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## **Names of Accused Remain Concealed**

Roman Catholic Bishop Won't Say Who Was Guilty of Abusing Minors

By Renee K. Gadoua  
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Bishop James Moynihan said Sunday he released a report on the Roman Catholic Diocese of Syracuse's history of clergy sexual abuse in an effort to rebuild trust.

But he remains firm in his refusal to reveal the names of priests accused of - or found guilty of - sexually abusing minors. "You'll never have names," he said, during an interview at the diocese office, 240 E. Onondaga St., Syracuse.

Moynihan cited the Eighth Commandment - "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor" - to explain his refusal to reveal names. The moral code that commonly refers to lying also forbids revealing a person's hidden faults or making a false statement that hurts a person's reputation, he said.

"Please, God, I'm not going to be guilty of either of those sins," he said.

He has repeatedly said he would not reveal the number of priests accused. In a letter distributed at weekend Masses, Moynihan said that 96 people have accused 49 local priests of sexual abuse since the 1950s. Releasing that and other statistics - the most detailed information the Syracuse diocese has provided since the clergy sexual abuse scandal surfaced about two years ago - reflect the diocese's commitment to reconciliation, he said.

Tuesday, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops plans to release a national audit of how the country's dioceses have complied with policies the U.S. bishops outlined in June 2002 at the

height of the national scandal.

The initial findings of a second report by the John Jay School of Criminal Justice in New York City are to be released Feb. 27. The data the Syracuse Diocese released is the same information it supplied for the national reports.

The national reports are not expected to provide names or information that will identify victims or perpetrators.

Last month, the Albany Diocese released a report on clergy sexual abuse there since 1950. The Rochester Diocese, which includes Cayuga and Tompkins counties, is expected to release its diocesan report Tuesday.

In the Syracuse Diocese, 16 priests - 2.2 percent of the 734 priests who have served in the diocese since 1950 - have been permanently removed from ministry in the last two years, according to officials.

The 49 priests accused of sexual abuse include:

Sixteen priests removed from permanent ministry because of credible allegations.

Five cleared of allegations.

Thirteen deceased.

Thirteen being investigated.

Two laicized before allegations were reported.

The report does not include a total number of incidents of alleged sexual abuse. In some cases, individuals reported more than one incidence of abuse. In other cases, more than one alleged victim accused a priest of abuse.

Although diocesan officials refuse to release the names of priests accused of sexual abuse, they previously confirmed permanently removing eight priests from ministry because of credible allegations of sexual abuse of minors. They are Monsignors Francis J. Furfaro, H. Charles Sewall and John M. Zeder, and the Revs. James Hayes, Donald Hebert, William Lorenz, Chester Misercola and Albert Proud.

Priests removed from ministry can no longer serve in any ministry, offer Mass publicly, wear clerical garb or represent themselves as priests.

Officials have confirmed they are investigating allegations against the Rev. Thomas Keating and the Rev. James F. Quinn. In November, a state Supreme Court judge dismissed a \$150 million lawsuit against Quinn because the statute of limitations had run out.

The diocese has also acknowledged paying \$475,000 to settle lawsuits that allege the late Rev. Daniel Casey molested three young boys, and officials have acknowledged public accusations against the late Rev. Bernard Gartska and the late Rev. Thomas Neary.

Officials said all cases reported involved incidents in which the statute of limitations has run out.

According to the diocese's report, 97 percent of reported sexual abuse by local clergy took place from the 1950s to the 1980s. The majority - 95 percent - were reported since 1980.

Officials followed the policies in place at the time the alleged abuse was reported, said Moynihan, who was appointed Syracuse's bishop in 1995.

Sunday, Moynihan said he was unfazed by the fact that the majority of the cases occurred when the diocese was led by retired Bishop Frank Harrison and the late Bishop Joseph O'Keefe. He said the understanding of sexual abuse and its treatment has changed in the last 30 years.

"I'm not going to do Monday-morning quarterbacking," he said. "I can't undo the damage of the past, but I can try to heal it."

David Cerulli, co-director of the New York City-area chapter of the victims support and advocacy group SNAP, or Survivors Network of Those Abused by Priests, applauds bishops for revealing more information about sexual abuse by clergy. But he said the source of the data, the bishops, makes him wary.

"The bishops are the same group that fought tooth and nail to keep documents secret," he said. "Asking them to self-report to an agency that was set up by the USCCB is a little disingenuous."

He concedes that the safe environment programs dioceses have been mandated to implement suggest a commitment to preventing future abuse. In the Syracuse Diocese, 4,000 of about 10,000 employees, clergy and volunteers have undergone training to recognize symptoms of sexual abuse.

"We do have to give them some slack," Cerulli said. "Training is good, but it's too early to tell if they're

going to have any impact."

Sue Sweet, one of three Oswego women who spent about 10 years investigating rumors that Catholic priests had sexually abused minors in Central New York, said releasing names of accused priests won't necessarily help victims. She hopes other Catholics are pleased the bishop has released the number of accusers and the number of priests removed from ministry.

"A lot of the dirty, ugly sins of the past are out in the open," she said. "We're talking about it like a family."

Sweet sees the bishop's report both as vindication of her concerns for victims and a step toward healing. "I feel better and better about the church that I love so much," she said. "I cried many, many nights on my knees, and now we're coming around."

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