

# Toward Transparency, Repentance, and Healing

As promised in the Society of Saint Pius X's (SSPX) [April 23, 2020 communique \(https://sspdx.org/en/publications/newsletters/us-district-responds-church-militant-57641\)](https://sspdx.org/en/publications/newsletters/us-district-responds-church-militant-57641) regarding allegations that it has covered-up instances of sexual abuse and impropriety, the U.S. District of the SSPX takes the essential first step toward addressing this painful but important topic.

As stated at the closing of its communique, the SSPX is committed to full transparency regarding recent allegations involving its current and former clergy, religious, and employees. The Society has cooperated with, and continues to work with, all civil and ecclesiastical authorities investigating accusations of abuse. Some of this cooperation, including the U.S. District's cooperation with the Kansas Bureau of Investigation, will be addressed in due course. As stated in the April 23 communique, if an investigation is ongoing, the SSPX cannot comment. However, those with information about potential criminal activity are encouraged to contact the proper authorities.

Most importantly, for the victims of sexual or any other type of abuse in particular, the SSPX offers its sympathy, prayers, and support. How can one abuse the trust God has given certain people? How does the Church confront true evil? As an apostolate of the Catholic Church, the SSPX wants justice for everyone.

## Plan to Protect

As much as the SSPX wants to prevent abuse from happening in the future, it cannot

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It takes great courage for a person who has experienced abuse to develop trust again. Time and patience are needed before a survivor can open up, and the SSPX is committed to helping.

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If you have been abused and you are still alone with your pain, the Society implores you to reach out, especially if you have suffered from a priest, religious, employee, or volunteer of SSPX. You are encouraged to come forward and to do so with whatever spiritual, medical, or professional assistance you need. In cooperation, the SSPX wants to make things right, ensure that justice is done, and help you overcome this evil.

Please visit the SSPX's Plan to Protect website. If you have chosen this initial step to look at this site, the Society invites you to contact us at [protection@sspdx.org](mailto:protection@sspdx.org) (<mailto:protection@sspdx.org>) or its toll-free number (833)-727-7779.

([Plan to Protect Website >](https://plantoprotect.website)) (<https://plantoprotect.website>)

For abuse in the State of Kansas: victims and witnesses of abuse by the SSPX or other clergy can contact the Kansas Bureau of Investigation at [clergyabuse@kbi.ks.gov](mailto:clergyabuse@kbi.ks.gov) (<mailto:clergyabuse@kbi.ks.gov>) or they can call 1 (800) KS-Crime (1-800-572-7463).

## The Sloniker Case

Mr. Kevin Sloniker grew up in Post Falls, ID. He and his family attended several SSPX chapels. His childhood gave no reason to suspect any improper conduct would be committed by Mr. Kevin Sloniker. He entered the Brothers' Novitiate in El Paso, TX as a postulant in 2004 with the intention of becoming an SSPX Brother. In 2005, he was sent to the seminary in Winona, MN, as the postulants were sent there to complete their formation as brothers.

During Mr. Sloniker's time in Winona, Fr. Patrick Abbet (who is not related at all to the accused and convicted Fr. Abbet in Belgium) was the spiritual director of Mr. Sloniker at the seminary. The superior of the seminary was Fr. Yves le Roux. In

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self-mutilation and was examined by a psychiatrist while at the hospital. The day Sloniker was released from the hospital, he was asked to leave the seminary and he complied with no objection.

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It was believed that he went home to his family who at that time were living in Wahington State. All the priests at the seminary knew of Mr. Sloniker's irrational behavior, but a report was never made and sent to the U.S. District. This was clearly an error, resulting from an absence of a robust reporting infrastructure within the U.S. District at that time. As such, Mr. Sloniker eventually became a camp counselor on or around 2006-07 at the Society's Post Falls, ID summer camps. The priest in charge of the summer camps at that time was Fr. Patrick Crane who had not been made aware of the self-mutilation incident at the seminary.

Mr. Sloniker left his position as a camp counselor when he was about 20 years old. He next surfaced in Dickinson, ND, where he attended the Society chapel and helped as a sacristan. The chapel was sporadically served by SSPX priests. One priest, while making a monthly visit to Dickinson, ND, was approached by a parishioner who said that he believed his child had an inappropriate relationship with Mr. Sloniker. Mr. Sloniker denied the allegation, but immediately left the area. The U.S District subsequently found out that Mr. Sloniker became a truck driver. At this time the Society was advised by their then legal counsel that they did not have a duty to report the allegations regarding Mr. Sloniker.

The U.S. District had no record regarding Mr. Sloniker until 2015, when the Society was contacted by law enforcement. Legal authorities were investigating Mr. Sloniker and eventually arrested him on September 14, 2015, in Menomie, WI. He was extradited to Kootenai County, ID, where he was charged with multiple counts of child molestation for conduct he engaged in over the prior decade.

At the time of Mr. Sloniker's arrest, he was a truck driver and was approximately 30 years old. He admitted to having had numerous unlawful sexual encounters with underage children. To the best of the SSPX's knowledge, he is currently serving an extensive prison sentence.

The U.S. District has conducted an in-depth investigation into its handling of the

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the seminary and the District, and then reporting him to authorities when the allegations arose in Dickinson, ND. Procedures have subsequently been put into place to report deviant behavior among individuals affiliated with the SSPX to all Society priests. The Society also adopted the Plan to Protect in 2018 which requires Society personnel to document every incident that might be a warning-sign for abuse and to report all credible claims of abuse to their superiors and to legal authorities.

## Fr. Todd Angele

Fr. Todd Angele vehemently denies the reported allegations of Mr. Kyle White concerning his supposed advice not to report abuse.

Contrary to accusations made on April 22, 2020 by the website *Church Militant*, the clergy-penitent privilege most certainly does apply to discussions in the course of ministry outside the confessional, and, more crucially, the obligation of professional secrecy applies in conscience to such “internal non-sacramental forum” conversations. If the other party to the conversation releases Fr. Angele from this secrecy, he will provide his side of how the conversation actually developed and the advice he gave. Until then, Mr. White’s accusation places Fr. Angele in an impossible position.

## Fr. Laurent Desautard

The SSPX learned of three allegations against Fr. Laurent Desautard of inappropriate contact with boarding students at St. Mary’s Academy while he was stationed there. Fr. Desautard allegedly engaged in grooming behavior with teenage boys in his dormitory office.

Fr. Gerard Beck, then rector of St. Mary’s Academy and College, after having been informed of the allegation by U.S. District Communications Director James Vogel, interviewed one of the students on July 28, 2016. Fr. Beck was told that the

Fr. Beck turned everything over immediately to the civil authorities. A complete disclosure was made. The civil authorities decided not to file charges. The SSPX, after a canonical investigation, has placed Fr. Desautard under restrictions to have non parish role, especially with minors.

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## A Concluding Statement

Any allegation that the SSPX stonewalled any investigation is false. The SSPX has identified and produced files from the past 30 years involving its clergy, religious, and employees while working under time frames and parameters agreed to by Sherri Schuck, Pottawatomie County Attorney and Agent Nick Pipkin of the KBI. The SSPX currently is in close contact with both entities regarding both closed and any ongoing investigations.

The SSPX agrees that if anyone possesses any relevant information concerning ongoing or future investigations, they should contact:

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Sherri Schuck, Pottawatomie County Attorney

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(785) 457-3511

(785) 457-3896 (fax)

[schuck@pottcountyatty.org](mailto:schuck@pottcountyatty.org) (<mailto:schuck@pottcountyatty.org>)

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Nick Pipkin

Special Agent

Kansas Bureau of Investigation

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This statement is the beginning, not the end, of a process of transparency. More

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The scourge of sexual abuse must be driven from the Catholic Church, including the SSPX's apostolate. The Society asks in all humility for your prayers. Pray for the SSPX. Pray for those who have fallen into sin that they may repent. Most of all, pray for the victims of these heinous and unspeakable crimes against natural and divine law.

We invite you to unite in this prayer to St. Rita for those who have been hurt by those who have betrayed their trust.

[Please join us in our prayers > \(https://plantoprotect.website/en/prayer-st-rita-special-need\)](https://plantoprotect.website/en/prayer-st-rita-special-need)

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