

# **Statement Regarding Response of the Archdiocese of Baltimore to Allegations of Child Sexual Abuse by Father Blackwell**

In responding to allegations of child abuse, the highest priorities for the Archdiocese of Baltimore are the safety of children and concern for victims. Our consistent reporting of child abuse allegations, cooperation with authorities, and offers of assistance to victims are vital to meeting these priorities. Given recent questions about reporting and offers of counseling assistance in connection with Father Blackwell, we believe that sharing certain information is critical for the public to evaluate fairly the credibility of the Church in its responses to allegations of child abuse.

Regarding whether the Archdiocese of Baltimore actually reported allegations of child abuse involving Father Blackwell that the Archdiocese received in 1998, we are releasing the following documents, somewhat redacted to protect confidentiality, that we believe confirm that the 1998 allegations were in fact reported and investigated by appropriate governmental authorities with the cooperation of the Archdiocese.

- Letter reporting allegation of abuse from Rev. J. Bruce Jarboe Director of Clergy Personnel dated September 17, 1998 to Assistant State's Attorney Emanuel Brown, Chief of the City of Baltimore's Sex Crimes Division.
- Notes of September 29, 1998 from Archdiocesan attorney David W. Kinkopf documenting telephone call among Mr. Brown, Father Jarboe, and Mr. Kinkopf. At Mr. Brown's request, the Archdiocese provided the victim's telephone number to Mr. Brown.
- Letter from Father Jarboe dated October 9, 1998 to Mr. Brown informing him of Father Blackwell's acknowledgment of sexual encounters with the victim.

- Internal memorandum of October 14, 1998 from Archdiocesan attorney Thomas C. Dame documenting telephone call between Father Jarboe and Baltimore City Police Sergeant Roussey, documenting Sgt. Roussey's contact with the victim and the status of the investigation Sgt. Roussey was conducting.
- Notes of October 23, 1998 from Father Jarboe detailing another conversation with Sgt. Roussey in which Sgt. Roussey requests and is provided the names of those who witnessed Father Blackwell's admission.

Further, we do not want to lose sight of the important reality that after his admission in 1998, Father Blackwell was immediately, and permanently, removed from all ministry. The allegations were disclosed in 1998 through the official statements of the Archdiocese that were reported in articles on October 21, 1998 in the *Baltimore Sun*, on October 29, 1998 in *The Catholic Review*, and elsewhere. These contemporaneous reports all refer to the report made by the Archdiocese to the State's Attorney's Office.

Father Blackwell's criminal attorney from 1998, Andrew Graham, confirms that he had communication with the State's Attorney's Office and Sgt. Roussey in the fall of 1998 regarding the 1998 allegation. Further, we believe that Detective Roussey would confirm to the State's Attorney's Office that he did investigate the 1998 allegations, and received requested follow up information from the Archdiocese.

Additionally, questions have been raised regarding whether any counseling assistance was offered to Dontee Stokes in 1993. We are providing a letter from then-Rev. Richard W. Woy, who in 1993 was Associate Director of Pastoral Personnel Services. The letter clearly indicates a commitment to pay for Mr. Stokes' therapy. The letter makes referrals on the advice of then-Detective Roussey, who was present a few days earlier when Father Woy offered therapy assistance during a meeting with Mr. Stokes and his mother. We are also providing a letter dated September 15, 1993 from M. Christina Gutierrez, who was representing Mr. Stokes and his mother at the time, which confirms receipt of the letter offering assistance with therapy. The Archdiocese reiterates its continuing offer of assistance to the Stokes family today.