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| **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****January 29, 2020** | **CONTACT: LAWRENCE ROBERT****323-236-9992** |

***DIOCESE OF ORANGE HAS ACCUSED PRIEST STILL IN MINISTRY AND HAS NOT INFORMED PARISHIONERS***

**FATHER EDWARD Poettgen, AN ACTIVE PRIEST IN THE DIOCESE OF ORANGE AT ST. BONIFACE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN ANAHEIM, HAS BEEN ACCUSED IN A LAWSUIT OF CHILDHOOD SEXUAL ASSAULT OF A MINOR AND REMAINS IN MINISTRY.**

**Irvine, California–** On January 29, 2020, the Orange County Superior Court in a pending lawsuit against the Diocese of Orange, authorized the Plaintiff to publicly name Fr. Edward Poettgen as a defendant in the lawsuit, instead of a “Doe Pseudonym” that was previously required.

[***Click here for court order.***](https://drive.google.com/open?id=17YCiuA2EWgzVn850m_T3bM_TcyWbY5RI)

The lawsuit which was filed on June 3, 2019, accuses Fr. Poettgen of molesting a minor boy beginning around 1994 and 1996, on two separate occasions, at the St. Polycarp Catholic Church and School, located in Stanton, California, within the Diocese of Orange.

[***Click here for complaint.***](https://drive.google.com/open?id=1NnBmHMbgneSzvnU7ryszS8neyqxldd5h)

These allegations are believed to have been known by the Diocese of Orange since January of 2019, for over a year. During this time, Fr. Poettgen has remained in active, unrestricted ministry with the Diocese of Orange, at a parish frequented by children and their parents. Fr. Poettgen is believed to still be in ministry at St. Boniface, located in Anaheim, California, though the congregation at St. Boniface is believed to have never been informed of the allegations against him of childhood sexual assault.

Attorney John C. Manly, who represents the survivor, said, “Allowing Fr. Poettgen to remain in active, unrestricted ministry with pending allegations of childhood sexual assault, is a direct violation of the 2002 United States Bishop’s *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*, as well as the Diocese of Orange’s own *Covenant of the Faithful*. These were promises of transparency that were made by the Diocese of Orange in the wake of a mass sexual abuse scandal, that they haven’t kept.”

Attorney and victim’s advocate Vince Finaldi said, “[t]he refusal of the Diocese of Orange to remove Fr. Poettgen from ministry, based upon a report of child molestation, is unconscionable and unfathomable after the Diocese of Orange’s long history of mishandling childhood sexual abuse cases. The Diocese of Orange’s decision not to inform the St. Boniface congregation of these allegations is equally reprehensible. Those who attend church at St. Boniface have a right to know if their pastor has been accused of sexual abuse, though the Diocese of Orange seems to believe otherwise.”

Any individuals with information concerning this matter are urged to come forward and share that information with the Orange County Sherriff’s Department.

Manly, Stewart & Finaldi have recovered more than one billion dollars in damages for victims of abuse by clergy in Los Angeles, Orange County, San Diego, Alaska and New York.

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[Manly, Stewart & Finaldi](https://www.californiasexualabusefirm.com/) is the nation’s leading firm representing athletes in child sexual abuse cases against Catholic dioceses, school districts, Universities and Olympic Governing Bodies. The firm has represented more than 150 victims of clergy sexual abuse in California and hundreds of others throughout the United States. They recently represented 180 alleged victims of former Olympic Team doctor Larry Nassar resulting in a $500 million-dollar settlement against Michigan State University.