

For Immediate Release:
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Investigation Results Regarding Lyman Pastor Announced

The initial investigation of sexual abuse allegations against Fr. Thomas Lee has been completed and the results have been announced to two parishes where he served. Diocesan administrator, Bishop Joseph J. Gerry is informing parishioners during Masses this weekend that he has found some of the allegations credible enough to forward the case to the Holy See. This step is required by the Dallas Charter, but is not a determination of guilt or innocence, which will be determined at a later stage. The referral to the Vatican means that the allegations raised enough concern that this next step in the process is necessary. In the meantime, Fr. Lee will continue to be restricted from having contact with minors and will have no priestly ministry.

Fr. Lee temporarily stepped down as Pastor of St. Philip Parish, Lyman in September of last year when the Diocese received additional information on an earlier claim of sexual abuse of a minor that previously could not be substantiated.

In a letter to St. Philip and Our Lady Queen of Peace Parish, Boothbay, Bishop Gerry explained that he has accepted Fr. Lee's resignation as Pastor in Lyman. A new Pastor will be assigned this June; until then, Parish Administrator Fr. Philip Michael Tracy will serve the Parish.

A copy of the Bishop's letter to the parishioners of St. Philip's is attached.

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[Additional information: The next step is for the Holy See to determine how to proceed. The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith could elect to determine the outcome of this case or it may give the Bishop authority to set up a local tribunal to try the case. Since the Portland Diocese has no experience with this new process, we cannot predict the timetable.

The specifics/details of investigations or the recommendations of the Review Board on any case are confidential as required by the Charter.

Fr. Lee is 76 years old and has been eligible for retirement since he was 70. His retirement does not affect this canonical process.

Father Lee was ordained in 1953 and served: St. Martin of Tours, Millinocket 1953-55
Chaplain, Mercy Hospital, Portland, Maine Medical Center, Boys' Training Center, Men's
Correctional Center 1955-71

Our lady Queen of Peace, Boothbay Harbor 1971-85
St. Mary's Parish, Bath 1977-85
St. Philip Parish, Lyman 1985-2004]