

**Statement of Bishop Paul Sirba  
Diocese of Duluth  
December 31, 2013**

**“As part of our ongoing efforts to address issues related to clergy sexual misconduct and to make our parishes, schools, religious education and youth programs the safest possible places for the children of our community, we are releasing information today related to priests who have been credibly accused of sexual abuse of minors in the diocese from 1950 to 2013.**

**“Much of this information is drawn from the John Jay Study, which was commissioned by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops in 2004 to study the causes and context of clergy sexual abuse. It also includes information regarding five additional clergy members.**

**“The release of this information underscores a sad truth that must be acknowledged: Over the last 65 years, a number of clergy members in the Diocese of Duluth have violated the sacred trust placed in them by children, youth and their families. These clergy have caused terrible harm to victims, to the victims’ families, to our community, to the Church and to the many, many good priests who faithfully carry out their duties to God’s people with love and generosity. Again, I offer my apology on behalf of the Church to all those who have been affected by clergy sexual abuse. I pledge once more that this Church stands with all those who seek to know the truth and to see justice done in these matters.**

**“The names released today will be published on our diocesan website and in our diocesan newspaper, the *Northern Cross*, which goes to every Catholic household in the Diocese. Our hope in releasing the names is to bring hope and healing to victims of clergy sexual abuse. Jesus, Our Savior, brings hope where there is hurt.**

**“Since 1992, the Diocese of Duluth has had in place a sexual misconduct policy that has been conscientiously enforced. The United States bishops issued their Charter for the Protection of**

**Children and Young People in June 2002. The Diocese of Duluth is committed to upholding these principles, to assisting in the healing of any victim of sexual misconduct by a member of the clergy and to preventing this terrible crime from happening in the future.**

**“If anyone hearing my words today have suffered such abuse, I ask you to report it to your civil authorities and to the diocese. We are located at 2830 E. 4<sup>th</sup> Street, our phone number is (218) 724-9111. You can also contact one of our diocesan Assistance Coordinators whose contact information is available in *The Northern Cross*, and on the diocesan website, [www.dioceseduluth.org](http://www.dioceseduluth.org).**

**“I’m happy to take any questions you may have.”**