



January 17, 2003 - Statement of Donna M. Morrissey, Spokeswoman, Archdiocese of Boston, concerning Fr. Paul McLaughlin

The Archdiocese of Boston in accordance with its policy for handling allegations of sexual misconduct with minors by members of the clergy has placed Father Paul J. McLaughlin, a senior priest retired and living in California, on Administrative Leave. The policy calls for a thorough investigation by the Delegate's Office and notification to the proper legal authorities in cases such as this.

The complaint made against Father McLaughlin is alleged to have occurred approximately thirty years ago. The Archdiocese has contacted the diocese where Father McLaughlin resides and has informed it of the complaint made against him.

The first priority of the Archdiocese of Boston is the protection of children. The rights of the complainant and the accused priest are to be respected and any action taken in the course of an investigation should not be construed as an implication of guilt.

The Archdiocese as representatives of the Church and as a community, legally and morally, has the obligation to fully investigate all allegations of abuse. Until the resolution of the investigation by representatives of the Church and by the proper authorities is complete, Father McLaughlin continues to receive benefits as a senior priest, however he does not have permission to perform any public ministry. This has been communicated to the diocese where Father McLaughlin resides. If the allegation proves to be groundless, efforts will be made to restore Father McLaughlin reputation.

The Archdiocese continues to offer prayers to victim/survivors and their families, the faithful of the Archdiocese, and all those who have been affected by instances of child abuse by members of the clergy.

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