



October 12, 2018

Dear Diocesan Family,

Given the rampant misinformation circulated by the news media in regards to the announcement on October 5, 2018 by the Diocese of Lansing regarding one of their priests, Fr. Robert Gerl, as well as our own statement regarding Fr. Gerl's pastoral work here in our Diocese which we released on October 11, 2018, we feel it important to offer some important clarifications.

After receiving information from the Diocese of Lansing we released a statement this past week with details of Fr. Gerl's pastoral ministry assignments in the Diocese. Unfortunately details provided in the diocesan statements have not been accurately reported. Following are clarifications:

- Fr. Bob Gerl came to the Diocese of Kalamazoo in 1986. He served at (now closed) Nazareth College, St. Thomas More Parish and St. Catherine of Siena.
- Fr. Gerl was not appointed by the Bishop of Kalamazoo to a Parish assignment. His ministry work at both parishes was arranged through the pastors of those parishes. This was appropriate given that Fr. Gerl was a priest in good standing.
- On October 5, 2018, the Diocese of Lansing announced that due to a credible allegation of sexual assault against an adult male which allegedly occurred in 1983, they had suspended Fr. Gerl's priestly faculties.
- Priestly faculties are a set of permissions, granted by a diocesan bishop to a priest within that diocese, allowing the priest to publicly minister. Among those permissions are: presiding or concelebrating at Mass; hearing confessions; witnessing marriages; baptizing; anointing the sick and dying. Without those faculties, or permissions, a priest may not publicly minister.
- Fr. Gerl has not had priestly faculties in our Diocese since December 2009.
- The credible allegation referenced in the statement from the Diocese of Lansing occurred prior to Father's arrival in the Diocese of Kalamazoo and was made known to us by the Diocese of Lansing on October 5, 2018.
- This allegation does not involve a minor.

Again, we encourage anyone with any information regarding to call our hotline. Also, we encourage you to visit our dedicated website: [protect.diokzoo.org](http://protect.diokzoo.org) for additional resources.

Thank you.  
Msgr. Michael Osborn  
Vicar General  
Diocese of Kalamazoo