



Diocese of Madison
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For Immediate Release

Diocese of Madison Response to Oaklawn Academy Civil Lawsuit

Child sexual abuse is a heinous crime that is completely contrary to Catholic teaching, and it must be condemned in the strongest terms. Our hearts go out to all victims of child abuse in our society, and we desire to bring Christ's healing love to anyone who has suffered in this way.

Recently, a civil lawsuit was filed regarding an alleged incident of child sexual abuse in 2013 at Oaklawn Academy in Edgerton, Wisconsin. Oaklawn Academy is not owned or operated by the Diocese of Madison. Oaklawn Academy is separately incorporated, and it is directly owned and operated as an apostolate through the Legionaries of Christ and its affiliates, which is an international religious order in the Catholic Church, separate and apart from any diocese, including separate from the Diocese of Madison.

The Oaklawn Academy property has never been owned or operated by the Diocese of Madison or its affiliates, nor has the Diocese of Madison ever had direct authority, control, or administrative or managerial oversight of Oaklawn Academy. The Diocese of Madison was not previously contacted by plaintiff's attorney to check these relevant facts. The Diocese of Madison is not legally or factually liable for the incident alleged in the lawsuit and will be immediately filing a motion to dismiss the Diocese as a defendant in the case.

In the last ten years, there have been *zero* incidents of the sexual abuse of minors credibly alleged to the Diocese of Madison against clergy or faith leaders (including reports from law enforcement). The Diocese of Madison remains vigilant in maintaining a safe environment in its parishes, schools, and institutions and preventing sexual abuse against minors.

As always, any allegation of sexual misconduct should be brought to the attention of law enforcement officials. If allegations involve priests, deacons, or other Church personnel, regardless of when they are said to have occurred, they should also be reported to the Diocese of Madison, by way of the Sexual Misconduct Question and Reporting Line, 608-821-3162. The diocesan policies regarding sexual abuse allegations, and instructions for making a report of sexual misconduct, are available on the diocesan website: madisondiocese.org/safe-environment.

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