

For Immediate Release

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U.S. Bishops, Seattle Archdiocese release clergy abuse data

(Seattle) In an unprecedented example of accountability and transparency, the U.S. Catholic bishops today released national study results that quantify clergy sexual abuse of minors over the past 50 years. In conjunction with the national release, the Archdiocese of Seattle released its own statistics related to the scandal.

The national study conducted at the request of the bishops by the John Jay College of Criminal Justice in New York indicated 4,392 priests had allegations against them from 10,667 individuals between 1950 and 2002. The total cost of the scandal nationally was calculated at more than \$500 million.

In the Seattle Archdiocese, 49 priests had allegations against them from 153 individuals who made allegations from 1950 through 2003. The total cost of the scandal locally was calculated at \$13.5 million.

"It is with deep regret for the crimes of the past and a sense of hope for the future that I make this report today," said Archbishop Alex J. Brunett. "One child harmed is one too many. I know my fellow bishops and our entire church share my remorse for those who have been harmed.

"At the same time, it is my hope that making ourselves accountable will promote healing for the victims and increase protection for children in our church and society," he said. "We know that apologies cannot change history. The only adequate response is an active commitment to heal past wounds and prevent future harm."

Local statistics indicate the incidence of abuse by Catholic clergy reached its peak here in the 70s and declined in each successive decade. Most incidents reported locally and in the national study are decades old. Although half of all allegations of clergy abuse were received by the Archdiocese of Seattle in the last three years, more than 75 percent of the reported incidents occurred prior to 1980.

"The statistics reported today show that the programs implemented here and in many other dioceses across the country have established a solid foundation for child protection and abuse prevention efforts," Brunett said. "We recognize that there is much work to do and we intend to build on our current prevention efforts so that children in our care and throughout society are protected."

The Seattle Archdiocese implemented one of the nation's first policies for pastoral outreach and maintains an active program of pastoral care as well as screening, training and background checks for all clergy and church staff.

The Archdiocese recently received commendation from an independent audit team dispatched here to verify compliance with strict national standards for addressing sexual abuse of minors by clergy. Auditors said Seattle's program "could serve as the national model for the Catholic Church in the United States."

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| Clergy Abuse Summary Archdiocese of Seattle (1950-2003) | |
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| Catholic population | 904,000 |
| Number of parishes, missions & faith communities | 176 |
| Number of clergy (1950-2003) | 1,249 |
| Number of clergy with allegations against them | 49 |
| Diocesan | 34 |
| Externs & Religious | 15 |
| Percentage of clergy with allegations | 3.9 Percent |
| Number of victims making allegations of abuse | 153 |
| Total cost of clergy abuse | \$13.5 million |
| Total cost of victim settlements | \$11.8 million |
| Total cost of counseling | \$474,000 |
| Total cost of pastoral care | \$350,000 |
| Total cost of attorneys' fees | \$900,000 |

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