

...to be released to confirm the arrest record and would not speculate on the motive.

## Washington, D.C., archdiocese announces priests' firings on sex charges from pulpit

WASHINGTON — The dismissal of four local priests for sexually abusing an altar boy in the 1970s was unusual not only for the number of clergy and the fact that they abused the same boy but for the way the church announced the news: from the pulpit at Sunday Mass.

Dawn Weyrich Ceol, a spokeswoman for Cardinal James Hickey, said this is the first time the Archdiocese of Washington has so openly handled sexual misconduct by the clergy.

Parishioners in five churches where the priests had served learned the news when, after the distribution of communion, priests read a letter from Hickey saying the priests had admitted sexual contact with the boy, now 34, and were dismissed Jan. 20.

This openness follows recommendations by a committee of U.S. bishops released last November.

In background papers accompanying the official report, titled "Restoring Trust," committee staff suggested a "pro-active stance: to be ready with the story rather than to have it break elsewhere."

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