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Msgr. Roger Landry, director of the Pontifical Mission Societies USA, speaks with people outside

Msgr. Roger Landry, director of the Pontifical Mission Societies USA, speaks with people outside Holy Family Church in New York City Sept. 9, 2024. (OSV News/Gregory A. Shemitz)

Gina Christian

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Msgr. Roger Landry has taken a temporary leave from his position as director of the Pontifical Mission Societies USA, following allegations he violated priestly conduct codes for two dioceses with which he is affiliated.

The news was announced by both TPMS USA and the Diocese of Fall River, Massachusetts, where Landry is incardinated, in separate statements issued Sept. 11.

Both statements confirmed the allegations do not involve minors. The Diocese of Fall River emphasized in its statement that Landry is "entitled to the presumption of innocence while the investigation continues."

Landry also issued a Sept. 11 statement, saying that his decision to temporarily step down was "voluntary" for "the sake of protecting the important work" of TPMS USA "as well as my own reputation as a priest."

He clarified that the Fall River Diocese had "verbally communicated" to him that "the accusations involve alleged violations of prudence, pastoral boundaries, and diocesan codes of conduct with adults."

"There are no allegations of sexual activity whatsoever or of misconduct of any kind with a minor," said Landry. "I maintain my innocence of any canonical violation or crime and will continue to defend my reputation to the best of my ability under the law of the Church."

He added, "Those who have raised concerns deserve to be heard."

Landry also said he was "grateful that canon law respects my natural human right to be presumed innocent and the right to protect the good reputation I have enjoyed throughout the many years the Lord has given me the privilege to serve Him and His holy people."

He said he was "cooperating fully with the investigation, with trust that a fair investigation will establish the truth that the Lord promises will set us free."

Landry said he was advised the investigation and ecclesiastical process "might take up to several months," and asked for prayers for himself and "all those concerned."

The announcement comes days before Landry was set to participate in multiple events amid the [beatification of Archbishop Fulton Sheen](#), who served as the national director of TPMS USA from 1950-1966.

As of Sept. 11, Landry was no longer listed as a speaker for an event ahead of the beatification, a concelebrant at one of the Masses of thanksgiving, or a participant in the Sheen Awards ceremony.

Landry's TPMS USA predecessor, [Msgr. Kieran Harrington](#), resigned from the role in 2024 following a substantiated claim of inappropriate conduct with an adult.

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In its statement, the Diocese of Fall River said that Landry, who currently resides in New York, has served in "several special assignments outside" its territory since 2015.

Those assignments have included serving within the Archdiocese of New York as Catholic chaplain at Columbia University and, following his 2024 appointment, as TPMS USA's director.

A papal missionary of mercy, Landry also served as an ecclesiastical assistant to Aid to the Church in Need USA, which has its offices within the Diocese of Brooklyn, New York, from 2021 to 2024.

He led the Seton Route of the 2024 National Eucharistic Pilgrimage, traveling the entirety of the route with its perpetual pilgrims from New Haven, Connecticut, to Indianapolis, where the four national pilgrimage routes converged as part of the 10th National Eucharistic Congress.

The Diocese of Fall River said it had received allegations against Landry "from multiple individuals."

The diocesan statement noted an "initial investigation" was conducted by the Archdiocese of New York, with the Diocese of Fall River — having consulted with the archdiocese and "canonical advisors" — determining that "sufficient evidence exists to restrict him from the public exercise of priestly ministry, pending the resolution of this matter."

"This action is consistent with Diocese of Fall River policy," said the statement. It added that Landry "remains a priest" of the diocese and is "subject to the authority" of its bishop, Bishop Edgar da Cunha.

The diocese said that Landry had requested the leave of absence from TPMS USA, and that he "is entitled to the presumption of innocence while the investigation continues."

The statement also acknowledged that "coming forward with concerns about the conduct of a member of the clergy can be difficult," and encouraged "anyone who may have been affected" to "report their concerns." It assured that such persons "will be treated with dignity, respect, and compassion."

Noting it had "no further comment at this time," the diocese said that "Bishop da Cunha asks for prayers for all those affected by this matter."

In its statement, TPMS USA said that current Chief Operating Officer Douglas Culp would serve as the organization's interim director at the request of its board and with the approval of Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle, a pro prefect in the Vatican's Dicastery for Evangelization.

TPMS USA stressed it "takes seriously concerns involving appropriate conduct and pastoral boundaries and respects the responsibility of the competent ecclesiastical authorities to address them.

"We are committed to respecting the dignity, privacy, and good name of everyone involved," the group said in its statement.

TPMS USA said its work "continues without interruption," and that its leadership is "taking the necessary steps to ensure continuity in the organization's operations and in its service to dioceses, donors and the Holy Father's missions throughout the world."

With the upcoming 100th anniversary of World Mission Sunday on Oct. 18, TPMS USA said it "remains fully committed to the missionaries, seminarians, religious, catechists and local Churches supported through the prayer and generosity of Catholics across the United States."

TPMS USA directed questions regarding Landry's priestly ministry or the church's investigative process to the Diocese of Fall River.

[Gina Christian is a multimedia reporter for OSV News. Follow her on X @GinaJesseReina.]