

---

# Diocese of Buffalo

## Office of Communications



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**April 24, 2019**

### **Protocol followed after incident at Hamburg Rectory**

On the evening of April 11, 2019, a social gathering of seminarians and priests took place at Saints Peter & Paul Parish Rectory in Hamburg. During this gathering unsuitable, inappropriate and insensitive conversations occurred that were disturbing and offensive to several seminarians in attendance. The complaints did not include or infer any instance of physical sexual abuse of a minor or adult.

In addition to VIRTUS training on sexual abuse, the seminarians, in the fall of 2018, completed New York State sanctioned sexual harassment training. This included knowing the process for reporting a complaint, knowing who the Title IX officers at Christ the King Seminary are and having the trust and confidence that the officers would investigate their complaints.

The Diocese of Buffalo is thankful the seminarians followed the proper protocol and the Seminary responded correctly by immediately investigating and forwarding the findings to Bishop Richard J. Malone and other diocesan officials, including the Office of Professional Responsibility.

As a result of this initial investigation, Bishop Malone has placed each of the following priests on a temporary leave of absence from their parish assignments while disciplinary actions are taken:

- Rev. Arthur E. Mattulke, Pastor, Saints Peter & Paul, Hamburg
- Rev. Patrick T. O'Keefe, Parochial Vicar, Saints Peter & Paul, Hamburg
- Rev. Robert J. Orlowski, Pastor, Our Mother of Good Counsel, Blasdell

It is of primary importance to Bishop Malone that these priests are held accountable for their actions. At this time, disciplinary and corrective actions include: psychological evaluations and possible treatment, retraining in sexual harassment policies, individual retreats and, based on the results of these steps and additional investigation, further actions may be taken.

*For more information, contact Kathy Spangler, Director of Communications  
716.847.8717, [kspangler@buffalodiocese.org](mailto:kspangler@buffalodiocese.org), [www.buffalodiocese.org](http://www.buffalodiocese.org)*