



## Statement regarding Father Charles Antekeier

August 14, 2015

The Diocese of Grand Rapids has received notice from the Vatican's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith that Father Charles Antekeier, a retired priest of the Diocese of Grand Rapids, has been permanently removed from ministry in accord with the provisions of the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People and the Essential Norms for Diocesan/Eparchial Policies Dealing with Allegations of Sexual Abuse of Minors by Priests or Deacons. Father Antekeier, age 79, is further obligated to lead a life of prayer and penance, and cannot publicly present himself as a priest.

The Diocese was approached by a victim regarding incidents that occurred in 1984-1985 while Father Antekeier was serving as pastor of Saint James Parish in Grand Rapids. The Diocesan Review Board examined the case and made its recommendations to Most Reverend David J. Walkowiak, bishop of the Diocese of Grand Rapids, who then forwarded it to the Vatican's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith where the decision was confirmed.

"I want to express my deepest apologies to any children, young people and their families who have been abused by members of the clergy in the Diocese of Grand Rapids," said Bishop Walkowiak. "While there are no words that can heal such wounds, I humbly ask for forgiveness for the pain and injury you and your families have suffered."

The Charter provides that "for even a single instance of sexual abuse of a minor - whenever it occurred - which is admitted or established... the offending priest is to be permanently removed from the ministry (Article 5)." In addition, dioceses are to be open and transparent in communicating with the public. The Diocese of Grand Rapids has also reported the information to the appropriate civil authorities.

The diocese encourages anyone who has been sexually abused as a minor by a priest, deacon or church employee, or who has knowledge of any such offense against a minor, to contact the appropriate civil

employee, or who has knowledge of any such offense against a minor, to contact the appropriate civil authority or the Diocesan Victim Assistance Coordinator at 616-243-0491.

**Father Charles Antekeier Biographical Information:**

Ordained: 1962

1962: St. Charles, Cheboygan

1966: St. Patrick, Grand Haven

1966: St. Mary, Grand Rapids

1972: Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Belmont

1977: St. James, Grand Rapids

1987: St. Francis Xavier, Grand Rapids

2000: Senior priest status (Retired)

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