

MINNESOTA: Anti-gay Twin Cities archbishop probed for sexually harassing male colleagues

Written by Arturo Garcia
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Minneapolis-St. Paul Archbishop John Nienstedt, who has publicly blamed the Devil for same-sex marriage, is under investigation for allegedly sexually harassing priests and other men, [the Catholic magazine *Commonweal* reported on Tuesday.](#)

Nienstedt confirmed in a statement that he authorized his local archdiocese to hire an outside law firm, Greene Espel, for an independent probe following multiple allegations of misconduct against him.

“The allegations do not involve minors or lay members of the faithful, and they do not implicate any kind of illegal or criminal behavior,” his statement read. “The allegations involve events alleged to have occurred at least a decade ago, before I began serving in the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis.”

A former attorney for Nienstedt, Jennifer Haselberger, told *Commonweal* that she had spoken to members of the firm, and that the allegations also include claims that Nienstedt has retaliated against people who “refused his advances” or raised questions about his alleged behavior both during his service as a priest in the Archdiocese in Detroit and his current position.

“Based on my interview with Greene Espel — as well as conversations with other interviewees — I believe that the investigators have received about ten sworn statements alleging sexual impropriety on the part of the archbishop,” said Haselberger, who resigned from the Minneapolis

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archdiocese in April 2013.

Once the report is completed, it is expected to be turned over to Archbishop Carlo Maria Viganò, the U.S. ambassador for Pope Francis, for delivery to the Vatican.

[WCCO-TV reported](#) that the investigation comes just over seven months after Nienstedt was [accused](#) of groping a boy's buttocks during a confirmation photo shoot in May 2009. No charges were ever filed against him.

Last year, Nienstedt said in a speech at a Catholic conference that "[the prince of lies](#)" was to blame for the successful campaign to legalize marriage equality in the state.

[Watch WCCO's report, as aired on Tuesday](#) .

<http://www.rawstory.com/rs/2014/07/02/anti-gay-twin-cities-archbishop-probed-for-sexually-harassing-male-colleagues/>

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