



ST. ANTHONY
—DE PADUA—
CATHOLIC PARISH

Dear St. Anthony de Padua Catholic Parish,

I write to inform you of the recent news of an allegation of sexual abuse of a minor, which has been lodged against Father Joseph Gaughan. The abuse is alleged to have occurred in the 1990s while Father Gaughan was an associate pastor at Saint Anthony de Padua Catholic Parish, South Bend. The alleged victim, now an adult, reported the allegation to the Diocese this past week. After investigating the allegation, including interviews with Father Gaughan and the alleged victim, and after consultation with the Diocesan Review Board, composed mostly of lay people, the Diocese has determined that the allegation is credible. The Diocese has also informed civil authorities of the allegation.

The next step is for the case to be sent to the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith in Rome for adjudication. As you may know, it is standard practice, required by canon law, to place the priest on administrative leave pending the determination of the Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith, and Father Gaughan is being placed on administrative leave. Please know, however, that placing a priest on administrative leave does not imply guilt and that Father Gaughan still enjoys the presumption of innocence until proved otherwise.

In this case, as in all such cases, the Diocese is following the Church's required protocols from the 2002 Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People for responding effectively, appropriately, and compassionately to all allegations of sexual abuse of minors. We are committed to providing a safe environment for all people, especially the young and vulnerable. If you have reason to believe that a minor may be a victim of abuse or neglect, Indiana law requires that you report this to civil authorities. If you or someone you know was abused as a child or young person by an adult, you are encouraged to notify appropriate civil authorities of that abuse. In addition, if the alleged abuser is or was a priest or deacon of the Catholic Church, you are encouraged to contact Mary Glowaski, Victim Assistance Coordinator, (260) 399-1458, email: mglowaski@diocesefwsb.org, or Rev. Mark Gurtner, Vicar General of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, at P.O. Box 390, Fort Wayne, Indiana, 46801, or at (260) 399-1419, email: mgurtner@diocesefwsb.org.

Please know of my heartfelt prayers at this difficult time. Bishop Rhoades, our parish staff, and I share in the deep concern and confusion you must feel at receiving this news. Let us be united in our faith and also in our prayers for the alleged victim, for Father Gaughan, and for one another. It may be difficult to be joyful amid this sad news, but we know with faith Christ will bring His peaceful light during this time. May Our Lady keep your families under her protecting mantle and may we all strive to be like our patron, St. Anthony de Padua.

Yours sincerely in Christ,

Rev. Robert Garrow
Pastor