



EPISCOPAL DIOCESE
of Rhode Island

To the people of the Episcopal Diocese of Rhode Island,

I learned on Friday that Gregory Lisby, formerly a priest of our diocese, pled guilty in federal court to a count of possession of child pornography and is awaiting sentencing. The Episcopal Diocese of Western Massachusetts, where Lisby most recently served in ministry, is conducting a disciplinary process under the canons of our church and taking all required steps to remove him from the Episcopal priesthood.

Additionally, the Episcopal Diocese of Western Massachusetts announced that credible evidence has emerged that Lisby sexually abused a teenager and violated pastoral boundaries. The alleged abuse did not occur in Rhode Island. We do not know the details of the situation, and we join Bishop Fisher in asking for privacy for the victim and the victim's family.

Please know that we take the safety of our young people very seriously in our diocese. We recognize the potential for harm when a priest, lay employee or volunteer engage in sexual exploitation, harassment or abuse in one of our churches or institutions. One way we work to prevent similar tragedies is through the safe church training required for clergy and many lay leaders. There is no guaranteed solution, however, and that is why I am asking that if anyone in our congregations wishes to share relevant information or have concerns about other incidents, please send an email to intake@episcopalri.org to ask for a conversation with one of the diocesan intake officers, or contact the Rev. Canon Dena Cleaver-Bartholomew, canon to the ordinary, at dena@episcopalri.org or 401-274-4500 x232. She serves as the case manager and will refer your case to one of the intake officers.

As this unfortunate situation progresses, I ask all of us in the Episcopal Diocese of Rhode Island to pray for everyone damaged by this unfortunate situation, but most especially the young people directly impacted.

+Nicholas
Bishop of Rhode Island
February 24, 2020
Providence