



## The Archdiocese of Seattle Settles 1980s Case

Seattle, WA January 9, 2020 – The Archdiocese of Seattle recently reached a final settlement for a case involving allegations of sexual abuse that took place in the 1980s.

Specifically, the archdiocese settled a case involving allegations of sexual abuse by Fr. Dennis Champagne for \$1,700,000. During the 1980s, Champagne served at St. Michael Parish in Snohomish, Washington, where he was pastor from 1979 until 1999. In 2002, the archdiocese put Champagne on administrative leave after receiving a complaint of sexual abuse. Champagne remained on administrative leave until a canonical process was completed, at which time he was placed on permanent prayer and penance, removing him from service.

A priest is placed on permanent prayer and penance through a canonical process authorized by the Vatican, which permanently removes him from all public ministry while still remaining a priest. He is not permitted to administer sacraments, wear clerical attire, or present himself publicly as a priest. He is asked to pray for healing and to do penance on behalf of those who have been abused. Any priest on permanent prayer and penance, including Champagne, is regularly visited by a professional compliance monitor.

Champagne was included in the archdiocese's List of Clergy and Religious Brothers and Sisters for Whom Allegations of Sexual Abuse of a Minor Have Been Admitted, Established or Determined to be Credible when the list was originally published in January 2016.

### Commitment to Transparency

As part of its commitment to transparency, the Archdiocese of Seattle recently launched a website dedicated to the topic of sexual abuse in the archdiocese. Please visit [Protect and Heal](http://www.protectandheal.seattlearchdiocese.org) to learn about the history of sexual abuse in the archdiocese, which peaked in 1975 and has since sharply declined. The website also outlines how since the early 1980s, the archdiocese has taken steps to prevent abuse, protect the community and help victims and their families heal. For more information please visit [www.protectandheal.seattlearchdiocese.org](http://www.protectandheal.seattlearchdiocese.org).

To report any suspicion of abuse by any church personnel, please contact local law enforcement. In addition, anyone who has knowledge of misconduct by a member of the clergy, an employee or volunteer of the Archdiocese of Seattle is urged to call the archdiocesan hotline at 1-800-446-7762.

### About the Archdiocese of Seattle

The Archdiocese of Seattle encompasses all of Western Washington, stretching from Canada to Oregon and from the Cascade Mountains to the Pacific Ocean. There are 169 parishes, missions and pastoral centers in the archdiocese, with more than 500 weekly Masses celebrated in eight languages. Archbishop Paul D. Etienne leads the archdiocese with his two auxiliary bishops, Bishop Eusebio Elizondo and Bishop Daniel Mueggenborg. For more information about the Archdiocese of Seattle, visit [seattlearchdiocese.org](http://seattlearchdiocese.org).

###

Media Contact:

Helen McClenahan, [Helen.mcclenahan@seattlearch.org](mailto:Helen.mcclenahan@seattlearch.org) Media line: 206-402-9373