Donna Morrissey
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To: _All_Employees
cc:
Subject: Media Release

Statement of Donna M. Morrissey, Spokeswoman, Archdiocese of Boston
August 27, 2002

The Archdiocese of Boston in accordance with its policy for handling allegations of sexual misconduct with minors by members of the clergy today placed Father Paul J. Bolduc, a priest on health leave who was in residence at St. Anne Parish in the Readville section of Boston, Massachusetts, on administrative leave. Our policy calls for a thorough investigation by the Delegate's Office and our agreement with civil authorities calls for notification to the Attorney General's office in cases such as this.

The complaint made against Father Bolduc was recently reported for the first time to the Archdiocese of Boston regarding an incident that would have occurred over thirty years ago. Pastoral and counseling support has been offered to both the person making the allegation and the accused priest.

The first priority of the Archdiocese of Boston is the protection of children. The rights of the alleged victim and the accused priest are to be respected and any action taken in the course of an investigation should not be construed as implication of guilt of the accused cleric. Our obligation as representatives of the Church and as a community, legally and morally, is to fully investigate all past allegations of abuse of a minor. Until the resolution of the investigation by representatives of the Church and by the proper authorities is complete, Father Bolduc will receive a salary and medical benefits but he will not have permission to perform any public ministry in the Church. If the allegation proves to be groundless, efforts will be made to restore the priest's reputation.

Representatives of the Archdiocese of Boston are in contact with the Pastor of St. Anne Parish. Efforts are at present being made to inform the people of the parish regarding this situation. Bishop John P. Boles, Regional Bishop of the Central Region will be present at the weekend Masses to inform parishioners and provide assistance during this upsetting time for the parish community. A clinical social worker also will be present to assist parishioners.

Our prayers continue to be with victims and their families, the faithful of the Archdiocese, the priests, deacons, men and women religious, and all those who have been affected by instances of child abuse by members of the clergy.