

Church Forbids Grave Marker Mentioning 'Rapist Priests'

A Catholic diocese in Michigan forbade a grave marker mentioning a deceased woman's support for "priest rapist victims," sparking outrage from the woman's son.

The Catholic Diocese of Joliet told Jack Ruhl that it will not allow the proposed grave marker for his mother, Marguerite Ridgeway, in one of its cemeteries because mention of the alleged rapist priests qualifies as "explicit language," according to Crux Now.

Maureen Harton, an attorney for the diocese, suggested in a letter to Ruhl that he consider using alternate inscriptions, but Ruhl demanded that the diocese not dishonor his mother by continuing to delay the installation of the grave marker as is, according to the *Chicago Tribune*.

"I don't understand why this marker is controversial in the least," Ruhl said, according to the *Chicago Tribune*. "It states 'She Supported Priest Rapist Victims.' Doesn't the diocese of Joliet also support priest rapist victims?"

Harton stated in her letter to Ruhl that the issue, as the diocese saw it, was not one of the subject of the inscription but of the wording.

"This is not a subject that we at the diocese of Joliet shy away from; it is a sad chapter in our history that we think about daily," Harton said, according to the *Chicago Tribune*. "Our concern must be with the many people who visit Assumption Cemetery with the expectation that their quiet time with their loved ones will be peaceful, tranquil and free of stress and anxiety."

Ridgeway died in 2015 after many years of lending emotional

support to victims of abuse from church clergy, one of whom is Rhul's wife, Diane Ruhl.

Ridgeway grew up a devout Catholic but stopped going to Mass and donating money when more and more victims came forward to share their stories. Despite her falling-out with the Catholic church, Ridgeway requested a Catholic burial service and that her body be interred at Assumption Cemetery in Wheaton.

Rhul continues to fight back against the diocese over the inscription for his mother's grave marker and insists that the word "rapist" be included. {eo}

This article originally appeared on the Daily Caller News Foundation.