



February 22, 2021

SNAP, Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests  
PO Box 56539  
Saint Louis MO, 63156

Most Reverend Michael C. Barber, SJ  
Diocese of Oakland  
2121 Harrison Street, Suite 100  
Oakland, CA 94612

Dear Bishop Barber:

[In a 2019 letter to your parishioners introducing your list of accused clerics, you say "...we have nothing to hide..."](#) We are writing to you today to ask about alleged abusers that, despite your statement, appear to remain hidden today.

Included with this letter is SNAP's own list of abusers associated with the Diocese of Oakland. At 161 names, it is close to two- and one-half times as large as your current list. Unfortunately, we believe it still is incomplete because more than a hundred dioceses and religious orders have yet to publish lists and we are certain that, if those lists do get published, data will likely show that even more yet-unknown-abusers worked and lived in Oakland.

In the interests of transparency and healing, the differences between these two lists should be reconciled and the missing names should be added to your current list. These men represent a diaspora of order and extern priests who made their way to Oakland, worked here, and then moved on. Often, the records show, they came to Oakland after abusing in a different place or in several other places. It appears allegedly abusive priests came to Oakland or left it for Europe, the Philippines, Mexico, Canada, various places in Central America and most, if not all, of the fifty states of the US.

For example, Father Roger Lucey, SJ, moved to the Oakland diocese after being accused in the Midwest. He spent fifteen years in the Oakland diocese but is not on your list, even though he is listed on the Jesuit's list and abused multiple children in at least two states.

Your colleagues in the Diocese of Sacramento have provided the best example nationwide of how a list should be maintained. Not only does this list provide complete work histories on each priest, it also includes priests who abused elsewhere but worked at some point in Sacramento. The reason that including those names is so important is because perpetrators potentially abuse any place where they have the access and opportunity to do so. Given that many victims feel alone and often come forward only after their abuser has been accused by someone else, survivors are owed that transparency.

Our records, when combined with those of Catholic-Hierarchy.org, indicate *average* annual abuse rates of around 11% in the Oakland diocese for its 59 years of existence. The rate was as high as 16% at one point in the 1970s and from 1970 to 2006 averaged 12.5% - meaning one in eight priests listed in your diocese was allegedly associated with sexual assault. That means, obviously, that children in Oakland's parishes and schools were exposed to those dangerous men over several generations, up to and including current times.



The data shows that, in a given year, anywhere from 23 to 49 priests who were or are associated with the diocese are alleged to have committed a sex crime, either in the Oakland diocese or elsewhere. Our data shows that as many as 33 parishes in a given year hosted abusers; about 40% of your churches, and hence, two out of five children of the diocese's youth population, were exposed to a hidden predator in any given year.

Our records show that thirty-two priests associated with the Oakland diocese were arrested or fled a police investigation. Eighteen of those are not on your list.

We also show that nearly every Oakland diocese parish at some point hosted an abuser. Records show that some parishes had as many as eight accused abusers at their parishes. Assignment records show that St. Elizabeth's, a school and parish in Oakland, hosted approximately sixteen accused priests over a thirty-year period. Some of those men overlapped.

There appears to be a taint of racism and classism in how the Oakland Diocese shuffled and accommodated alleged abusers because the clusters of abusers show up mostly in poor, minority neighborhoods. Children in those places during those years were undeniably at risk and are the adults today who are coming forward in litigation. We believe that outreach by your diocese should be undertaken that targets each affected parish, names each complicit priest, and attempts to provide these men and women some restorative justice. SNAP can supply you with a list of affected parishes and purported offenders if your files are incomplete.

You have said "abuse is in the past". Sadly, it is not. On your watch, now in its eighth year, six priests have been accused. Two have fled, one is in jail. Others have cost the diocese millions of dollars in legal fees and settlements.

We believe that the only way for this scandal to be resolved is through an honest evaluation of the past and the present. You cannot control the past, but you can endeavor to be truthful about it. You can control your present and future actions, and those actions, we believe, should be geared towards complete transparency.

Sincerely,

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