

## **FAQ's Regarding the Release of Names of Accused Jesuits and Procedures for Preventing Abuse**

### **Q: What information are you releasing?**

**A:** The Maryland Province is releasing the following information associated with accusations of sexual abuse of minors dating from 1950:

**1:** Jesuits with a credible or established offense against a minor (anyone under the age of 18) who are current Maryland Province Jesuits or are current Jesuits from another Province whose offense took place in the Maryland Province.

**2:** Jesuits with a credible or established offense against a minor (anyone under the age of 18) who are deceased or former Maryland Province Jesuits or are deceased or former Jesuits from another Province whose offense took place in the Maryland Province.

**3:** Jesuits with an allegation of an offense against a minor (anyone under the age of 18) that could not be fully investigated to determine credibility, but for which there is a reasonable possibility (semblance of truth) that the alleged offense occurred. These are deceased or former Maryland Province Jesuits or deceased or former Jesuits from another Province whose alleged offense took place in the Maryland Province. Reasons a full investigation would not be possible include that the allegation was brought forward after the death of the Jesuit or that historic information on the allegation is incomplete.

**4:** Jesuits from other provinces who served in the Maryland Province at one time. The Province is currently aware that these Jesuits have been publicly named by other provinces or by (arch)dioceses for an allegation of abuse against a minor (anyone under the age of 18) that took place outside the Maryland Province. These allegations were not reported to or investigated by the Maryland Province.

### **Q: Where is this information available?**

**A:** This information is accessible on the Maryland Province website.: [www.MDSJ.org](http://www.MDSJ.org)

### **Q: What do you mean by a credible accusation?**

**A:** An allegation is deemed "credible" if there is a preponderance of evidence that the allegation is more likely true than not. The Review Board—an independent board of predominantly lay professionals from the fields of psychology, law enforcement, and human resources—evaluates accusations and subsequent investigations and makes a judgment on

the credibility of the accusation. That judgment is presented to the Provincial who makes the final decision on credibility in accordance with province policies approved by our accrediting agency, Praesidium, Inc.

Credibility can also be established by a conviction in court or by the admission of the truth of the allegation by the Jesuit.

**Q: Are any credibly accused Maryland Province Jesuits still in active ministry?**

**A:** No.

**Q: When is the last known incident of sexual abuse of a minor by a Jesuit in the Maryland Province?**

**A:** In the Maryland Province, the last known incident of sexual abuse of a minor by a Jesuit happened in 2002. Most of the reported cases date back decades.

There have been more than 1,700 Jesuits who belonged to the Maryland Province since 1950.

**Q: The released lists indicate that some Jesuits were engaged in ministry after the date the abuse took place. How do you explain that?**

**A:** In many cases, the accusation was received many years after the abuse took place, so a Jesuit may have continued in ministry because we were not aware of the abuse at that time. Since 2002 when the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People was instituted, clear and consistent procedures have been developed for removing from ministry priests and religious with a credible allegation of abuse of a minor. Prior to that time, priests were sometimes allowed to continue in ministry after an accusation. For example, it was often recommended that someone who had abused a minor could be safely returned to ministry after receiving treatment. We know better now. Our awareness of the nature and effect of abuse of minors has changed dramatically over the years. We are diligent in investigating all accusations of abuse, and we do not allow anyone with a credible accusation to engage in public ministry. We recognize now our failures of the past in this regard, and we are deeply sorry.

**Q: Why are you releasing this information now?**

**A:** Recent revelations about sexual abuse of minors by priests are leading the People of God rightly to desire greater accountability from the leadership of the Church. We are releasing this information to provide that kind of transparency. We view this disclosure as part of our commitment now to preventing abuse and hope that it will contribute to the process of restoring trust.

**Q: What happens when the Province receives an accusation?**

**A:** When a claim involving abuse of a current minor is made against a Jesuit, the Province immediately reports it to law enforcement. The Province fully cooperates with legal authorities throughout their investigation. Upon receipt of an allegation involving sexual misconduct with a minor, regardless of the victim's current age, the accused Jesuit is

suspended from ministry pending the outcome of the investigation. The Province offers pastoral and therapeutic services to the victim. The Province also opens its own internal investigation irrespective of whether a criminal investigation is initiated. Results of the investigation are evaluated by the Review Board and Provincial as described above.

**Q: What happens to a Jesuit when an accusation of abuse is deemed credible?**

**A:** We are committed to safeguarding others and preventing future abuse while also caring for our Jesuit brothers, even those who have committed serious sins. Jesuits who are credibly accused of abuse do not engage in public ministry and live within a Safety Plan in a strictly monitored environment not associated with any Jesuit institution. Safety Plans specify risk reduction strategies and restrictions on behavior, including the use of technology, travel, and access by visitors. The plans are developed and monitored in consultation with the Review Board.

**Q: What are you doing to make sure this never happens again?**

**A:** The Maryland Province has a zero-tolerance policy regarding instances of inappropriate conduct between a Jesuit and a minor. We have had protocols and procedures in place since 2003 as part of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People (Dallas Charter), a comprehensive set of procedures originally established by the USCCB for addressing allegations of sexual abuse of minors by Catholic clergy.

The Province is also accredited by Praesidium, Inc., an organization providing consultation, risk management assessment, policy development, and training materials for use in preventing sexual misconduct and responding to allegations of sexual misconduct. The Province maintains accreditation through regular audits by Praesidium. As an additional step toward transparency and accountability, the Province plans to have an external audit of our files to ensure that our previous reviews were both accurate and complete.

Jesuits at every stage of their ministry receive regular safe-environment training to promote ethical conduct in ministry and awareness and sensitivity of professional boundaries. Even before a young man is accepted into the Jesuits, he undergoes an in-depth screening process that includes a psychosexual assessment, social media evaluation and an extensive criminal background check. We work hard to ensure that our long formation program for these young Jesuits fosters a healthy development for both their spiritual life and mental health.

**Q: How can I report abuse? Is the Province required to report accusations of abuse to civil authorities?**

**A:** If you believe that you, or someone you know, has been abused by a Jesuit or a Province employee, we urge you to contact the Maryland Province by calling the Victim Assistance Coordinator at 443-370-6357, [MARadvocacy@jesuits.org](mailto:MARadvocacy@jesuits.org), or in writing to the Maryland Province of the Society of Jesus, 8600 LaSalle Rd, Suite 620, Towson, MD 21286. We report accusations involving a minor to law enforcement in the jurisdiction where the abuse occurred.