News

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The Catholic Diocese of Dodge City on October 2 released a list of 12 clerics or seminarians with substantiated allegations of abuse against minors.

The diocese said five of the priests were assigned to the Dodge City diocese, while five others worked at some point in the diocese but allegations against them were made in other dioceses. Two others were seminarians.

"I apologize to victim survivors of child sexual abuse, especially those who were abused by priests or seminarians of the Catholic Diocese of Dodge City," Bishop John Brungardt said in a news release. "You have suffered from this terrible sin. I beg your forgiveness. I pray our Lord Jesus will give His healing love to you and your families."

The bishop also offered to meet with any survivors or their families who wish to do so.

Dodge City is the fourth and final Kansas Catholic diocese to release its list of credibly accused clerics. The Wichita diocese named 15 clerics, the Salina diocese named 28 and the Kansas City, Kansas, diocese listed 22 with substantiated claims.

The list was compiled by retired District Judge Robert Schmisseur, who spent four months reviewing more than 600 files in the Diocesan Chancery office related to

priests, deacons and seminarians, the diocese said. The files dated from 1951, when the diocese was formed. The findings have been shared with the Kansas Attorney General’s office and the Kansas Bureau of Investigation, which is conducting a statewide investigation of Catholic priests.

Five of the priests on the list are deceased, four are no longer priests and one is listed as priest in the Diocese of Boac, Philippines. One of the seminarians was dismissed from the seminary and the other, Joel McClure, pleaded guilty in 2016 to transportation of child pornography.

The list includes dates of ordination, where the priests served and brief information on when the allegations were reported. The diocese said the audit did not find any allegations of sexual misconduct that had not previously been known to a review board the diocese created in 1993 to address clergy sexual abuse.

Dioceses throughout the country began releasing lists of credibly accused clerics last year after a Pennsylvania report revealed abuse of more than 1,000 children by hundreds of priests there since the 1940s, and also detailed efforts by church leaders to hide the abuse.

The Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests, a victims advocacy group, criticized Brungardt for his "irresponsible delay" in not releasing the list sooner, noting he has been bishop in Dodge City for nine years. The group also urged Brungardt to release work histories, photos and the whereabouts of every accused cleric so victims can identify their abusers. The group also said in a news release that the bishop he should include religious orders in the list and "aggressively" seek out others who may have been victims or seen abuse.

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