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# Banners honoring former bishops who helped cover up abuse removed from cathedral



Todd Berkey / AP

The Altoona-Johnstown diocese is headquartered in Altoona.

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By **THE MORNING CALL**

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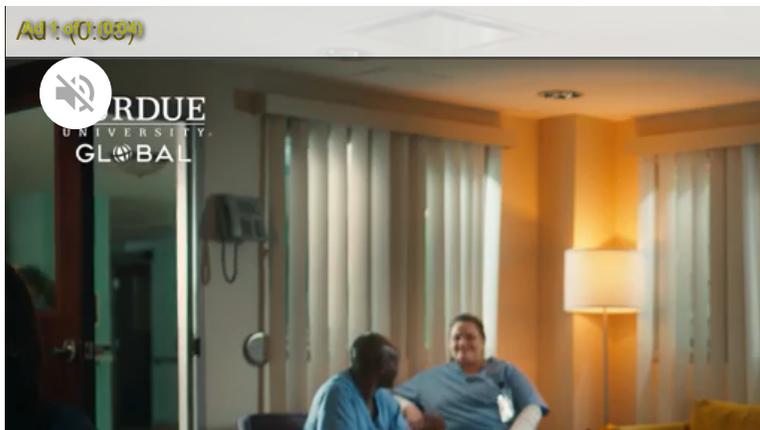
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ALTOONA (AP) — A grand jury report that found two former bishops helped cover up the sexual abuse of hundreds of children by more than 50 priests in a Pennsylvania diocese has prompted a sitting judge to resign from a Catholic school board and the current bishop to remove cathedral banners that celebrate former bishops.

Bishops James Hogan and Joseph Adamec, who headed the diocese from 1966 until 2011, were criticized by the report. Hogan died in 2005 and Adamec's attorney has denied he did anything wrong.

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Diocesan spokesman Tony DeGol said Bishop Mark Barchak ordered the banners removed from the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament because he “feels this is a time of humility for the diocese and the focus should be on the victims of abuse.”

Meanwhile, Cambria County Judge Patrick Kiniry has resigned from the board of a Catholic high school. The grand jury report said Kiniry, a former prosecutor, helped Hogan transfer an alleged molester rather than pursue criminal charges in 1985. That priest, Francis McCaa, was described as a “monster” who fondled altar boys who were told to go without pants under their cassocks, according to the grand jury.

McCaa molested boys in a church sacristy and rectory, and “in other cases the priest offended on victims while taking their confession,” the grand jury found.

According to the report, when Kiniry was an assistant district attorney in Cambria County, he met with Hogan after parents complained about the priest in 1985. According to Hogan’s notes, Kiniry and his boss at the time, District Attorney Gerald Long, were scheduled to meet with the parents that December and “they will try to defuse,” the bishop wrote.

Attorney General Kathleen Kane said the grand jury determined that police, prosecutors and others often let church officials determine how abuse allegations would be handled.

Eventually, Hogan transferred McCaa as a hospital chaplain in West Virginia after providing a “glowing recommendation,” the grand jury said.

Long, now a senior Common Pleas judge, told the grand jury he didn’t know that Kiniry and other assistants had met with the church officials, but described Kiniry and another prosecutor involved as “pretty strict Catholics.” Kiniry told the grand jury that an agreement was struck to have McCaa transferred and that any decision not to prosecute would have been Long’s.

“Back then the diocese moved the problem, that’s just how it was,” Kiniry told investigators, according to the grand jury report.

Kiniry issued a statement saying he has been “reading and digesting” the grand jury report but that, as a judge, he’s prohibited from commenting on the issue.

Also Tuesday, several protesters gathered outside the offices of the Altoona-Johnstown Diocese.

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