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SEATTLE ARCHBISHOP EXPRESSES 'HOPE FOR HEALING' AFTER SETTLEMENT

Archbishop Alex J. Brunett expressed his hope that the victims in a case involving former Spokane priest Patrick O'Donnell would find healing after the fourth and final victim accepted the settlement offer made to him several months ago.

"It is my hope that the settlements to all four victims will help them in their journey of healing," Archbishop Brunett said after the settlement reached with the fourth victim in the case ended the first trial in a clergy sexual abuse case brought against the archdiocese. "It is always our practice to offer fair and just settlements as well as counseling and pastoral care to victims in the hope that they will receive all the assistance they need from the church to rebuild their lives."

The archdiocese did not contest that the victims had been abused, but contended that it was not aware of O'Donnell's history of abuse when he moved to Seattle from Spokane to pursue graduate studies at the University of Washington from 1976 to 1978.

All four victims in the case had been compensated for this same abuse in a previous settlement with the Spokane Diocese and the Sulpician order. Two of the four men had agreed to a settlement with the Archdiocese of Seattle before the trial began.

"The Archdiocese of Seattle has taken proactive steps over the past 20 years to address the problem of child sexual abuse in the church and society while responding to victims of past abuse in a fair and just manner," Archbishop Brunett said. "We will continue to build on these efforts in the future and work with other groups to eradicate this terrible crime."

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.

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