



Archdiocese of Seattle Response to Attorney General Press Conference

SEATTLE, May 9, 2024 – After listening to the Attorney General’s press conference, we have the following statements to share:

The Archdiocese of Seattle supports the idea to “do the right thing” as mentioned by Attorney General Bob Ferguson in today’s press conference. As stated before, the Archdiocese of Seattle welcomes this investigation because we have a shared goal of abuse prevention, healing for victims and transparency.

We have been collaborating with the Attorney General’s legal team on the shared legal analysis, which is common for investigations like this. Today’s press conference was a surprise to us since we welcome the investigation and have been working closely with the Attorney General’s team for months now.

In fact, earlier this year the Archdiocese of Seattle asked the Attorney General’s Office if we could hold a joint press conference to announce this investigation and share our sincere desire to cooperate so that we can transparently share information without divulging the privacy of victims and re-traumatizing them. The Attorney General’s Office denied this request, stating that they do not speak publicly about ongoing investigations.

The Attorney General’s claim that we have not “shared a single document that is not public” is not how we see it. In fact, on Monday of this week we offered to submit a series of private deposition documents. The Attorney General’s office responded that they are not interested in these private documents.

There were a few additional statements in today’s press conference that were inaccurate and we wish to provide accurate information. Specifically, there were comments made about how we are hiding victim stories and not meeting with victims “face-to-face”:

- The information in our files comes directly from victims and their families. Given this, there is no effort to hide these victim stories from the victims themselves, as insinuated during the press conference. They know their story and what was shared with us.
- Furthermore, each victim is offered pastoral care, which includes an invitation for a face-to-face meeting with the Archbishop and Victim Assistance Coordinator, among other options to facilitate healing.

Furthermore,

- We agree that sexual abuse is wrong.
- We do not deny that there was abuse in our local Archdiocese.
- We share the common goal to prevent abuse and provide a path for healing for victims and their families.
- We are committed to transparency – but must do so in a way that does not re-traumatize victims.

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 a volunteer of the Archdiocese of Seattle is urged to call the archdiocesan hotline at 1-800-446-7762.

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