Leland Smith was born on July 11, 1927, in Winona, Minnesota. He was ordained a priest of the Diocese of Winona on May 30, 1953. Leland Smith served at the following parishes throughout his tenure:

- June 12, 1953 - Saints Peter and Paul, Blue Earth, MN
- December 31, 1954 - Saint John, Rochester, MN
- August 17, 1955 - Saint Wenceslaus, Jackson, MN
- August 30, 1960 - Saint Casimir, Wells, MN
- July 3, 1963 - Saint Rose of Lima, Avoca, MN and Saint Mary, Lake Wilson, MN
- August 16, 1967 - Holy Trinity, Rollingstone, MN
- August 16, 1967 - Immaculate Conception of Mary, Oak Ridge, MN
- July 15, 1975 - Saint Charles Borromeo, Saint Charles, MN
- June 23, 1983 - Saint Joseph, Rushford, MN and Saint Mary, Houston, MN
- July 3, 1987 - Immaculate Conception, Wilson, MN
- June 30, 1989 - Saint Joachim, Plainview, MN and Immaculate Conception, Kellogg, MN
- July 1, 1991 - Saint Agnes, Kellogg, MN
- June, 2002 – Retired

Ministerial Status - Laicized April 11, 2014

In May of 1994, the Diocese of Winona received a number of reports concerning Leland Smith regarding his sexual abuse of minor males and a sexual approach toward an adult male in the early 1970’s. Leland Smith was placed on a leave of absence in June of 1994 after which time he entered into and successfully completed treatment. After completion of treatment his ministry was strictly limited to the elderly. In March of 2002, a further allegation of sexual abuse was made against Leland Smith, after which all of his ministerial privileges were suspended. Leland Smith retired from ministry shortly thereafter.