

Lawsuit filed involving deceased priest from Ireland

NEW ULM – The Diocese of New Ulm has been named in a lawsuit alleging sexual misconduct by Fr. Francis Markey, a deceased priest of the Diocese of Clogher, Ireland.

The lawsuit, filed Dec. 12, 2013, in the 5th Judicial District Court for the State of Minnesota, alleges Fr. Markey sexually abused a male minor while serving at the Church of St. Andrew in Granite Falls.

In December of 1981, Fr. Markey came to Willmar. He had applied for and was accepted to participate in a Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) program at Willmar State Hospital. While participating in that program, he did some temporary parish work in the diocese.

For about three months in the spring of 1982, Fr. Markey served at the Church of St. Andrew in Granite Falls, following the death of the church's pastor. Fr. Markey left the Diocese of New Ulm in June of 1982. Since that time, Fr. Markey did not live in or serve the diocese in any capacity. Fr. Markey died in 2012.

The claimant filed a similar lawsuit in U.S. District Court for the District of Minnesota in 2011 that was dismissed for procedural reasons.

The new lawsuit includes a nuisance claim that is identical to a claim in Ramsey County District Court. In that case, the judge recently issued a ruling that significantly narrowed the scope of that claim.

The Diocese of New Ulm deeply regrets the long-lasting and devastating effects of sexual misconduct on the part of clergy. Such misconduct requires positive action on our part, and we have been strengthening our systems and procedures in order to address this grave issue.

The diocese is committed to offering help and healing to anyone who has been a victim of sexual misconduct and to preventing this terrible crime from occurring in the diocese. Anyone who has suffered sexual abuse, exploitation, or harassment by a priest, deacon, pastor, or pastoral administrator of the diocese is asked to report such misconduct to the law enforcement or to contact the Victim Assistance Coordinator or the Bishop's Delegate in Matters Pertaining to Sexual Misconduct, 1400 6th Street North, New Ulm, MN 56073; phone: 507-359-2966.