Archdiocese announces settlement agreements

Following mediation, the Archdiocese of Dubuque announces that it has completed structured settlement agreements with several persons who reported that they were sexually abused as minors by priests of the Archdiocese.

Twenty-six individuals retained the services of a Waterloo law firm to present their cases. All of the abuse, according to the claims, took place more than 35 years ago. Most occurred in the 1950’s and 1960’s.

Of the ten priests named by the claimants, nine had been named previously and were already included on the “Table of Accused Priests” found on the Archdiocesan Web site.


To settle all twenty-six claims, the Archdiocese agreed to pay the sum of 5.2 million dollars to the law firm representing the plaintiffs.

The Archdiocese also committed itself to several activities, many of which it has been doing for years, to raise awareness of the effects of sexual abuse of minors and to invite victims to come forward and seek help. Among these commitments are the following:

1. The Archdiocese will continue to publish periodic notices in the Archdiocesan newspaper, The Witness, and in several secular papers inviting persons who as minors were sexually abused by church personnel to come forward and encouraging them to contact law enforcement personnel. Throughout the Archdiocese there are about three thousand icons (sacred depictions) of St. Raphael the Archangel with information on how to reach the Archdiocesan Victim Assistance Coordinators.

2. The Archdiocese will allow victims whose claims were found credible the opportunity to speak at their home parish or in the parish where they were abused, if they wish to do so. This will take place following a Sunday Mass.

3. The Archbishop continued the long-standing practices of writing to victims and of visiting privately with victims who requested such a meeting.
4. The Archdiocese offered to pay for counseling and therapy for victims for up to twelve sessions.

Archbishop Michael Jackels and Archbishop Emeritus Jerome Hanus apologize to the victims and their families. It is their hope that this settlement will be supportive of them. They assure all the victims of their prayers for them and their families. They express their commitment to support them in their efforts to achieve spiritual and emotional well-being.

Priests who abused are a disgrace to the vocation and a scandal to the faithful. The vast majority of priests are good and holy servants of God and God’s people. They give of their energy and time most generously. They abhor sexual abuse and work hard to ensure that the parishes, schools, and other institutions of the Archdiocese are safe. The priests want to help victims experience reconciliation, healing, and justice. Many have contacted and supported victims of sexual abuse.

The same can be said for other members of the Church. The Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People calls all to heed Jesus’ call to show mercy and compassion to the least ones. “Jesus extended this care in a tender and urgent way to children, rebuking his disciples for keeping them away from him: ‘Let the children come to me’” (Mt 19:14).

The Archdiocese of Dubuque continues to commit itself to the protection of children, striving always to make the way safe for them.

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