was granted senior priest status in April 2016, which means he has not been assigned to a parish since that time.

A victim-survivor approached the Diocese of Grand Rapids in 2018 regarding incidents of sexual abuse that occurred from 1999-2006 while Langlois was serving as pastor of Saint Patrick – St. Anthony Parish in Grand Haven. These incidents began while the victim-survivor was a minor and continued into adulthood. The diocese immediately notified local civil authorities, who worked with the Office of the Michigan Attorney General to investigate this allegation. Even though he was already retired, the Diocese of Grand Rapids further restricted Langlois from any type of public ministry as soon as it learned of the allegation.

The Diocese of Grand Rapids' Review Board assessed the allegation made against Langlois and advised Bishop Walkowiak that it was credible. Bishop Walkowiak forwarded the results of the preliminary canonical investigation to the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith for their determination on the case.

“It takes courage for survivors to share their story. I am appreciative this survivor came forward and I hope that this announcement will aid in the healing process,” Bishop Walkowiak said. “As Bishop, I renew my profound apologies to all those who have suffered abuse in the Church. I continue my prayers and support for their recovery and healing.”

The Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People, promulgated in 2002, together with the *Essential Norms for Diocesan/Eparchial Policies Dealing with Allegations of Sexual Abuse of Minors by Priests or Deacons* has enabled the Catholic Church to strengthen its efforts to protect children and young people. Visit grdiocese.org and click ‘[Protecting God’s Children](#)’ in the menu to find information on the diocese’s safe environment programs.

Langlois’ assignments:

Feb. 24, 1974: Ordained to the priesthood

1974: Associate pastor, St. Stephen Parish, East Grand Rapids

1976: Associate pastor, St. Jude Parish, Grand Rapids.

1979: Chaplain for Blodgett and Butterworth Hospitals, Grand Rapids

1984: Pastor, St. Michael Parish, Coopersville with a mission at Grand Valley State University



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1996: Pastor, St. Patrick – St. Anthony Parish, Grand Haven
2016: Granted Senior Priest Status (retired)

To report abuse: Any person who suspects the sexual abuse of a minor by a member of the clergy or by any person acting in the name of the Catholic Church is urged to make a formal complaint to the Michigan Attorney General's Hotline at 844-324-3374.

If you are a survivor of sexual abuse, either as a child or an adult, by someone representing the Catholic Church, we urge you to come forward to seek help. A report can be made regardless of when the alleged abuse occurred. Every diocese has a victim assistance coordinator who is available to help survivors make a formal complaint and obtain support:

To contact the victim assistance coordinator for the Diocese of Grand Rapids:

Call: 616-840-2079, email: vac@grdiocese.org
or write to:
Diocese of Grand Rapids - Cathedral Square Center
Attn: Victim Assistance Coordinator
360 Division Ave. S.
Grand Rapids, MI 49503

The Diocese of Grand Rapids serves more than 175,114 Catholics, 80 parishes and 31 schools in an 11-county area of West Michigan. For additional information visit our website grdiocese.org. Connect with the diocese on [Facebook](#) (Diocese of Grand Rapids), [Twitter](#) (@GRDiocese), and Instagram ([@GRDiocese](#)).

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