Report to the University of Notre Dame Board of Trustees

Some portions of this report are sensitive and graphic. It is not intended for children.

Debevoise & Plimpton LLP
Helen Cantwell

66 Hudson Boulevard
New York, NY 10001

May 28, 2026

I. Executive Summary

Debevoise & Plimpton LLP ("Debevoise") was retained by the University of Notre Dame du Lac ("Notre Dame" or "University") in September 2025 to investigate allegations of inappropriate conduct and sexual abuse related to Rev. Thomas King, C.S.C. Fr. King, a member of the Congregation of Holy Cross ("the Order"), served as rector of Zahm Hall from 1980 until 1997.

Notre Dame has confronted clergy sexual abuse within its community before, and the University has undertaken various efforts to address directly allegations of misconduct. In Summer 2025, following concerns dating back to 2018 about the handling of allegations against Fr. King raised by alumni to Notre Dame, the University commenced this investigation. A former Notre Dame student had written to the University in 2018 alleging that Fr. King engaged in inappropriate behavior while he was a student in the 1990s and thereafter other former students reported allegations of various types of sexual abuse by Fr. King. This investigation has determined that in the 1990s, under the guise of concern about students' health, Fr. King took students to the Rockne Memorial Gym ("Rockne") to be weighed. Once in the locker room, he would direct students to undress fully before they stepped onto a scale, suggesting they needed to be naked in order to obtain an accurate reading of their weight.

In total, Debevoise has identified 15 individuals who were credibly subjected to Fr. King's weighing scheme.[1] Beyond the weighing scheme, Debevoise also found that multiple individuals, some of whom were weighed, were sexually touched or assaulted by Fr. King, both at Notre Dame and after he left. The findings pertaining to Fr. King's time at Notre Dame relate to conduct that took place in the 1980s and 1990s.

Senior leaders of Notre Dame are fully committed to students' and alumni wellbeing and have been deeply affected by the experiences of members of the community and others who have shared very painful memories. Despite this, with respect to allegations concerning Fr. King raised since 2018, the University did not recognize the reported conduct to be at a minimum boundary crossing and, more seriously, grooming behavior because the weighing scheme was not properly understood as sexual and did not include touching or specific sexual assault. This limited opportunities for Notre Dame to learn the full extent of Fr. King's past sexual abuse earlier.

This document contains Debevoise's key findings and will principally cover the following topics: Fr. King's time as rector of Zahm; Fr. King's conduct following his departure from Notre Dame in 1997 until the time of his residence in Holy Cross House

---

[1] Debevoise heard about several additional individuals who were weighed or possibly assaulted but was not able to verify those accounts.

starting in 2020; allegations related to other former Notre Dame clergy, including Rev. David Porterfield, C.S.C.; and observations and recommendations for how Notre Dame's policies should be further strengthened to improve responsiveness to any future allegations of misconduct by faculty or staff (including members of the Order).

The vast majority of witnesses who spoke with investigators, even those who shared deeply painful experiences, expressed a deep appreciation for Notre Dame and its community. Debevoise has observed that the leadership of Notre Dame, the Order, Holy Cross College, the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, and the Diocese of Kalamazoo are committed to ensuring that the disturbing circumstances that led to this review become an opportunity to learn and further improve these longstanding institutions.

II. Scope of Investigation

In September 2025, the University's Board of Trustees established a Special Committee to oversee the work conducted by Debevoise, led by Helen Cantwell. The Special Committee was led by the Board Chair and further comprised of three additional lay members of the Board. Ms. Cantwell has no prior connection to Notre Dame, the Order, or any of the other institutions involved in this matter and was selected specifically to provide an external perspective for this investigation. Ms. Cantwell has extensive experience conducting investigations into allegations of sexual misconduct, dating back to her time as a sex crimes prosecutor in the 1990s.

The Debevoise investigation was publicly announced to the Notre Dame community by the President of Notre Dame and the Board Chair. A letter was posted on Notre Dame's website and distributed to each resident who lived in Zahm between 1980 and 1997 according to University records. The letter encouraged anyone with information related to Fr. King or any related concerns that would assist the investigation to contact Debevoise at NotreDameReview@debevoise.com. The letter also emphasized Debevoise's role as a fact finder, separate from Notre Dame. On November 25, 2025, in connection with media reporting related to the investigation and allegations concerning other priests that worked at Notre Dame, Notre Dame issued an additional statement encouraging members of the community to contact Debevoise. In addition to speaking with anyone who reached out to Debevoise with relevant information, Debevoise directly contacted witnesses who were identified to have relevant information.

While many people provided information about Fr. King, some witnesses also called to discuss other clergy who had previously worked at Notre Dame. Debevoise was directed by Notre Dame to speak with any witness who reached out to provide information about any past clergy abuse at Notre Dame. Details of these reports are included to the extent they helped the investigators understand the response to Fr. King or brought new information to light. Debevoise took additional investigative steps to learn more about these other allegations, including reviewing records provided by various institutions. Debevoise sought to listen and understand these witnesses' stories, and each

witness' information helped Debevoise understand the history of how clergy abuse allegations have been handled at Notre Dame and will influence future Notre Dame policy.

In total, Debevoise conducted 101 interviews (some individuals were interviewed more than once), including current and former faculty and staff of Notre Dame, members and leadership of the Order, current and former Holy Cross College employees, members and leadership of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend and the Diocese of Kalamazoo, Notre Dame and Holy Cross College alumni, and other witnesses. Debevoise spoke to everyone who requested an interview related to the scope of the work, [2] and the selection of additional witnesses to interview was made entirely by Debevoise. Many of the individuals who agreed to be interviewed requested anonymity. Debevoise did not share the identities of any witnesses who requested confidentiality with anyone, including the Board or Notre Dame.

Debevoise obtained documents from Notre Dame, the Order, Holy Cross College, the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, the Diocese of Kalamazoo, and Notre Dame College Prep (formerly Notre Dame High School for Boys); each of these institutions cooperated with our requests for documents and witnesses. A total of over 1,000 documents were reviewed, including letters, emails, memoranda, personnel files, and policies.[3]

The investigators carefully analyzed all information in order to make their determinations about the credibility of what they learned. The investigators considered, among other things, whether the information was provided by someone with direct knowledge, whether there were multiple sources for the information, and whether contemporaneous documents supported a finding.

a. Limitations

The findings in this document are limited to information that the investigators could obtain through voluntary interviews and documentary evidence. In some instances, individuals contacted by the investigators did not respond to our emails or declined to speak with Debevoise. Debevoise requested to speak with Fr. King, whose counsel

---

[2] We decided not to speak with two witnesses who contacted us. One witness reached out regarding allegations entirely unrelated to Notre Dame. We understand that witness to be in touch with local and state law enforcement. The second witness contacted us regarding a personal dispute between adults.

[3] In this matter, Debevoise entered into an attorney-client relationship with Notre Dame. Although we received privileged materials, nothing in this report is intended to waive any applicable privilege, including but not limited to the attorney-client privilege and work product protection.

refused our request for an interview. All relevant able-minded, living current and former Presidents of Notre Dame, leaders of the Order, and the Dioceses voluntarily met with us and answered our questions.

b. Naming Conventions and Confidentiality

In deciding whether to include the names of anyone in this document, Debevoise considered the individual's body of knowledge, position of authority, and supervisory role related to Fr. King. In certain circumstances, to safeguard identities, we have referred to witnesses by the year they reported their allegations (*e.g.*, 2018 Reporter, 2023 Reporter, and 2025 Reporter) regarding the abuse by Fr. King at Notre Dame that occurred in the 1990s. We have not reported on certain facts if they were not necessary to our findings and their disclosure might make the identity of the reporter apparent.

III. Various Entities in the Report

Given Fr. King's involvement with multiple institutions, an understanding of the entities described below, and the ways in which some intersect or overlap, is essential to understand Fr. King's misconduct.

a. The Order

The Order founded Notre Dame in 1842, and the two institutions have been deeply connected since the University's inception. Throughout Notre Dame's history, members of the Order have served as professors, spiritual leaders, and administrators of the University. As required by the University's governing documents, every University president has been a member of the Order. This shared history is essential to understanding Notre Dame's institutional culture and its division of responsibilities with the Order.

From 1842 until 1967, the Order governed Notre Dame. In 1967, governance of the University was changed and transferred to a newly constituted Board of Fellows and Board of Trustees, both comprised of lay people and Holy Cross priests. Notwithstanding this change in governance, the relationship between the Order and Notre Dame continues to be exceptionally close.

b. Notre Dame

i. *Background*

Notre Dame is a private Catholic research university located near South Bend, Indiana. The University enrolls approximately 8,900 undergraduate students, and its campus features 33 undergraduate residence halls that serve as the foundation of its distinctive residential life. Ordained priests and brothers are integral to the fabric of the

University community. The spiritual underpinnings of Notre Dame's mission foster exceptionally close relationships between students and priests and brothers on campus.

ii. *Abuse by Priests at Notre Dame*[4]

The University has at times in its history confronted sexual misconduct arising from relationships between students and clergy. For example, in 1990, then President Rev. Edward Malloy, C.S.C. asked then Provost Timothy O'Meara to investigate allegations of sexual abuse by Rev. James Burtchaell, C.S.C. Fr. Burtchaell was at various times a rector, a theology professor, and a provost at Notre Dame. The investigation by Provost O'Meara continued into 1991. In his investigation, Provost O'Meara spoke to multiple witnesses abused by Fr. Burtchaell, pursued leads, and questioned Fr. Burtchaell, who admitted to behaving inappropriately with students. The investigation culminated in Notre Dame requesting that Fr. Burtchaell resign, and in a public statement released on December 1, 1991, then Provincial Superior Rev. Carl F. Ebey, C.S.C. acknowledged the serious nature of the matter involving Fr. Burtchaell and apologized to individuals who may have been hurt by the conduct. Fr. Ebey added that as a result of that investigation, the University had requested Fr. Burtchaell's resignation, which the Order endorsed. At the time and thereafter, questions have been raised as to when Notre Dame first received reports of Fr. Burtchaell's abuse and the quality of the investigation in 1990–91. Debevoise finds that the University may have received reports of misconduct as early as the 1970s. However, records from 1990 show that the University, under the leadership of then President Fr. Malloy, thoroughly investigated and addressed the matter in 1991.

In 2002, in the wake of the national Catholic Church sexual abuse scandal, then President Fr. Malloy convened the Church Study Committee in service of the Church. The committee, which was comprised of 11 members of Notre Dame's faculty and staff, was responsible for developing recommendations on how the Catholic Church could address and prevent allegations of sexual misconduct. The committee wrote a report that was sent to the American Catholic Bishops prior to the bishops' June 2002 policymaking meeting in Dallas.

In the fall of 2002, a former Notre Dame student arranged to meet with members of the University's Church Study Committee. He reported abuse he suffered at the hands of Rev. Robert D. Huneke, a Diocesan priest, and urged Notre Dame to take steps to help students who encountered clergy abuse as children or in young adulthood. The former student first encountered Fr. Huneke as a young boy at his parish on Long Island, and Fr. Huneke began sexually abusing him when he was 13 years old. Fr. Huneke followed

---

[4] This is not intended to be an exhaustive listing but rather is derived from information taken from witnesses who reached out and documents we reviewed.

the student to Notre Dame, where he secured a job as the assistant rector of Cavanaugh Hall. The abuse of the student by Fr. Huneke persisted at Notre Dame.

The *South Bend Tribune* then published an article in Spring 2003 reporting Fr. Huneke's abuse, and the former student authored an article in the Summer 2003 edition of *Notre Dame Magazine* describing the abuse. Notre Dame issued a response to the student's article, notifying the public of the formation of a three-person committee created by then President Fr. Malloy to address past sexual abuse by clergy at Notre Dame, even where the abuser was no longer a member of the Notre Dame community. The committee members were: Carol Mooney (former Assistant Provost), John Cavadini (Professor in the Theology Dept.), and Carol Kaesebier (former General Counsel).

The committee reviewed allegations, decided whether an investigation was necessary, and made recommendations regarding remedial actions. The committee also reported to an Advisory Board, which was comprised of three people from the South Bend community who were independent from Notre Dame. At the time, allegations against several priests were brought to the committee, including Fr. Burtchaell, Fr. Huneke, and Fr. Porterfield.[5]

At its inception, the committee maintained a process for reviewing and responding to allegations, and it fulfilled that mandate during its active period. However, the work of the committee did not continue as the number of reports declined, and its activities appear to have concluded in 2005.

In October 2018, then Notre Dame President Rev. John Jenkins, C.S.C. released a statement in response to the August 2018 Pennsylvania grand jury investigation of sexual abuse by Catholic clergy. The statement not only noted the abuse of minors by clergy, but it also acknowledged the power imbalances in relationships with priests, teachers, and rectors that could give rise to adult abuse on campus. The statement cited the earlier efforts by the University and renewed the invitation to those who had been abused to come forward and make a report.

iii. *Notre Dame Residential Hall Life and Zahm Hall*

Notre Dame's residential life tradition is an integral part of the undergraduate experience. The assigned residence halls at Notre Dame play a unique role in shaping the identities of students on campus and as alumni. Students typically remain in the same residence hall throughout their time at Notre Dame, fostering a strong sense of community. Students form close relationships with hallmates, developing a shared identity tied to the residential community.

---

[5] All three of these priests are deceased.

Rectors, who live among students in the single-sex undergraduate halls, serve a critical purpose at Notre Dame. As the primary leader in residence halls, they are responsible for the development and general well-being of residents. They also play an essential role in fostering community. Rectors, who are employees of Notre Dame, include Holy Cross priests, women and men from other religious orders, and lay women and men. In addition to rectors, priests also live in residential halls as priests-in-residence.

Zahm Hall, a men's residence, was built in 1937. During Fr. King's tenure as rector (1980–1997), Zahm had a well-known reputation for being especially rowdy and raucous. Witnesses uniformly described Zahm's culture as fraternity-like, and various traditions contributed to this reputation, namely the Odin ritual and the Bun Run.

- Odin was a Zahm tradition that took place before the pep rally of the first home football game of Notre Dame's season. Freshmen were directed to dress in togas and then paraded across campus. The event, which some witnesses said included heavy drinking, involved students being slapped with dead fish, being covered in shaving cream, and jumping into mud pits.

- Some witnesses recalled that as part of Odin, upon returning to Zahm, Fr. King was outside the dorm with a hose and directed the residents to remove their togas and underwear before hosing them down. Other witnesses remembered being hosed down by Fr. King while partially dressed.[6]

- The Bun Run was a Zahm tradition that involved freshmen running naked through the student center and library during finals week.[7]

- Members of the Freshman Orientation Committee were required to take a group photo that was posted at the entrance of Zahm. The students in the photo were completely naked with objects strategically placed to cover their private areas. Fr. King was responsible for taking the picture.

Witnesses described an environment in Zahm that was permeated by a persistent sexual undercurrent, where sexualized behavior was normalized and appropriate boundaries were routinely disregarded. Zahm's entrenched fraternity-like culture promoted conditions in which certain behaviors were obscured under the guise of

---

[6] Odin was banned by Student Affairs in 1993 when it was determined to be demeaning and dangerous, although without specific knowledge of Fr. King's role of hosing down students.

[7] Although not formally banned by the University, online sources indicate the Bun Run was phased out by 2020.

initiation rituals or excused as typical male behavior. We find that the culture of Zahm that witnesses reported was fostered and accepted by Fr. King.

While student-on-student sexual assault was not part of the remit of this investigation, witnesses described situations in the 1980s and 1990s involving various types of assault.

- One witness knew of instances where upperclassmen held down underclassmen and assaulted them. He personally recalled an incident when two upperclassmen attempted to assault him, though he fought back. He reported the assault to Fr. King who dismissed it by stating, "boys will be boys."

- Another witness described being attacked in his room by two or three upperclassmen who attempted to sodomize him with a broomstick or something similar.

- One witness described an incident where, shortly after moving into Zahm, he was physically restrained by a group of Zahm residents who sexually assaulted him. The witness recalled that Fr. King was present during the event, though the witness was not certain if Fr. King participated.

c. Holy Cross College

While he was the rector of Zahm, Fr. King also had a teaching assignment at Holy Cross College, where he remained on the faculty until 2007. Holy Cross College was founded in 1966 by the Mid-West Province of the Brothers of Holy Cross and today is a four-year academic institution. During Fr. King's tenure, however, Holy Cross College was a two-year junior college. Historically, students who were interested in matriculating at Notre Dame often began their studies at Holy Cross College with the intention of transferring. These two academic institutions shared various resources, including facilities like the Rockne.

d. The Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend and the Diocese of Kalamazoo

Fr. King worked at parishes in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend and the Diocese of Kalamazoo. From 1999 until 2007, Fr. King served as the pastor of Sacred Heart of Jesus Church near Lakeville, Indiana. In 2007, after his time at Holy Cross College, Fr. King joined St. Mark Parish in Niles, Michigan, where he served as administrator and then pastor until 2019. In January 2020, at the direction of the Order, Fr. King ceased any formal ministry and moved into Holy Cross House, where retired, elderly, or ill members of the Order reside.

IV. **Findings Related to Fr. King**

a. Fr. King's Personal and Professional History

i. *Educational background and positions prior to Notre Dame*

Fr. King attended Notre Dame High School for Boys in Niles, Illinois before enrolling at Notre Dame in 1960. After graduating in June 1965 with a bachelor's degree in philosophy, Fr. King moved to Washington, D.C., where he attended Holy Cross College. Once he received his master's degree in theology in 1968, he returned to Notre Dame, where he completed graduate work. He was ordained in April 1969. His first assignment as a Holy Cross priest was at his alma mater, Notre Dame High School for Boys, where he taught history, Latin, and theology. He also served as the school's Athletic Director until his departure in 1979. We know of no complaints made during his time there. Fr. King also attended Notre Dame as a graduate student in history at this time.

ii. *Notre Dame and rectorship at Zahm Hall (1980–1997)*

Fr. King served as the rector of Zahm from 1980 until 1997.[8] Multiple witnesses report that Fr. King enjoyed his role as rector. He took great pride in Zahm, and several witnesses recalled that Fr. King studied the pictures of the incoming students and knew their names even before they arrived. Fr. King was a nonconformist, who was at times at odds with administrators. For example, several witnesses stated that Fr. King preferred handling discipline directly. Rather than escalating matters to Student Affairs, Fr. King would impose his version of disciplinary measures within the hall.

We investigated the circumstances of Fr. King's departure. Records indicate that he resigned as rector of Zahm in 1997, and there is evidence that his departure from Notre Dame was not linked to any reports of misconduct. In a letter to the Academic Dean of Holy Cross College on February 12, 1997, Fr. King wrote that he was in the process of terminating his commitment to Notre Dame effective May 25, 1997. Fr. King's employee termination form lists May 19, 1997, as the last day he worked at Notre Dame. The form indicated that the reason for his departure was that his contract period had ended, and Fr. King decided not to renew. Employees and former students we spoke with did not remember the reason for Fr. King's departure from Notre Dame in 1997. Some witnesses speculated that Fr. King's departure was due to his increasingly strained relationship with Student Affairs, while others remarked that Fr. King had been rector for quite some time and turnover in the position was common. Finally, some believed that he resigned because of complaints raised by a former student and his father in Spring 1997. The then VP of Student Affairs, who signed Fr. King's employee

---

[8] While at Notre Dame, Fr. King also taught a Freshman Writing Program course from Spring 1986 until Spring 1991.

termination form, did not recall the details or timing of his departure in 1997. She explained that if there had been a complaint about Fr. King at the time, the reason for his departure would have been recorded differently on the termination form.

iii. *Holy Cross College (1981–2007)*

When Fr. King taught at Holy Cross College, it was widely believed by the students that he had strong ties to Notre Dame. Students who were interested in transferring to Notre Dame tried to enroll in Fr. King's class in the hopes of securing a letter of recommendation for admission to Notre Dame from him. He also taught more challenging gatekeeper courses required for students looking to transfer. We learned from one Holy Cross College administrator that Fr. King only wanted those students who were highly motivated and could handle the level of rigor of his classes.

b. The Weighing Scheme

We find that Fr. King had an established pattern of inappropriate grooming behavior by weighing students. He would first raise concerns about a student's health, suggesting to them that they looked sickly, thin, or as if they were losing weight. Fr. King would address these "concerns" by taking students to the Rockne to be weighed, despite the fact that the infirmary was located just behind Zahm. Fr. King often drove students alone in his car to the Rockne. Once at the gym, he led students to the men's locker room in the basement of the building. He then directed them to undress and to step on the scale. While not all students were weighed naked, Fr. King often demanded that the students be completely naked to get an accurate weight. Some witnesses reported that Fr. King left the immediate area to look around the locker room. These witnesses believe he was checking to see if anyone else was present. Some witnesses also reported Fr. King slowly balancing the scales while they stood naked in front of him.

We have credible reports that 15 former students were subjected to the weighing scheme by Fr. King. Some of these students were residents of Zahm while others were Holy Cross College students. We heard about several more specific examples of students being weighed that we were unable to corroborate. Additionally, we found that discussion of Fr. King's weighing scheme was widespread among certain Zahm classes, and many witnesses recalled hearing or learning about students being weighed at the time, though they were unable to remember specific names.

c. Grooming Behavior

Grooming is a concept that is now well recognized as a series of inappropriate behaviors designed to increase the ability of a perpetrator to sexually abuse a victim.[9] Although typically thought of in the context of child abuse, researchers have found that perpetrators use similar behavior patterns against adults, especially where a power differential exists and the perpetrator holds a position of trust.[10] Grooming often involves similar stages and behavior patterns, such as choosing a vulnerable victim; gaining a positive reputation in the victim's community; building trust and making the victim feel special; initiating inappropriate behaviors in seemingly innocent ways; and controlling the victim through methods like rewards or blackmail.

Fr. King engaged in many of these grooming behaviors. For example, he held a position of trust and power, either as a rector, professor, or pastoral leader. Fr. King often chose individuals in vulnerable positions, such as residents who were distraught about their personal lives or students who wanted to transfer from Holy Cross College to Notre Dame. Most of the survivors with whom we spoke were first-year students or enrolled in Fr. King's class at the time he weighed or otherwise abused them.[11] Fr. King initiated inappropriate behaviors for purportedly innocent reasons: weighing students because he was worried about their health or hosing down naked residents after Odin to remove the mud before going inside. We heard from some witnesses that Fr. King rewarded them by securing them highly sought-after jobs on campus and writing a letter of recommendation for at least one student. Finally, Fr. King used threatening language against at least one person, stating that he could prevent his transfer to Notre Dame if the student told anyone what had happened.

---

[9] Natalie Bennett and William O'Donahue, *The Construct of Grooming in Child Sexual Abuse: Conceptual and Measurement Issues*, 23 J. of Child Sexual Abuse 957, 968 (2014).

[10] Aletky et al., *Adult Sexual Grooming: A Systematic Review*, 9 J. of Social Work in the Global Community 1, 1 (2025).

[11] We use both the terms "survivor" and "victim" in this Report. We recognize that individuals who have experienced harm may prefer one term over the other, and those preferences are not uniform. In some instances, we use "victim" because that was the term used by the witnesses when sharing their experience.

d. Allegations Against Fr. King at Notre Dame[12]

i. *2018: Notre Dame receives a letter from a former student alleging inappropriate conduct in the 1990s*

In September 2018, Notre Dame's Office of Institutional Equity ("OIE") received a letter from a former Zahm resident raising allegations of inappropriate behavior against Fr. King dating to the 1990s ("2018 Reporter"). The letter was also sent to the office of Notre Dame's President, as well as to the Assistant to the Bishop in Pastoral Care for the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend. In the letter, the 2018 Reporter disclosed the following to University officials:

- In the 1990s, under the guise of concern for the student's health, Fr. King drove the 2018 Reporter to the Rockne where he directed him to disrobe and step onto the scale to weigh him.

- The 2018 Reporter initially undressed to his underwear before Fr. King demanded that he remove his underwear. Reluctantly, the 2018 Reporter agreed, but he was extremely uncomfortable standing naked in front of Fr. King.

- Once weighed, the 2018 Reporter dressed and Fr. King drove him back to Zahm in silence.

- The 2018 Reporter also described the impact of this trauma, including the resulting shame. In subsequent communications, he detailed how Fr. King's abuse has had lasting adverse effects on his life and relationships.

This was the only time the 2018 Reporter was weighed by Fr. King.

ii. *2018: Notre Dame refers the investigation to the Order*

Shortly after receiving the 2018 Reporter's letter, Notre Dame's then General Counsel called the Assistant Provincial and Vicar of the Order (the "Assistant Provincial") regarding the former student's allegations.[13] Because Fr. King had not been an employee of the University for 21 years but was still a member of the Order, Notre Dame referred the matter to the Order for an investigation into the allegations. Notre

---

[12] Various questions have been raised about the credibility of two reporters alleging sexual contact by Fr. King. However, given the number of other accusations of sexual assault and touching involving Fr. King, we can reliably conclude that Fr. King engaged in sexual misconduct beyond the naked weighing of students.

[13] It is customary for the Assistant Provincial to review allegations of misconduct concerning a member of the Order.

Dame's Office of the General Counsel conducted a search for complaints related to Fr. King and informed the Order that it had found none. The Order similarly did not have any complaints of this nature about Fr. King. After the initial referral, Notre Dame offered to assist in the review. However, the Order did not request Notre Dame's help, and the University did not provide further assistance.

On September 27, 2018, the 2018 Reporter sent a second letter to both Notre Dame and the Order, expressing skepticism about the Assistant Provincial's appointment as investigator. The 2018 Reporter believed that as a priest of the Order, the Assistant Provincial would not be able to conduct an independent investigation.

iii. *2018: Fr. King's statements to the Order*

In October 2018, within days of receiving the 2018 Reporter's letter, the Assistant Provincial met with Fr. King regarding the allegations. During the course of the conversation, Fr. King admitted to the following:

- He had driven a student to the Rockne to be weighed.
- He directed the student to undress, though not completely.
- He intimated that he had resigned from teaching at Holy Cross College because of similar accusations.

At the time, the Assistant Provincial interpreted Fr. King to be acknowledging two separate allegations with similar stories from students who did not know each other. Fr. King then stated nothing else similar had happened since his departure from Holy Cross College through the next 11 years. When pressed on his conduct prior to leaving Holy Cross College and Notre Dame, Fr. King stated that there was nothing to find. The Assistant Provincial reviewed the Order's file and confirmed that it did not reflect any complaints from Holy Cross College (or anywhere else).

iv. *2019: The 2018 Reporter and his parents send additional letters to Notre Dame and the Order*

In January 2019, the 2018 Reporter contacted the Assistant Provincial to follow up on his complaint. Although the Assistant Provincial continued to have ongoing conversations with the 2018 Reporter from a pastoral perspective, no formal interview of the 2018 Reporter was conducted. The 2018 Reporter expressed frustration with the pace of the investigation and questioned whether the Assistant Provincial had contacted Fr. King. The Assistant Provincial responded that he had, in fact, spoken with Fr. King and relayed that Fr. King admitted to taking a student to the Rockne to be weighed, though he denied directing the student to undress completely. The Assistant Provincial did not share further details of Fr. King's statements.

In February 2019, the 2018 Reporter's parents sent their own letter to the Order and the University. While he did not speak to the parents, the Assistant Provincial responded to their letter. At that time, the Assistant Provincial believed that based on the information he had, there was little else he could do to investigate the allegations.

v. *2020: The Assistant Provincial meets with the 2018 Reporter*

The Assistant Provincial met with the 2018 Reporter in person on February 16, 2020. The Assistant Provincial arranged this meeting out of a sense of pastoral care and in an effort to continue to provide support to him, rather than for investigative purposes. The Assistant Provincial did not ask the 2018 Reporter about the details of his allegations during this meeting, including what happened or whether he disclosed the incident to anyone.

vi. *2021: The 2018 Reporter alleges multiple victims and additional evidence of sexual misconduct*

In a January 2021 letter, the 2018 Reporter again reached out to the University and the Order adding significant details concerning Fr. King's behavior at Zahm in the 1990s:

- He labeled Fr. King's conduct as sexual abuse.
- He described Odin, noting that Fr. King hosed him and other students down while they stood naked outside of Zahm.
- He added that he had learned of three other Zahm residents, without providing names, who were victims of the same weighing scheme.
- He explained that during a talent show that took place his sophomore year, he was made to do a sketch that consisted of pretending to masturbate under a bed sheet. He stated that the sketch was Fr. King's idea.[14]

With respect to Notre Dame, an employee within the OIE called the 2018 Reporter to discuss his note. He was upset and expressed dissatisfaction with the Order's investigation. The OIE employee informed the 2018 Reporter that she did not know anything about the investigation and was not privy to information relating to it, as

[14] The existence of the Zahm Invitational Talent Show ("ZITS"), the sketch itself, and the fact that it was Fr. King's idea were all corroborated by various witnesses during the course of this investigation. Although not every witness recalled that Zahm had a talent show, we note that in addition to witness statements, ZITS was mentioned in an article published on November 24, 1986, in *The Observer*, Notre Dame's student-run newspaper.

Fr. King was no longer a Notre Dame employee. Notre Dame took no further action in response to the January 2021 letter, and it appears that no efforts were made to ascertain the identity of the three additional victims.

vii. *2023: An additional alumnus comes forward*

On January 13, 2023, a separate alumnus met with the Assistant Provincial and alleged that several Zahm residents were taken to the Rockne to be weighed, and that some were touched without their consent or raped ("2023 Reporter"). This conversation, which took place in person, was recorded by the 2023 Reporter with the Assistant Provincial's consent. He informed the Assistant Provincial that some residents had written letters to the University when they were students on campus. During the meeting, the 2023 Reporter did not fully reveal his own experience with Fr. King, and the 2023 Reporter did not reach out to Notre Dame. Approaching this as a pastoral matter, during the conversation, the Assistant Provincial apologized for what happened but did not discuss the facts of his specific allegations.

viii. *2023: Former students inform Notre Dame of reports regarding Fr. King made in 1990s*

In February and March 2023, in response to outreach from the 2018 Reporter, two additional former Zahm residents reached out to the University and the Order regarding their own impressions of Fr. King and in support of the 2018 Reporter. [15]

(1) In one letter, a former Zahm resident wrote that he previously made a report about Fr. King weighing students to the Office of Residence Life in Spring 1997. He did not receive a response from the University. A few weeks later, it was announced that Fr. King would no longer be the rector of Zahm. Prior to contacting Residence Life, this alumnus consulted with his father about Fr. King's conduct; his father separately wrote a letter and subsequently had an in-person meeting at the University during graduation in May 1997. The father stated that he spoke with a representative of Student Affairs and reported what his son had told him about Fr. King weighing students.

[15] In March 2023, the 2018 Reporter sent a letter directly to Fr. King at Holy Cross House. The letter detailed the night Fr. King drove the 2018 Reporter to the Rockne where he instructed him to disrobe before being weighed. The 2018 Reporter described how the experience shaped him and the lasting negative effects it has had on his life. He concluded the note by urging Fr. King to tell the truth. Fr. King never responded to the letter, and the 2018 Reporter never received confirmation that the note reached him.

(2) A second former student stated that while Fr. King was never inappropriate with him, he knew that a dormmate and Zahm resident was weighed by Fr. King. In his letter, the former student described the Odin ritual, noting that Fr. King personally hosed down residents who were naked. He wrote that sometime during the academic year of 1995–1996, he went to the Office of Residence Life on campus and made an in-person report about Fr. King's conduct. He explained that his concerns were based on credible reports he heard about Fr. King weighing students naked, clarifying that he had not personally witnessed the conduct. He indicated that the Residence Life personnel dismissed him, stating that he was not a firsthand witness and therefore did not possess direct evidence of these allegations.

We spoke to all relevant administrators in Student Affairs and the Office of Residence Life in 1996 and 1997 and nobody recalled these communications. The then Assistant VP of Residence Life stated that he did not recall hearing complaints that Fr. King was taking students to be weighed naked. He was adamant that if such an allegation reached his office, they would have done something about it. He also suggested that he would have known if this complaint was the reason for Fr. King's departure from Notre Dame.

The then VP of Student Affairs had a vague recollection of discussing Fr. King weighing students at the Rockne, but she did not remember when, with whom, or where this conversation occurred. Her understanding was that students were in their underwear while being weighed by Fr. King. She noted, however, that she never heard any allegations related to sexual abuse or sexual misconduct.

These 2023 letters were sent both to the University and to the Assistant Provincial at the Order. Upon learning that reports were made to the University in the late 1990s, Notre Dame's Office of the General Counsel conducted another review of files related to Fr. King. No evidence of these complaints was identified during the search, and we similarly did not find these letters. In 2023, the University informed these former students that the Assistant Provincial was handling the matter, as Fr. King was no longer a Notre Dame employee.

ix. *2023: 2023 Reporter alleges rape by Fr. King in the 1990s*

In April 2023, the 2023 Reporter sent a text message to the Assistant Provincial, stating for the first time that he was raped in the shower of the Rockne by Fr. King when he was a first-year student in the 1990s. Upon receipt of this allegation, the Order hired outside counsel to investigate. The 2023 Reporter did not disclose his allegation to Notre Dame, nor did the Order inform the University about it. Ultimately, the 2023 Reporter decided that he would not engage with the Order's outside counsel, at which point that work did not continue.

e. Additional Allegation of Sexual Assault at Zahm

Beyond the 2023 Reporter, we spoke with a witness who stated that while he was never taken to the Rockne to be weighed, Fr. King sexually assaulted him on several occasions at Zahm Hall in the 1990s. Fr. King initiated these assaults by threatening to remove the student from Notre Dame either by revoking his scholarship or through disciplinary measures if he did not acquiesce to sexual contact. The former resident never reported the abuse to Notre Dame, as he felt there were inadequate channels for disclosing Fr. King's conduct.

f. Alleged Reports to University Officials in the 1980s and 1990s

One witness informed us that he told a University administrator in the late 1980s or early 1990s about his inappropriate interaction with Fr. King. Separately, a second witness told us that he reported a sexual touching by Fr. King to a different University employee. Both Notre Dame employees denied any knowledge of such reports. Based on the totality of the evidence we have, we do not conclude that the University was on notice of sexual assault by Fr. King at the time these reports were allegedly made.

g. Allegations Against Fr. King at Holy Cross College

The investigators also received reports about conduct that occurred at other institutions, including at Holy Cross College. We identified six witnesses who were credibly subjected to the weighing scheme by Fr. King while they were students at Holy Cross College. As with the students at Notre Dame, Fr. King initiated the weighing by first raising concerns about the student's health, suggesting they appeared thin or as if they were losing weight. Fr. King also took the Holy Cross College students to the Rockne to be weighed, driving them there in his car.

Despite the parallels between Fr. King's conduct at both institutions, there was an additional dynamic for the Holy Cross College students because the witnesses we met who were weighed by Fr. King while at Holy Cross College aspired to transfer to Notre Dame. For at least one student, Fr. King wrote him an enthusiastic letter of recommendation after subjecting him to weighing. We learned from another witness that while Fr. King did not promise him admission to Notre Dame, he did threaten the student to prevent his admission if he told anyone about what happened at the Rockne. Fr. King leveraged the dynamic between the two institutions and his perceived influence at Notre Dame to facilitate his misconduct.

i. *Early 2000s: Former student makes report regarding 1996 conduct regarding Fr. King to Holy Cross College*

In the early 2000s, a former Holy Cross College student shared information regarding allegations against Fr. King to the Holy Cross College VP of Student Affairs

("2025 Reporter").[16] The 2025 Reporter experienced two incidents involving Fr. King. In the spring of 1996, he enrolled in Fr. King's course at Holy Cross College. During that semester, Fr. King invited the student to his office to discuss his academic goals; Fr. King then turned to a discussion of his physical appearance. Fr. King told the 2025 Reporter that he looked as though he was losing weight and that he needed to be weighed. Fr. King drove him toward Notre Dame's campus. The 2025 Reporter, who thought he was being taken to the Infirmary, was instead taken to the Rockne. He was led to the men's locker room in the basement, where Fr. King directed him to undress fully and step on the scale. Fr. King stood in front of the 2025 Reporter, adjusting the weights on the scale, while he stood completely naked. After he was weighed, Fr. King drove the 2025 Reporter back to Holy Cross College's campus.

A week later, the 2025 Reporter was in Fr. King's office to discuss his application to transfer to Notre Dame. Fr. King again commented on his health and suggested they get lunch at a dining hall at Notre Dame. When they arrived on campus, instead of walking to the dining hall, Fr. King led them back to the Rockne. In the locker room, Fr. King directed the 2025 Reporter to strip down. This time, he left his underwear on. Fr. King stepped away for a moment. When he returned, he approached the 2025 Reporter from behind and molested him by placing his hand inside the front of the 2025 Reporter's underwear and touching him. The 2025 Reporter quickly collected his clothing before walking back to Holy Cross College.

When the 2025 Reporter next returned to class, Fr. King pulled him aside. In an empty classroom, Fr. King threatened him, stating that while he could not guarantee him a place at Notre Dame, he could keep him out. The 2025 Reporter was accepted to Notre Dame.

In the early 2000s, after graduating from Notre Dame, the student disclosed his experience with Fr. King at Holy Cross College to the VP of Student Affairs at Holy Cross College. The student recalled that during the meeting, the VP of Student Affairs stated that she would look into his allegations. The student never received any follow-up from Holy Cross College or the administrator. The administrator had no memory of this conversation, though she was adamant that if she had told the student that she was handling the situation, she would have followed through.[17]

---

[16] This student is referred to as the "2025 Reporter" due to timing of his report to the Order.

[17] Notwithstanding her lack of recollection, she noted that the 2025 Reporter should not be discounted simply because she did not recall the conversation.

ii. *2007: Fr. King leaves Holy Cross College*

Fr. King left Holy Cross College in 2007. At the time, the VP for Academic Affairs at Holy Cross College told a member of the faculty that (1) Fr. King was fired from Holy Cross College because a student was upset with a recommendation letter from Fr. King; and (2) the student believed that Fr. King kept him out of Notre Dame after the student rebuffed Fr. King's request to weigh him. The former VP for Academic Affairs declined our request to participate in the investigation.[18] According to records, Fr. King submitted a letter of resignation to the Academic Dean on June 5, 2007, after 27 years at Holy Cross College. Fr. King provided no reason for his departure in the letter.

iii. *2025: The 2025 Reporter meets with the Order's outside counsel*

In Spring 2025, the 2025 Reporter discovered posts on a Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests ("SNAP") thread about others who had suffered abuse at the hands of Fr. King. Around that time, he reached out to the Order's outside counsel, who he believed was conducting an independent investigation of Fr. King. In April 2025, they arranged an in-person meeting. The 2025 Reporter told the Order's outside counsel what had happened to him, including that an unnamed priest had touched him. The outside counsel, however, interpreted this exchange as a request for counsel by the 2025 Reporter. The outside counsel explained that he represented the Order and would not be able to represent the 2025 Reporter in any matter involving the Order or one of its members. Notre Dame was unaware of this information.

h. Fr. King at St. Mark in Niles, Michigan

In 2007, after leaving Holy Cross College, Fr. King joined St. Mark, a parish of the Diocese of Kalamazoo, in Niles, Michigan. The Diocese relies on various religious communities, including the Order, to supplement its pastoral needs. Fr. King joined as the parish's Administrator before transitioning to the role of Pastor in 2008.

i. *Allegations against Fr. King at St. Mark Parish*

We spoke to a former parishioner who described an incident involving Fr. King. After meeting with Fr. King in confession, the parishioner was asked by Fr. King to visit him in his office at the rectory. At the meeting, Fr. King instructed the parishioner to remove his shirt. Fr. King proceeded to circle the parishioner's body, spraying his bare chest and back with holy water. When he returned to face the parishioner again, he sprayed his face with the holy water. In the process, Fr. King grabbed the parishioner's groin area. The parishioner, who was in shock, sat down. Fr. King then proceeded to request that the parishioner bring pornographic films for them to watch together. The

[18] Additionally, we were not able to interview Brother Richard Gilman, C.S.C., who was the President of Holy Cross College at the time, as he passed away in 2017.

parishioner left that evening and never returned to St. Mark. The parishioner did not report the incident to the Diocese or the Order.[19]

Documents reveal that starting in 2012, parishioners began expressing concerns about Fr. King's health and behavior. They described his dramatic mood swings, uncontrollable anger, and public outbursts. Around 2018, the concerns about Fr. King's health and emotional wellbeing escalated. He was increasingly irritable and volatile, lashing out at parishioners.

In November 2019, leadership from the Order met with Fr. King to discuss his deteriorating health and erratic behavior. The Order decided that it was best for Fr. King to leave Niles. Witnesses we spoke to were told that he was removed for health reasons, though in various correspondences, leadership of the Order acknowledged that the information reported by the 2018 Reporter was a factor in Fr. King's removal from the parish. In January 2020, Fr. King was placed into Holy Cross House, where retired, elderly, or ill members of the Order reside.

i. 2020: The 2018 and 2023 Reporters Reach Out to the Diocese of Kalamazoo

In 2020, the 2018 Reporter wrote to the Diocese of Kalamazoo directly, attaching his September 2018 letter to Notre Dame reporting his allegations against Fr. King. In his note, the 2018 Reporter asked Bishop Paul Bradley whether the Order ever informed him of his grievance against Fr. King. The Diocese reported the matter to the Michigan AG's office in compliance with their process, as they had not been previously made aware of the allegations. The Diocese also informed the Assistant Provincial of the 2018 Reporter's outreach.

In 2025, the 2023 Reporter reached out to the Diocese with his allegations against Fr. King. At the time, the Diocese reported the allegations to Notre Dame Police, South Bend Police, and State Police.

V. Allegations Related to Fr. David Porterfield

a. 2018: New Allegations Against Fr. Porterfield Are Handled by the Assistant Provincial

In the course of our work, as noted above, Debevoise heard about other priests accused of misconduct. We decided to include details about Fr. David Porterfield

[19] We also spoke with a witness whom the parishioner spoke to at the time, who corroborated the account.

because his case involves an extensive course of conduct of abuse at Notre Dame that has not previously been publicly disclosed.[20]

i. *1980s reports concerning Fr. Porterfield result in his departure from the University, though he later returns*

In the early 1980s, Notre Dame became aware of at least one complaint of sexual abuse of a student by Fr. Porterfield when he was rector of Sorin Hall.

- 1983: Fr. Porterfield resigned from the University shortly after Notre Dame learned of the allegation.[21]

- 1984: Less than a year later, in January 1984, Fr. Porterfield was rehired by Notre Dame as an assistant rector at Grace Hall and in 1985 served as an Assistant Director of Admissions at the University.

- 1986: In early 1986, Notre Dame received a report of Fr. Porterfield abusing a student at Grace Hall. Fr. Porterfield invited the student into his room and asked intimate details about his personal life and sexuality. Fr. Porterfield then embraced the student and made explicit comments. The University and the Order looked into the matter which resulted in Fr. Porterfield leaving the University in 1986 and entering an alcohol treatment program. No public announcement was made.

- 1988: Fr. Porterfield returned to the South Bend area and served in various parishes in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend.

- 2003: In response to the invitation to the Notre Dame community to speak about clergy abuse, an alumnus reported sexual misconduct allegations against Fr. Porterfield to the newly formed three-member committee. Specifically, he reported that in Spring 1985, Fr. Porterfield propositioned him to have sex in his room in Grace Hall.

The committee organized a meeting with the alumnus alongside the then Assistant Provincial of the Order, who led an investigation into Fr. Porterfield. At the conclusion of this 2003 investigation, the Order transferred Fr. Porterfield, assigning him as the

---

[20] The last known incident involving Fr. Porterfield occurred around the same time Notre Dame received the 2018 Reporter's letter. Thus, the details of this case can also inform Notre Dame's future policies and procedures.

[21] A March 25, 1983, article in *The Observer* stated that Fr. Porterfield resigned as rector because he felt he was "overextended by working two full-time jobs."

Assistant Superior at Holy Cross House and then the Superior at Fatima House, a religious retirement home.

ii. *Lack of communication and internal recordkeeping at Notre Dame gives Fr. Porterfield continued access to the Notre Dame community*

- 2009: Despite Notre Dame being aware of three separate allegations of sexual misconduct by Fr. Porterfield, an alumnus who was suffering from substance abuse issues was unwittingly referred by the Notre Dame Alumni Association to Fr. Porterfield for counseling.

- 2010: This alumnus reported to the University that during the meeting, Fr. Porterfield asked the alumnus about his sexuality. A member of Notre Dame's Office of the General Counsel shared the alumnus's letter with Fr. Porterfield. Fr. Porterfield confirmed that he met with the alumnus in his apartment in Fatima House, but he denied anything inappropriate happened. We are not aware of any action that was taken in response to this report.

iii. *Allegations reported in 2011 result in an investigation by the Order and Safety Plan*

- 2011: The Order received a report of allegations against Fr. Porterfield by the wife of a victim, who graduated from Notre Dame in 1986, related to abuse on Notre Dame's campus in the 1980s. The Order informed Notre Dame's Office of the General Counsel of the allegation, and the then Assistant Provincial of the Order proceeded with an investigation, the results of which were shared with the University. At the conclusion of the 2011 investigation, the Order put a safety plan in place: Fr. Porterfield's ministry was limited, and he was prohibited from performing ministry at Notre Dame or with minors.

iv. *Fr. Porterfield's predatory behavior continues in the South Bend area*

Despite his safety plan, Fr. Porterfield continued to have access to young men, at least through Alcoholics Anonymous ("AA") retreats.

- 2018: The Order received a complaint from the mother of an AA attendee that Fr. Porterfield sent inappropriate text messages to her son during an AA retreat that Fr. Porterfield led in South Bend in Summer 2018. The allegation involving the AA attendee was entirely unrelated to Notre Dame, and the Assistant Provincial handled the matter simultaneously with the 2018 Reporter's complaint.

- As a result of an investigation by the Assistant Provincial, Fr. Porterfield was no longer allowed to perform any public ministry or lead any AA programming.

At various times between 2012 and 2021, witnesses shared that they met with Notre Dame's Office of the General Counsel and the Order. Contemporaneous notes of the witnesses suggest that they were told that there were no prior complaints. Assuming these notes are accurate, we are unaware of what searches for documents or complaints were performed at the time of these meetings.[22]

VI. Observations and Recommendations

Over the course of its history, Notre Dame has confronted clergy abuse, and at critical points, invited members of its community to come forward to report allegations. While Notre Dame's commitment to addressing clergy abuse has been clear, the University's execution has been inconsistent.

In certain instances, Notre Dame responded with visible action. In the case of Fr. Burtchaell, in response to Notre Dame students' accusations of abuse in 1990, an investigation was initiated by the University. The investigation substantiated the allegations, and Fr. Burtchaell had to resign. The Order released a public statement endorsing the University's course of action. On December 3, 1991, a member of Notre Dame's Public Relations and Information Department shared a statement by Fr. Burtchaell that was later published in the *National Catholic Reporter*. Fr. Burtchaell acknowledged his conduct and noted that Notre Dame had requested that he resign. Following his resignation, Fr. Burtchaell remained a Holy Cross priest but lived under supervision without public ministry faculties.

Similarly, the University's 2003 efforts were progressive and impactful. By encouraging members of the community to come forward, the committee embraced transparency as a mechanism for accountability and institutional learning. Additionally, the University's 2018 statement accurately acknowledged abuse by adults in positions of power and invited people to come forward regardless of the tenure of the former clergy.

A review of the University's handling of the Fr. King and Fr. Porterfield matters, however, shows that there is more the University can do to build on these past efforts and strengthen its approach to any similar complaints in the future. The recommendations

---

[22] Following the conclusion of the 2003 committee's work in 2005, reports related to allegations involving clergy appear to have been directed to the Office of the General Counsel.

that follow are intended to incorporate the findings of this investigation and position Notre Dame to be an enduring leader on these issues.

a. Policies and Procedures

The University has long had policies and procedures intended to foster a community where the dignity of every member is respected and upheld. These policies—which include the University's Policy on Discriminatory Harassment, Sexual Harassment, and other Sex-Based Misconduct; the Violence in the University Community Policy; and the Consensual Relationships Policy, among others—have been updated and amended over time to reflect best practices. In addition to outlining expectations for all community members, the University's policies and related procedures also provide avenues for reporting, responding to, and addressing policy violations and other concerns.

To enhance its policies and procedures, the University should establish and maintain a policy addressing how the University will handle reports that clergy and other persons at the University in positions of trust have committed sexual misconduct against a student. In response to the 2018 Reporter's initial allegations, the University believed in good faith that referring the investigation to the Order was an appropriate response because Fr. King no longer worked at the University. However, Notre Dame has far greater resources and personnel to investigate these types of cases than the Order. The University should be in a position to take ownership over these matters. Accordingly, the policy should specify that Notre Dame will independently address reports against clergy, regardless of whether they remain employed by Notre Dame at the time of the report. Additionally, although the initial allegation against Fr. King from the 2018 Reporter was not properly understood as sexual and did not specifically involve sexual assault, had certain investigatory steps been taken, the full scope of Fr. King's misconduct could have been uncovered earlier. The policy should establish a consistent approach to oversight of these investigations that will promote critical review of investigatory progress.

The University also should work with the Order to develop and maintain a cooperative framework for communicating about complaints either entity receives about a member of the Order who has or had a role at the University, and any related investigations that either entity conducts. Documenting and adhering to such a framework would help address a gap identified in the Fr. King matter, where Notre Dame and the Order did not maintain a regular course of communication such that the facts and details surrounding the mounting and increasingly serious allegations against Fr. King were not understood by the University as they evolved.

b. Improved Communication and Recordkeeping

Relatedly, the University should establish and maintain a process for tracking complaints against clergy and other individuals at the University in positions of trust, and

communicating to relevant departments any restrictions imposed against such individuals due to sexual misconduct.

In regard to Fr. Porterfield, the University lacked a consistent and reliable system of records to track and manage restrictions on his activities, which allowed him to return to campus in 1984 and later enabled the unwitting referral by the Alumni Association of an alumnus to Fr. Porterfield for counseling in 2009. As both the Fr. King and Fr. Porterfield matters also demonstrate, extreme care needs to be taken to ensure accuracy when communicating to survivors or witnesses about what was previously known, especially the existence of prior complaints. A more robust system and process for tracking complaints against clergy and associated outcomes would better position the University to manage each of these areas moving forward.

c. Enhanced Training and Education

The University should enhance training and education delivered to faculty, staff, and students regarding University policies on sexual misconduct. This should include both ongoing training, including emphasis on ways of reporting sexual misconduct against clergy and other persons in positions of trust, and development of additional training as appropriate.

VII. **Conclusion**

These key findings conclude Debevoise's investigation, but the investigators remain available should anyone wish to come forward with additional information.