

Abuse Alleged Against Retired Priest

The Archdiocese of Baltimore has learned of an allegation of sexual abuse through the Baltimore County Police Department. Steven P. Girard has been accused of sexually abusing a minor in the early 1990s, while assigned as pastor of St. Clement in Lansdowne. This allegation was immediately reported to the State's Attorney's Office. In accordance with archdiocesan policy, the alleged victim has been offered counseling assistance.

Steve Girard, accompanied by civil and canonical attorneys, met with representatives of the Archdiocese. He denied the allegation. Our investigation into the matter is ongoing.

Steve Girard resigned and had his faculties to function as a priest removed in 2002, when he was charged with filing a false carjacking report. He was sentenced to one year of supervised probation. He is prohibited from functioning as a priest.

"The Archdiocese of Baltimore is committed to protecting children and helping to heal victims of abuse," Cardinal William H. Keeler said. "We are deeply sorry for the pain suffered by survivors of abuse due to the actions of clergy, and nothing is more important than protecting our children. There is no place in the priesthood or religious life for those who harm children, and we will be open, accountable and consistent in keeping this commitment."

Steve Girard was ordained in October 1975 and served at St. Matthew from 1973-1975; at John Carroll High School from January 1975-June 1975; Our Lady of Mt. Carmel from 1975-1978; CYO Retreat House from 1978-1982; St. Clare from

1982-1987 and St. Clement from 1987-2002.

Anyone who has any knowledge of child sexual abuse is urged to come forward, and to report it immediately to civil authorities. The number for Baltimore County is 410-853-3000. If clergy or other church personnel is suspected of committing the abuse, we ask that you also call the Archdiocesan Office of Child and Youth Protection Hotline at 1-866-417-7469.