



January 31, 2019

Diocese of Laredo Announces
Review of Clergy Files Regarding Credible Allegations
of Sexual Abuse of Minors by Clergy

To the clergy, men and women in consecrated life, and laity of the Diocese of Laredo:

Today, the Diocese of Laredo unites with the Catholic dioceses in Texas and the Ordinariate of the Chair of St. Peter to fulfill our commitment made on September 30, 2018 to publish the names of clergy who have been credibly accused of sexually abusing a minor while ministering in the diocese. The bishops' decision was made in the context of their ongoing work to protect minors from sexual abuse and their efforts to promote healing and a restoration of trust in the Catholic Church.

The Diocese of Laredo was established on August 9, 2000 by Pope John Paul II. The Most Reverend James A. Tamayo was named by Pope John Paul II as the first bishop of the Diocese of Laredo. The diocese consists of an area which was previously portions of the Diocese of Corpus Christi and the Archdiocese of San Antonio, mainly the counties of Dimmit, Jim Hogg, LaSalle, Maverick, Webb, Zapata and Zavala. The Diocese of Laredo was established in the year 2000; therefore, the review of clergy files is from the year 2000 to the present.

After having reviewed the files of all clergy who have received permission to minister in the Diocese of Laredo since its inception, there have been no credible allegations of sexual abuse of a minor by a member of the clergy.

The Diocese of Laredo is committed to the prevention of sexual abuse and works diligently with Church personnel, volunteers and parents to foster a safe environment for minors. Our Safe Environment Program provides education and training on the prevention of sexual abuse and requires criminal background checks of clergy, volunteers and church personnel.

If anyone knows of any sexual abuse of a minor by a member of the clergy or any Church personnel in the Diocese of Laredo, please contact Melinda Sepulveda, Diocesan Interim Victim Assistance Coordinator, at 956-764-7868. In accordance with Texas Law, anyone who has cause to believe a minor may have been or is being abused, must report suspicions to the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services at 1-800-252-5400 or contact local law enforcement.

May God bring healing to the victims and families of sexual abuse. May we all work together to respect and protect the children of our community.