

Press Release



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE — Monday, March 18, 2019

Upon completion of its recent review of clerical personnel files, the Diocese of Springfield-Cape Girardeau surfaced a 2003 allegation involving Fr. Ernest (“Ernie”) Marquart inappropriately taking photographs of youth swimming during the 1980s. Not determined to be sexual in nature, abusive, or exploitative, in today’s climate, this action is in violation of the US Bishops’ “Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People.” Retired from active ministry since 2012, Fr. Marquart has been restricted in his ministry by Bishop Edward M. Rice to only saying Mass in a private chapel.

Ernest Joseph Marquart was born in 1936 in Englewood, NJ. He was ordained a priest in 1970 in St. Peter’s Basilica, Vatican City, for the Diocese of Springfield-Cape Girardeau.

Pastoral appointments for Fr. Ernest Marquart:

1970—Pastor, St. William Parish, Buffalo, MO; Assistant Director, Sacred Heart House of Studies, Springfield; Instructor of Religion, St. Agnes Regional High School, Springfield;

1975—Pastor, SS. Peter and Paul Parish, Pulaskifield, MO; Sacred Heart Parish, Cassville, MO

1980—Pastor, Sacred Heart Parish, Caruthersville, MO

1987—Pastor, Our Lady of the Lake Parish, Branson, MO

1993—Pastor, St. Catherine of Siena Parish, Piedmont; St. George Mission Church, Van Buren, MO, and Our Lady of Sorrows Mission Church, Williamsville, MO;

1994—Pastor, St. John Vianney Parish, Mountain View, MO; and St. Sylvester Mission Church, Eminence, MO

2012—Retired

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@dioscrg.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 dioscrg.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.dioscrg.org.



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