

Notice regarding Holy Family School teacher

Holy Family Catholic Church has terminated the employment of Mervin Sharkey, a part time algebra teacher at our school, after evaluating information relating to a complaint against Mr. Sharkey from the 1980s that was made by a former student at a public school.

In accord with our policies and procedures, this information was also provided to the Review Board of the Diocese of Jefferson City. The Review Board is a 17-member, confidential, consultative body for Bishop Shawn McKnight, comprised of clergy, religious, attorneys, counselors, educators, pastoral ministers, pediatricians and psychiatrists, as well as people from the professions of criminal justice, human resources, law enforcement and social services. They come from parishes in the following counties of the Diocese: Boone, Callaway, Cole, Crawford, Marion, Moniteau and Montgomery.

The Review Board made a recommendation to Bishop McKnight that, in its opinion, the former public school student has made a credible report of inappropriate behavior involving a minor against Mr. Sharkey and such behavior constituted a violation of the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People and the Diocese's commitment to providing a safe environment for minors entrusted to the care of the parish.

Bishop McKnight has accepted the recommendation of the Review Board and while no student at Holy Family Catholic Church has reported any inappropriate behavior involving Mr. Sharkey, the parish and the Diocese encourage parents to speak with their children about this development. Since this is a personnel matter, we are not in a position to provide additional information.

In light of the developments of this matter, Sister Mary Essner, SSND has been delegated by Fr. Quinn and Sr. Betty as the parish and school representative responsible for all parish safe environment matters and she will report to the Chancellor of the Diocese.

As a church, we are committed to a safe, healthy and holy environment for our children. If anyone is aware of any inappropriate behavior toward our children or vulnerable adults, please contact the appropriate Missouri state hotline:

- The Missouri Child Abuse & Neglect Hotline: 1-800-392-3738
- The Missouri Adult Abuse and Neglect Hotline: 1-800-392-0210
- Attorney General form to report clergy abuse: <https://ago.mo.gov/other-resources/clergy-abuse-resources>

In addition to the state resources, please contact our Victim Assistance Coordinator, a licensed professional counselor and a certified clinical trauma professional, Nancy Hoey. You may email her at reportabuse@diojeffcity.org or call her at 573-694-3199.

We take very seriously the great responsibility imparted to us by our parents to protect our children and help them grow in God's grace and mercy. Thank you for all you do in supporting this important ministry.