

# For Immediate Release

May 29, 2004

## Father Michael OBrien returned to active ministry

**Seattle**--Archbishop Alex J. Brunett announced today that he is returning Father Michael C. OBrien to active ministry after an independent review found a sexual-abuse allegation against the priest not to be credible. Father OBrien will resume his pastoral duties at St. Mary of the Valley parish in Monroe immediately.

Archbishop Brunett asked Father OBrien to accept voluntary administrative leave in April after an investigation, conducted in keeping with Archdiocesan policy, raised questions about the adequacy of an inquiry into the allegation more than a decade ago by civil authorities. Father OBrien denies the allegation.

An inquiry by civil authorities in Mason County in 1993 failed to substantiate a charge of sexual abuse. The recent investigation conducted by the Archdiocesan Case Review Board also found the allegation not to be credible "having failed to meet the threshold tests of veracity or probability of truth."

"My gratitude and prayers go out to all those who took part in this process," said Archbishop Brunett. "I believe we made every effort to assure due process and the protection of all the parties involved."

Archbishop Brunett also asked for continued prayers for the victims of child sexual abuse as well as for the Church, "that it will act with wisdom to restore trust in its mission and provide a source of reconciliation to all those harmed by the current scandal."

Anyone who has knowledge of clergy sexual abuse should call the Archdiocesan hotline at 1-800-446-7762.

*For more information, contact Greg Magnoni, 206-382-4862*