

Press Release



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE — Monday, March 18, 2019

The Diocese of Springfield-Cape Girardeau reports an allegation of sexual abuse of a minor involving former-Fr. Wallace (“Wally”) G. Ellinger, deceased (2007). The allegation pertains to a period in the 1960s. Following procedures outlined in diocesan Safe Environment Policies and Procedures, the Diocese has notified the Pemiscot County Prosecuting Attorney.

Wallace Gordon Ellinger was born in 1918 in Webster Groves, MO. He was ordained a priest in 1953 in St. Louis for the Archdiocese of St. Louis. The Diocese of Springfield Cape Girardeau was formed in 1956 from territory that was prior to 1956, part of the Archdiocese of St. Louis and the Diocese of Kansas City. Father Ellinger left the priesthood in 1975. He was laicized in 1976. Mr. Ellinger died in 2007.

Pastoral appointments for former-Fr. Wallace G. Ellinger:

1953—Assistant Pastor, Sacred Heart Parish, Caruthersville, MO;

1957—Part-time Assistant Pastor, St. Mary Parish, Joplin, MO, and Chaplain, St. John’s Hospital, Joplin;

1959—Pastor, St. Mary Parish, Seneca, MO, and Nativity of Our Lord Mission Church, Noel, MO;

1960—Pastor, Sacred Heart Parish, Caruthersville, MO, St. Cecilia Parish, Kennett, MO, and St. Joseph Mission Church, Steele, MO (closed in 1986);

1965—Pastor, St. Cecilia Parish, Kennett, MO;

1967—Pastor, Immaculate Conception Parish, New Madrid, MO;

1972—Administrator, St. Lawrence Parish, New Hamburg, MO;

1973—Chaplain, St. de Chantal Monastery (Carmelite), Springfield, MO;

1974—Pastor, St. Francis de Sales Parish, Lebanon, MO;

1975—Left the priesthood;

1976—Laicized, returned to the lay state.

Accountability & mandated reporting

The Diocese is committed to an atmosphere of safety for its people, one that is consistent with Catholic moral principles and free from abuse, harassment, discrimination, and violence, with respect to canon law, state and federal laws, and diocesan policies. If you or someone you know has been harmed by anyone working or volunteering within the Diocese of Springfield-Cape Girardeau, no matter how long ago, we want to provide healing resources to you and your family and the opportunity to be reconciled with you. Please:

Report suspicions of abuse

1. Any suspected or known abuse of a minor must first be immediately reported to the Missouri Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline 800-392-3738 or 844-CAN-TELL; or for suspected or known abuse of vulnerable or eligible adults, the Missouri Adult Abuse and Neglect Hotline 800-392- 0210;

2. Contact your local law enforcement agency or call 911, and;

3. All Church personnel are required to also report to the Diocese violations of The Code of Conduct for Clergy, Employees, and Adult Volunteers Working with Minors to the Director of Child and Youth Protection, William Holtmeyer, Jr., MS, NCC, LPC, CEAP at billholtmeyer@dioscg.org or (417) 866-0841. Persons who wish to document an allegation may also do so through the diocesan Web-based TIPS Online reporting portal (see dioscg.org and look for “TIPS” link).

At the heart of the Catholic Church’s concerns are 1) the victim(s)/survivor(s); and 2) a prevailing sense of justice and accountability. The Safe Environment Procedures for the Diocese of Springfield-Cape Girardeau and relevant policies related to keeping our children and adults safe, which includes training requirements and background screenings, are available for review under the Child and Youth Protection ministry tab on the diocesan Website at www.dioscg.org.



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