

September 6, 2025

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

These last two weeks have been very dark and sad for our diocese. Like many of you, I remain devastated by the allegations against Fr. Andrew Showers and the news that was made public this week that he allegedly assaulted a woman in 2024. I am heartbroken by the harm and distress that has been caused by the alleged actions of one of our priests.

On Thursday, a woman came forward at a press conference to accuse Fr. Showers of assault during an incident in Chicago. What she did was very brave, and as a Church, it is important for us to hear these allegations and to take actions to both support victims and prevent abuse.

Unfortunately, the victim advocacy groups who hosted the press conference, while intending to correct perceived injustices, have painted a scandalous version of events that is simply not true. It is false to state that I or diocesan staff knew of abuse allegations against Fr. Showers and failed to act on information which had been received about him.

In our continuing effort to communicate the information we have with you and the public, I have included with this letter a full and transparent statement with essential details, supporting documentation, and a clear, accurate timeline of events. The statement also clarifies that the diocese had no information upon which it could act concerning the latest allegations.

Be assured that I have not and will not excuse or defend any member of the clergy who commits sexual abuse of any kind. Regarding this latest allegation, had we known the identity of the priest being accused of this abusive misconduct, he would have been removed from active public ministry immediately.

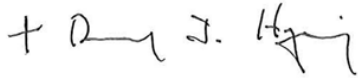
The Diocese played no part in posting Fr. Showers' bail or his release from jail. Furthermore, Fr. Showers is solely responsible for his criminal legal defense and its related expenses. The Diocese is not providing him legal representation.

O F F I C E O F T H E B I S H O P

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Amid these sad days, take heart and do not lose faith! We place our hope in Jesus Christ, who is our light and life, who has already gained the victory over the power of sin and death. I take great consolation in the powerful parting words of our Lord before He ascends into heaven, "Behold I am with you all days, even to the end of time." In the midst of life's great storms, we know that Jesus is with us in the boat and will lead us to the safe harbor of His consoling love.

Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "+ Donald J. Hying". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

+Donald J. Hying
Bishop of Madison