



October 31, 2002 - Statement of Donna M. Morrissey, Spokeswoman, Archdiocese of Boston on the Reinstatement of Msg. Foster

As has been previously reported, on 18 August 2002, the Archdiocese of Boston opened a preliminary investigation into an allegation of sexual misconduct made against Reverend Monsignor Michael Smith Foster. This investigation was closed on 12 September 2002. On 13 September 2002, the complainant contacted the Archdiocese of Boston to make a formal complaint and to offer new information regarding the allegation previously investigated. In accord with the policy of the Archdiocese of Boston and the norms of Canon Law, The Most Reverend Walter J. Edyvean, Vicar General/Moderator of the Curia, decreed that the Delegate of the Archbishop conduct a preliminary canonical investigation into the allegation.

The investigation was conducted in order to ascertain the facts, circumstances, and the imputability of the allegation. Throughout the investigation, efforts were made to ensure that the canonical and civil rights of the person bringing forth the complaint and those of Monsignor Foster were respected. Care has been taken to investigate appropriately this allegation following the norms of Canon Law and the policy of the Archdiocese. During this time care has also been taken so that the good name of each person involved in this process not be endangered by this investigation.

In accord with our policy, the Delegate represented the case to the Review Board. The recommendation of both the Delegate and the Review Board were forwarded to His Eminence, Cardinal Law. The Delegate and the Review Board both recommended that the case be closed and that the priest be returned to active ministry with no restrictions. Cardinal Law has reviewed the recommendations. He has determined that the complaint is unsubstantiated; therefore, in accord with canon 1718, this investigation has now been closed. His Eminence Cardinal Law has directed The Most Reverend Walter J. Edyvean to revoke his decree, which opened the investigation, thus closing the matter.

The Archdiocese of Boston reinstates Monsignor Foster to his position as Judicial Vicar and Presiding Judge of the Metropolitan Tribunal of the Archdiocese of Boston. Cardinal Law and his associates will work with Monsignor Foster in an effort to restore his good name. Following these conversations, the details will be made public. His Eminence has also instructed that the Delegate Offices, including the Office of Healing and Assistance, continue to reach out and provide appropriate pastoral care to all of the parties involved in this case.

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