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by The Associated Press

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A former New York Giants team chaplain who faced sexual abuse allegations nearly 20 years ago has been sued by one of the accusers.

The suit, filed Monday, said the Rev. William Dowd abused a boy at Immaculate Conception parish in Montclair, New Jersey, for five years beginning in 1967, when the boy was 12, according to NorthJersey.com.

Dowd was placed on administrative leave from his post as the Giants' chaplain after the man first came forward in 2002, one of two people who lodged allegations against the priest that year.

Though a review board of the Archdiocese of Newark determined the allegations warranted action by church officials, Dowd was cleared by a panel of three priests in 2005. The Vatican confirmed the decision in 2007, and he returned to the Giants for several more years, leading Bible studies and counseling players.

Dowd was with the team for its Super Bowl victory in 2008. He once told NorthJersey.com that he had returned "just in time to get that Super Bowl ring."

The accuser's lawyers said in a news release that Dowd has been stationed in northern New Jersey and that the Newark archdiocese lists him as being on special assignment.

It wasn't clear if Dowd has an attorney who could comment on his behalf.

In a statement, the Newark archdiocese said it would be "inappropriate for us to publicly discuss matters in litigation and/or under review by law enforcement," but that it takes all allegations seriously.

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