

Published on *National Catholic Reporter* (<https://www.ncronline.org>)

June 5, 2013 at 4:12pm

Criminal charges dismissed in Worcester bishop's drunken-driving case

by Catholic News Service

Worcester, Mass. — Bishop Robert J. McManus of Worcester said he continues "to ask forgiveness" from the family, friends and "all the good people I serve" since his early May arrest on charges of drunken driving and leaving the scene of an accident in Rhode Island.

On Tuesday, criminal charges against him were dismissed after he pleaded guilty to refusing a chemical test after the accident May 4.

McManus was arrested in Narragansett, R.I., after allegedly being involved in a collision and driving away from the scene. He pleaded not guilty to the charges May 7 at a Wakefield, R.I., courthouse and was released on his own recognizance when he waived his right to an extradition hearing.

In late May, he entered his guilty plea before the Rhode Island Traffic Tribunal and his license was suspended for six months.

"As I stated previously on May 6, I made a terrible error in judgment on May 4, 2013," the 61-year-old bishop said in a statement Tuesday. "I have been committed to making amends and accepting the consequences of my actions. I am grateful that the legal process has been concluded."

McManus, a Rhode Island native, shares a family home with his siblings in Narragansett, which is in the Providence diocese.

"I paid the fine determined by the court and will provide 10 hours of community service and attend safety class," he said in a statement posted on the Worcester diocese's website.

WJAR-TV reported the bishop had to pay more than \$900 in fines and court costs in addition to having his license suspended.

"I continue to ask forgiveness from all the good people I serve, as well as my family and friends in the Diocese of Worcester and the Diocese of Providence," he said. "I am both grateful for and humbled by the support I have received from clergy, parishioners, and the community as I continue to serve to the best of my ability as the bishop of Worcester."

McManus has been bishop of Worcester since 2004. He previously served for five years as an auxiliary bishop in Providence.

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