



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### Statement following the SNAP press conference

GREEN BAY, Wis. (Jan. 18, 2019) – As was shared during yesterday’s media briefing, the Diocese of Green Bay entered into an engagement with the independent investigative firm of Defenbaugh & Associates to complete a thorough review of diocesan priest and deacon files for the purpose of independently identifying any allegation of sexual abuse of a minor. Full and complete access to all diocesan clergy files was turned over to the investigators upon their arrival to identify, review, examine the personnel records, and ultimately prepare and present the results to the Independent Review Board and the Chancellor.

During the briefing, Tammy Basten, Chancellor of the Diocese of Green Bay, provided the following statement:

“I want to be very clear, this list includes diocesan priests. Diocesan priests are directly accountable to the Bishop. Priests who are part of religious orders, such as the Norbertines or Franciscans, are accountable to their religious superior within the order. Therefore, like any allegation the Diocese of Green Bay receives, we encourage the person making the allegation to contact law enforcement authorities. Additionally, this information is immediately turned over to the religious order, which is also responsible for contacting the authorities and investigating the priest. The religious orders hold, and are responsible for, the personnel files of their priests.

Religious orders have been notified, and it has been strongly recommended that they complete a full review of their own priest files with the objective to release the names of priests publicly who have had a substantiated allegation of sexual abuse of a minor.”

The diocese will continue to cooperate with all law enforcement and state agencies in ensuring that all priests and religious are accountable for the care of minors and vulnerable adults, and that priests deemed to have a substantiated accusation of sexual abuse are reported to authorities and removed from ministry. We are confident that our engagement with Defenbaugh & Associates has helped substantially in the process.

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**Who we are:** As friends and followers of Jesus, the Catholic Diocese of Green Bay is devoted to fostering households and communities of discipleship through the mission and ministry of the Catholic Church. We are missionary disciples striving to lead all people to the Kingdom of God. Established in 1868, the diocese is composed of 324,000 Catholics in 16 counties: Brown, Calumet, Door, Florence, Forest, Kewaunee, Langlade, Manitowoc, Marinette, Menominee, Oconto, Outagamie, Shawano, Waupaca, Waushara and Winnebago.

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