

# Catholic bishop was commended amid sex-abuse scandal

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Bishop Emeritus John D'Arcy, who oversaw the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend during a time of church closings, a national sex-abuse scandal and run-ins with University of Notre Dame leaders, died Feb. 3 at his home in Fort Wayne. He was 80.

Diocese spokesman Sean McBride confirmed the death and said the cause was cancer.

Bishop D'Arcy retired in 2010 as bishop of the Roman Catholic diocese that covers 14 counties in northern Indiana with more than 150,000 members.

He received national attention when he was one of the few church officials commended in a scathing 2003 report issued by the Massachusetts attorney general about the widespread sexual abuse of children by priests in the Boston Archdiocese.

The report blamed then-Cardinal Bernard Law, his predecessors as archbishop and Law's assistants for sheltering abusive priests and other church workers who molested as many as 1,000 children between 1940 and 2000.

But Bishop D'Arcy, a former auxiliary bishop in Boston, was noted for his strong support of screening potential priests, as well as his warnings to his superiors about predatory priests.

Later in 2003, he disclosed that 33 children, most of them teenagers at the time, had been sexually abused over the previous five decades by 16 priests in the north-

ern Indiana diocese. Bishop D'Arcy said then that there was too much secrecy surrounding the issue.

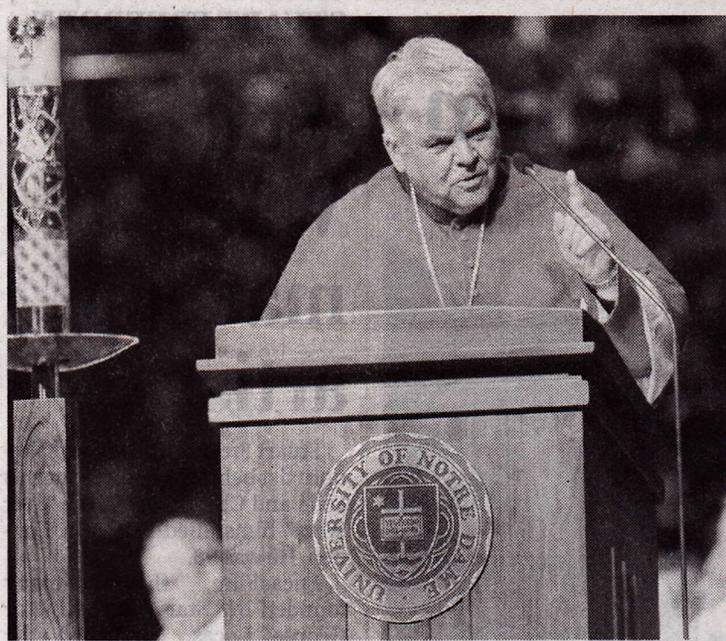
"I think people don't want to know a lot about it, but they want to know the bishop is handling it right. I think that means a lot to them," he said.

Bishop D'Arcy also made headlines for opposing some decisions by leaders at the University of Notre Dame, which is in the diocese. He wrote a nine-page "pastoral response" in 2006 criticizing the decision by the Rev. John Jenkins, Notre Dame's president, to allow "The Vagina Monologues" to be performed on campus.

Bishop D'Arcy also boycotted Notre Dame's commencement in 2009 because of the speaker, President Obama, whose policies on stem cell research and abortion, Bishop D'Arcy said, ran counter to church teaching. But the bishop did attend an open-air Mass and rally on the campus that day, saying he wanted to support the students protesting Obama.

"All of you are heroes, and I'm proud to stand with you," he said.

John Michael D'Arcy was born Aug. 13, 1932, in Boston. He was ordained a priest in 1957 and served as a parish priest in the Boston area for nine years. In 1975, he was ordained an auxiliary bishop for the Archdiocese of Boston, and he was installed as bishop of the Fort Wayne-South Bend diocese on May 1, 1985.



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**Bishop John D'Arcy, who oversaw an Indiana archdiocese, spoke at the University of Notre Dame's Baccalaureate Mass in 2009.**

**JOHN D'ARCY, 80**