



July 17, 2002 Statement of Donna M. Morrissey, Spokeswoman, Archdiocese of Boston Concerning Father Robert P. Beale

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 Robert P. Beale, Director of Our Lady's Hall, in Milton, Massachusetts on administrative leave and removed him from all assignments pending further review of an allegation made against him. This policy calls for a thorough investigation by the Delegate's Office and notification to proper legal authorities within forty-eight hours in cases such as this.

The allegation against Father Beale was determined to be credible last evening by the Archdiocese of Boston regarding an incident that occurred over twenty-five years ago. Following the policy it was determined that the allegation had enough substance to warrant further investigation by the Archdiocese of Boston and met the criteria to place Father Beale on administrative leave. 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 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, Father Beale will continue to receive his 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 have met with the staff of Our Lady's Hall and have offered assistance and support. Our Lady's Hall is part of the Priest Recovery Program, which serves the pastoral needs of priests of the Archdiocese of Boston. There are no priests currently residing at Our Lady's Hall.

Our prayers are with victims and their families, the faithful of the Archdiocese, and all those who have been effected by instances of child abuse by members of the clergy.

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