

# **Catholic Diocese of Beaumont joins with other Texas dioceses in announcing plans to release names of clergy credibly accused of sexual abuse of minors**

Bishop Curtis Guillory, SVD, joined other Texas bishops today in announcing their decision to release names of clergy credibly accused of sexual abuse of minors.

This decision, made by the 15 Catholic dioceses of Texas and the Ordinariate of the Chair of St. Peter, is in the context of the ongoing work to protect children from sexual abuse and their efforts to promote healing and the restoration of trust in the Church.

“We are taking this action in response to the faithful’s call for greater accountability and transparency,” said Cardinal Daniel DiNardo, archbishop of Galveston-Houston.

All dioceses will publish their lists by January 31, 2019.

“Earlier this summer I joined the Holy Father and Cardinal DiNardo, president of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, in expressing my deep sadness for the severe damage that has been imposed on the lives of so many by this sinful and criminal abuse. I am also saddened by the violations of trust that have happened in so many other places,” said Bishop Guillory.

“On December 12, 2003, I addressed a major statistical study by the John Jay College of Criminal Justice of all dioceses in the U.S. regarding sexual abuse of minors by clergy. The statistics we reported at that time covered the time period from the diocese’s establishment in 1966 until 2002. Please remember, as I have said many times before, we have zero tolerance in our diocese. We investigate all allegations.

“And now, continuing in the spirit of complete openness and before the end of January, our diocese will release the names of all clergy who had a credible allegation brought against them since our establishment as a diocese on September 29, 1966,” said Bishop Guillory.

Dioceses that were established earlier than the Beaumont diocese will be going back as far as 1950. Prior to the establishment of the Diocese of Beaumont, parishes in Southeast Texas had been part of the Diocese of Galveston-Houston.

In making the joint announcement today, the Texas bishops explained that the endeavor to compile a comprehensive list of clergy who have been credibly accused of sexually abusing a minor represents a major project since there are currently 8.5 million Catholics and 1,320 Catholic parishes in Texas.

“It will take some time for files to be reviewed, and there may be people who come forward with new information following this announcement,” explained Archbishop Gustavo García-Siller, MSPS, archbishop of San Antonio.

The release of names of clergy credibly accused of sexually abusing a minor is the continuation of the ongoing effort by the dioceses to provide an ever safer environment for children. These lists will be updated as new information becomes available. The decision by the bishops to release the names was made on September 30, 2018.

Each bishop will be releasing his own statement and list. The full statement of the bishops of Texas includes information on this work and follows:



## PREVENTING THE SEXUAL ABUSE OF MINORS

We are deeply sorry that some Church leaders have, at times, failed in their responsibility to protect minors. The Catholic Church throughout the United States has worked to improve protection, especially over the last fifteen years. We will remain vigilant to provide an even safer environment for every child we serve.

The Catholic Church in Texas is committed to the prevention of sexual abuse of minors by those who are in ministry in the Church and to promote healing for survivors of abuse. Each diocese has comprehensive policies in place both to respond to complaints and to prevent the sexual abuse of minors. These safety policies and practices are regularly verified by an external audit of each diocese.

### PREVENTION OF ABUSE

- **Safe Environment:** All Texas dioceses have implemented comprehensive “safe environment” education programs and have together trained many of the 8.5 million Catholics in the state -- adults, minors, employees, clergy, and volunteers -- on how to identify, report, and help prevent abuse. Prior to his anticipated ministry, every priest seeking to minister in a diocese is to present a written attestation of suitability supplied by his bishop/religious superior.
- **Background Checks:** The dioceses conduct background evaluations for all bishops, priests, deacons, and religious, as well as other diocesan, parish, and school personnel who have regular contact with minors. Since 2002, criminal background checks have been completed regularly on volunteers, employees, and clergy who are involved in ministry in the Church.

### RESPONSE TO ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE

- **Reporting to Civil Authorities:** All of the Texas Catholic dioceses have policies to report to civil authorities whenever there is cause to believe that a minor has been sexually abused.
- **Removal from Ministry:** Diocesan policies provide that a bishop, priest, deacon, or religious who has been credibly accused of sexually abusing a minor will be removed from ministry.

## HEALING OF SURVIVORS

- **Therapeutic and Pastoral Response:** Each diocese has a Victim Assistance Coordinator, who facilitates the provision of counseling and other professional assistance to help those who report they were sexually abused as a minor. In addition, all victims of childhood sexual abuse by a minister of the Church have the opportunity to meet with the bishop in order to facilitate healing.

## PUBLICATION OF NAMES

- **Dioceses to Publish Local Lists:** Texas dioceses are actively reviewing files of bishops, priests, and deacons. By January 31, 2019, each bishop will publish a list of clergy credibly accused of sexual abuse of a minor in his diocese dating back to at least 1950.
- **How to Report:** Visit <http://txcatholic.org/how-to-report> for information on reporting abuse.



## PREVINIENDO EL ABUSO SEXUAL DE MENORES

Lamentamos profundamente que algunos líderes de la Iglesia en ocasiones hayan faltado a su responsabilidad de proteger a los menores. La Iglesia Católica en todo Estados Unidos ha trabajado para mejorar la protección, especialmente durante los últimos quince años. Seguiremos siendo vigilantes para proporcionar un entorno aún más seguro a cada menor que servimos.

La Iglesia Católica en Texas está comprometida con la prevención del abuso sexual de menores por parte de quienes ejercen el ministerio en la Iglesia, así como con la promoción del restablecimiento de los sobrevivientes de abuso. Cada diócesis cuenta con políticas integrales para responder a las quejas y para prevenir el abuso sexual de menores. Estas políticas y prácticas de seguridad son verificadas regularmente por una auditoría externa de cada diócesis.

### PREVENCIÓN DE ABUSO

- **Ambiente seguro:** Todas las diócesis de Texas han implementado programas educativos integrales de “ambiente seguro” y han capacitado a muchos de los 8.5 millones de católicos en el estado (adultos, menores, empleados, clérigos y voluntarios) sobre cómo identificar, reportar y ayudar a prevenir el abuso. Todo sacerdote que busque desempeñar el ministerio en una diócesis debe presentar un certificado escrito de idoneidad, proporcionado por su obispo o superior religioso, antes de poder ejercer esa función.
- **Verificación de antecedentes:** Las diócesis realizan evaluaciones de antecedentes de todos los obispos, sacerdotes, diáconos y religiosos, así como de personal diocesano, parroquial y escolar distinto que tenga contacto regular con menores. Desde 2002 se han completado regularmente las verificaciones de antecedentes penales de voluntarios, empleados y clérigos que participan en el ministerio en la Iglesia.

## RESPUESTA A ALEGATOS DE ABUSO

- **Reportar ante autoridades civiles:** Todas las diócesis católicas de Texas tienen políticas para informar a las autoridades civiles cuando sea que exista causa para creer que un menor ha sido víctima de abuso sexual.
- **Destitución del ministerio:** Las políticas diocesanas establecen que un obispo, sacerdote, diácono o religioso, sobre el que se haya presentado una acusación verosímil de haber abusado sexualmente de un menor, será cesado del ministerio.

## RESTABLECIMIENTO DE LOS SOBREVIVIENTES

- **Respuesta terapéutica y pastoral:** Cada diócesis tiene un Coordinador de Asistencia a las Víctimas que facilita la prestación de asesoramiento y otras formas de asistencia profesional, para ayudar a las personas que informan que fueron abusadas sexualmente siendo menores. Además, todas las víctimas de abuso sexual infantil por parte de un ministro de la Iglesia tienen la oportunidad de reunirse con el obispo para facilitar su curación.

## PUBLICACIÓN DE NOMBRES

- Las diócesis publicarán listas locales: Las diócesis de Texas están revisando activamente los archivos de obispos, sacerdotes y diáconos. A más tardar el 31 de enero de 2019 cada obispo publicará una lista de clérigos acusados de abuso sexual de un menor en su diócesis que se remonte por lo menos hasta 1950.
- Cómo reportar: Visite <http://txcatholic.org/how-to-report> para obtener información sobre cómo denunciar abuso.