

## Archdiocese announces settlement agreements

### Sexual abuse occurred over 35 years ago

#### For The Witness

DUBUQUE — Following mediation, the Archdiocese of Dubuque announces that it has completed structured settlement agreements with several persons who reported that they were sexually abused as minors by priests of the archdiocese.

Twenty-six individuals retained the services of a Waterloo law firm to present their cases. All of the abuse, according to the claims, took place more than 35 years ago. Most occurred in the 1950s and 1960s.

Of the 10 priests named by the claimants, nine had been named previously and were already included on the “Table of Accused Priests” found on the Archdiocesan Web site. Priests accused of sexual abuse of minors and named in this mediation are the following: the Reverends John T. Reed (deceased 1996), Joseph Patnode (deceased 1977), Patrick McElliott (deceased 1987), William Schwartz (removed from the priesthood in 2005), Louis Wunder (deceased 1990), Louis Wendling (deceased 1969), Peter Graff (deceased 1976), Robert Reiss (removed from the priesthood in 1997, deceased 2005), Allen Schmitt (removed from ministry 2002), and Robert Swift (deceased 1980). More than one victim made claims against McElliott, Patnode, Schwartz, Reed, Reiss, Wunder, and Wendling.

To settle all 26 claims, the archdiocese agreed to pay the sum of \$5.2 million to the law firm representing the plaintiffs.

### Archbishop Michael Jackels and Archbishop Emeritus Jerome Hanus apologize to the victims and their families.

The archdiocese also committed itself to several activities, many of which it has been doing for years, to raise awareness of the effects of sexual abuse of minors and to invite victims to come forward and seek help. Among these commitments are the following:

1. The archdiocese will continue to publish periodic notices in the archdiocesan newspaper, *The Witness*, and in several secular papers inviting persons who as minors were sexually abused by church personnel to come forward and encouraging them to contact law enforcement personnel. Throughout the archdiocese there are about 3,000 icons (sacred depictions) of St. Raphael the Archangel with information on how to reach the Archdiocesan Victim Assistance Coordinators.

2. The archdiocese will allow victims whose claims were found credible the opportunity to speak at their home parish or in the parish where they were abused, if they wish to do so. This will take place following a Sunday Mass.

3. The archbishop continued the longstanding practices of writing to victims and of visiting privately with victims who requested such a meeting.

4. The archdiocese offered to pay for counseling and therapy for victims for up to 12 sessions.

Archbishop Michael Jackels and Archbishop Emeritus Jerome Hanus apologize to the victims and their families. It is their hope that this settlement will be supportive of them. They assure all the victims of their prayers for them and their families. They express their commitment to support them in their efforts to achieve spiritual and emotional well-being.



More online at  
[www.arch.pvt.k12.ia.us/  
ProtectionofChildren/](http://www.arch.pvt.k12.ia.us/ProtectionofChildren/)

Priests who abused are a disgrace to the vocation and a scandal to the faithful. The vast majority of priests are good and holy servants of God and God's people. They give of their energy and time most generously. They abhor sexual abuse and work hard to ensure that the parishes, schools, and other institutions of the archdiocese are safe. The priests want to help victims experience reconciliation, healing, and justice. Many have contacted and supported victims of sexual abuse.

The same can be said for other members of the church. *The Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People* calls all to heed Jesus' call to show mercy and compassion to the least ones. “Jesus extended this care in a tender and urgent way to children, rebuking his disciples for keeping them away from him: ‘Let the children come to me’” (Mt 19:14).



Posters of the Archangel Raphael are distributed throughout the archdiocese with information on how to reach the Victim Assistance Coordinators.

The Archdiocese of Dubuque continues to commit itself to the protection of children, striving always to make the way safe for them.