

[Source: NCR, <http://ncronline.org/news/accountability/seattle-archbishop-j-peter-sartain-alexander-brunett-harry-quigg-abuse>, where this letter is dated 5/6/14 and the authors are identified as Terrence Carroll and Michael McKay.]

Dear Archbishop Sartain:

We are the former chair and vice-chair of the Archdiocesan Review Board (Board), established pursuant to the Dallas Charter and Essential Norms, which issued a report in 2004. We have been made aware of a statement (attached) released by your office to the parishioners of St. Bridget Church regarding Fr. Harry Quigg. While we are aware our work and recommendations were completed well before your arrival, your statement contains two serious misstatements. The purpose of this communication is to invite your attention to these errors and ask that you correct them at your earliest convenience but certainly by the time you meet with the St. Bridget parishioners this evening

After disclosing the Board's recommendation that Fr. Quigg be removed from the ministry, your office's statement reports that "[t]he information was not made public because of the determination that the sexual contact did not involve a minor" but fails to disclose that the Board repeatedly urged your predecessor to make this public. The statement also indicates that the Archdiocese only "learned recently" that Fr. Quigg did not comply with his ministry restrictions when six Board members notified your predecessor in December of 2004 that Fr. Quigg was violating this restriction.

First, as footnote 4 to our report indicates, this was a serious case. Although canon law may have given Fr. Quigg a pardon under Church law and the work of the Review Board, there remains a serious moral issue about his conduct. Further, to us it was a clear violation of criminal law in place at the time of the work of the Review Board, although perhaps unclear at the time of the relationship with the minor.

We urge you to consider releasing the documents of the Review Board relating to this matter, subject to not identifying any victims, so that the laity can have complete and accurate information.

Second, the Review Board clearly concluded that Fr. Quigg was unfit to continue as a priest. Apparently, Archbishop Brunett initially agreed. It was never the intention of the Review Board that the faithful not be made aware of the sanctions imposed by the archbishop. In fact, it was and remains our understanding that diocese policy requires that the initial determination to remove from the ministry is made known to the community. Any notion that the protection of Fr. Quigg's 'privacy' would lead to a different conclusion is astonishing given the conduct and recommendation of the Review Board.

Third, we take strong issue with the suggestion in the statement that the archdiocese was unaware Fr. Quigg was continuing to perform priestly functions. Attached is a letter, dated December 20, 2004, wherein we specifically refer to Fr. Quigg's ongoing performance of priestly functions. To suggest that such conduct has continued for 10 years without knowledge of the chancery cannot be accurate.

We are confident that, since all this occurred before your arrival, you were unaware of this history. We believe that the Quigg case reflects poorly on the archdiocese, which needs to be more open and accurate in communicating with the faithful. As time has shown, and as our report recommended, it is only through a steadfast willingness to fully inform the laity that this shameful part of Church history can be put behind us.

We are confident you will correct the errors in the statement issued by your office. We are certainly willing to have further dialogue on this matter and, if you wish, have no hesitation in permitting the distribution of this communication to the faithful at St. Bridget Church and the greater community.