

Former Mount St. Joseph teacher accused of abuse

Xaverian Brother Robert Flaherty, a former teacher at Mount St. Joseph High School in Baltimore, has been removed from ministry by his religious community following an allegation that he sexually abused a minor in the mid-1980s.

According to an Aug. 21 statement by Xaverian Brother Edward Driscoll, superior general of the Xaverian Brothers, the Baltimore City police informed the religious community of the allegation.

“The Xaverian Brothers have been cooperating with the State’s Attorney’s Office in their investigation,” Brother Edward said. “With the permission of the State’s Attorney’s Office, the Brothers have implemented their protocols regarding the allegation of abuse of a minor and removed Brother Flaherty from ministry pending the outcome of the investigation.”

Brother Robert joined the Xaverian Brothers in 1979 and made his profession of vows in 1980. He taught at Mount St. Joseph from 1980 to 1993 and from 2008 to 2010. He also taught at St. Xavier High School in Kentucky, from 1994 to 1999, and at St. John’s Preparatory School in Massachusetts from 1999 to 2007 and from 2010 until his suspension last week, according to the Xaverian Brothers.

According to a letter to his school community sent by George E. Andrews Jr., president of Mount St. Joseph, the allegation of abuse does not involve a current or former student of the school.

Sean Caine, communications director for the Archdiocese of Baltimore, said in a written statement that the archdiocese reviewed its files when it learned of the announcement from the school. It found no information or prior allegations against Brother Robert, he said.

“It is typically the case that we see an increase in the reporting of allegations of abuse whenever there are high-profile cases in the news,” Caine said. “This is one of the reasons we try to be very public whenever we receive a credible allegation of

abuse, so that victims will be encouraged to come forward. We ask anyone with information about abuse to report it to the police and if it involves a representative of the church we ask that they also report it to the archdiocese.”

Brother Robert graduated from Mount St. Joseph in 1964. An athletic coach for four sports at the school, he was inducted into Mount St. Joseph’s athletic hall of fame in 2013. He is credited with reviving the ice hockey program, according to a 2013 report in the Catholic Review.