

## **WHAT HAS THE ARCHDIOCESE OF SEATTLE DONE TO PREVENT ABUSE AND KEEP CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS SAFE?**

The Archdiocese of Seattle sexual abuse prevention, training and victim support efforts first started in the 1980s, more than two decades before similar safety and prevention programs became required for all dioceses in the United States. Since 1989, the Catholic Church in Western Washington has been conducting criminal background checks of clergy, religious, and lay employees and volunteers who have ongoing unsupervised access to minors through church activities. Beginning in 1990, the Archdiocese of Seattle instituted its Safe Environment Program with policies and procedures designed to prevent sexual abuse of minors. This includes regular training to recognize and respond to potential signs of sexual abuse of minors.

## **HOW CAN WE BE CERTAIN NOTHING IS BEING COVERED UP AND THAT ALL REPORTS OF ABUSE HAVE BEEN AND WILL BE INVESTIGATED AND HANDLED APPROPRIATELY?**

A formal committee including lay subject matter experts in the field of sexual abuse was first established in the Archdiocese of Seattle in 1986. The Archdiocesan Review Board, as it is now known, reviews all allegations of abuse in the archdiocese and provides important support and guidance for the archbishop in this area.

## **WHAT HAS THE ARCHDIOCESE DONE TO ENSURE TRANSPARENCY REGARDING CASES OF ABUSE THAT HAPPENED BEFORE THE CURRENT REVIEW BOARD WAS ESTABLISHED?**

The Archdiocese of Seattle voluntarily opened its confidential clergy files in the 1980s for review by law enforcement. In 2015, the archdiocese asked a respected consulting firm with a strong background in law enforcement to conduct an independent and thorough review of its files. As a result of this review, and in an effort to be as transparent as possible with the issue, the archdiocese, on its own initiative, chose to publicly issue a list of all clergy and religious brothers and sisters in this area for whom allegations of sexual abuse of a minor have been admitted, established, or determined to be credible. This information is published on the archdiocese's

[\*Protect and Heal website.\*](#)

## **WHAT ASSURANCE CAN THE ARCHDIOCESE OF SEATTLE GIVE TO DONORS THAT NO FUNDS FROM THE CALLED TO SERVE AS CHRIST CAMPAIGN WILL BE USED TO PAY FUTURE SETTLEMENTS IN ABUSE CASES?**

The campaign has been established as a separate 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation whose funds can only be used for the purposes designated in the campaign. The campaign corporation will undergo annual independent audits to assure it is conforming with all legal and ethical requirements. In addition, the Priest Pension Plan is a qualified pension plan whose funds can only be used to pay pension benefits and whose financial statements are subject to an annual audit by an independent certified public accounting firm. These audits are published at [calledtoserveaschrist.org/audits](http://calledtoserveaschrist.org/audits)

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**CALLED TO  
SERVE *as* CHRIST**

*A campaign for our*  
PRIESTS, SISTERS & FAMILY OF FAITH

**HAVE FUNDS FROM THE PENSION OR MEDICAL PLANS EVER BEEN USED TO PAY ABUSE CLAIMS?**

No. The money for abuse claims was paid by our insurance program and the sale of unneeded property.

**WILL A PRIEST WHO IS FOUND TO HAVE A CREDIBLE ALLEGATION OF ABUSE MADE AGAINST HIM BE ABLE TO RETIRE AND DRAW A PENSION BENEFIT FROM THE PRIEST PENSION PLAN?**

Under federal law, vested participants in a qualified retirement plan cannot be deprived of their retirement benefits. However, pension benefits for those few individuals who have been found to have a credible allegation of abuse are paid from a separate entity than the Priest Pension Plan and will not benefit from this campaign.

**WHAT ABOUT THE RETIRED PRIEST HEALTH PLAN, WILL A PRIEST FOUND TO HAVE ABUSED A CHILD BE ABLE TO OBTAIN BENEFITS FROM THIS PLAN?**

Priests removed from the priesthood (laicized) due to a credible allegation of abuse receive no medical benefits from the Priest Health Plan. Priests removed from ministry due to a credible allegation of abuse and ordered to a life of permanent prayer and penance continue to be covered by the Priest Health Plan, but all costs associated with their coverage are reimbursed from another source so the proceeds of the campaign will not fund any healthcare costs for these priests.

You can view a video of Archbishop Etienne addressing this topic on the archdiocese's *Protect and Heal* website at [protect-seattlearchdiocese.org/](http://protect-seattlearchdiocese.org/) or access the video directly [here](#).

**HOW CAN I REPORT SUSPECTED ABUSE IN MY PARISH OR CATHOLIC SCHOOL?**

To report any suspicion of abuse by any Church personnel, please contact local law enforcement. In addition, anyone who has knowledge of sexual abuse or misconduct by a member of the clergy, an employee or volunteer of the Archdiocese of Seattle is urged to call the archdiocesan hotline at 1-800-446-7762.