For Immediate Release

August 21, 2004

Archdiocese removes three priests from ministry

Seattle--Archbishop Alex J. Brunett today announced a final disposition in three cases of child sexual abuse by priests and released the information to parishes where the former priests had served. Acting on the advice of an independent advisory board, and after review by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith in Rome, the Seattle Archdiocese permanently restricted the three accused priests from ministry.

The three former pastors are: James McGreal, who served in the Seattle Archdiocese between 1948 and 1988; David Linehan, who was a priest in the Archdiocese from 1956 until he retired in 1995; and Desmond McMahon, who served from 1960 until he was placed on medical leave in 1990.

The local announcement followed confirmation by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith in Rome of the recommendation submitted by Archbishop Brunett in the three cases. Alleged incidents of abuse in the three cases date as far back as the 1960s.

"My hope is that making this information public will affirm our commitment to transparency and lead to closure and reconciliation for past victims," Archbishop Brunett said. "Once again I extend my sincere apologies to all victims and their families for the actions of these men.

"I also want to offer a special word of thanks to the Case Review Board for its work in evaluating these cases," Archbishop Brunett said. "Their task was difficult and their contribution has been invaluable."

The Archdiocesan Case Review Board was formed by Archbishop Brunett in the spring of 2003 as an advisory board to assess all allegations of sexual abuse of minors by diocesan clergy. The board evaluated allegations against 13 priests of the Archdiocese.

When an allegation of child sexual abuse is received against a member of the clergy in the Seattle Archdiocese, the individual is immediately removed from ministry, law enforcement is notified and an independent investigation is initiated.

Archbishop Brunett said the names of all priests who will be restricted from ministry or removed from the clerical state as a result of child sex abuse charges will be released. In each case, disclosure of the names will follow a definitive response from the Vatican’s Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

For more information, contact: Greg Magnoni 206.382.4862