

ARCHDIOCESE OF CHICAGO



STATEMENT ABOUT BISHOP GOEDERT July 21, 2009

Most Reverend Raymond E. Goedert, DD, Retired Auxiliary Bishop of Chicago, gave a deposition on November 13, 2007 as part of an ongoing mediation process designed to achieve compassionate and fair resolution in cases brought by survivors of sexual abuse by priests. A key element of the mediation process is the public disclosure of certain documents and files.

Bishop Goedert served as Vicar for Priests for the Archdiocese of Chicago from July of 1987 to September of 1991 under Joseph Cardinal Bernardin. Among his responsibilities as Vicar for Priests was to act as a pastor and advocate for priests that were accused of sexually abusing minors.

During his tenure, Bishop Goedert introduced many improvements to the Archdiocesan policies regarding clerical misconduct, including:

- Strengthened reporting to Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS)
- Arranged evaluations by respected forensic psychiatrists
- Instituted proactive outreach to victims
- Advocated for written policies and procedures for handling allegations
- Brought a broader range of people into the decision making process

In his deposition, Bishop Goedert describes protocols and practices in dealing with sexual misconduct by priests that were accepted Archdiocesan policy and mental health treatments at that time. We now know that these practices were not enough. As a result, in 1992, the late Joseph Cardinal Bernardin reformed Archdiocese policies. Since 1997, under Francis Cardinal George, O.M.I., the process for dealing with abuse allegations and abuse survivors has changed, been expanded and further improved.

It has long been the practice of the Archdiocese to reach out to victims to try to resolve their claims without requiring them to go through lengthy court proceedings. The Archdiocese believes that mediation of claims is the best, most compassionate way to resolve these cases, as it spares the victims and their families the burdens and stresses of an extended legal process.

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