

## Statement Regarding Harry Walsh

The Archdiocese of St. Paul & Minneapolis | December 19, 2013

A media report was published today regarding Harry Walsh, a former member of the Redemptorists religious order in Ireland, and a former priest who ministered in the Archdiocese of Detroit and who later moved to the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis. Walsh agreed to resign from priestly ministry in 2005 and was subsequently permanently removed from the priesthood (laicized) in 2012.

The Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis is committed to disclosure because it can be an important means of assisting victims of abuse in their healing process. Our sorrow for all acts of abuse by clergy can never be communicated enough. Our new disclosure practices began on December 5 and are ongoing. This is a process that has just begun and will take some time in order to proceed thoroughly and factually.

As we continue that work with a genuine sense of urgency, we want to provide the following facts regarding a number of assertions made in today's media report regarding Walsh.

The Archbishop did not know of the allegations relating to Walsh's alleged sexual abuse of a minor until 2010. The Archbishop informed Walsh (who was then no longer in active ministry) that he could either choose to request a dispensation from the obligations of Holy Orders, or the archdiocese would seek his dismissal through the appropriate canonical process. Walsh chose to request a dispensation and he was subsequently laicized.

Minnesota law and the archdiocese's policies at the time did not obligate the archdiocese to report these dated allegations to police. In accordance with our present policy, we will report all past and present credible claims of sexual abuse of minors to the police as our file review continues.

By the time the allegations were made known, the alleged abuse had occurred decades before, not within the preceding three years, the period required by law. Indeed, both alleged incidents occurred prior to Walsh's leave of absence in 1991 and the first alleged incident occurred in Detroit and was resolved through a \$15,000 settlement that was made solely by the Redemptorists in Glenview, Illinois, not the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis.

The statement in the report that the Walsh story contradicts “Nienstedt’s promise of transparency” is false and disingenuous for two reasons. First, the initial December 5 disclosure, as ordered by the Court, primarily concerned the John Jay list previously compiled in 2004. Walsh was not on that list. Second, the archdiocese made it clear on December 5 that the file reviews were ongoing and that the initial list was not intended to be complete or final.

As has been widely communicated, the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis has been conducting a thorough review of clergy files over the past month, starting with those clergy members who were included on the so-called “John Jay list” of 33 clerics who were identified by the archdiocese in 2004 as credibly accused of sexual abuse of a minor. The review of files of these 33 men was completed in November in preparation for disclosure by the end of November, as promised by Archbishop John Nienstedt on October 24, 2013. Further, the review of priests in active ministry began on December 8 by Kinsale Management, a national expert in these kinds of file reviews, and is in process. Once this segment of the file review process is complete, the next segment will begin with the review of files of clergy who are no longer in ministry.

Additional disclosures will likewise be made on an ongoing basis as the review of over 400 files continues and as further claims are made known. We appreciate everyone’s patience as we are working hard to take serious, concrete actions to fulfill the promise of our goals. Every decision and action we are taking is focused on creating safe environments for all, caring for victims, and restoring trust with our communities.