

Bishop's Response to Sexual Misconduct Allegations

The Diocese of Pueblo has received multiple complaints regarding former Marianist Brother William Mueller, who taught at Roncalli High School in Pueblo from 1966-1971. At this time the Diocese has been named in 24 lawsuits regarding misconduct by former Brother Mueller. A majority of the suits have been filed under "John Doe" status, wherein the complainants have chosen to withhold their names. A letter was sent to Roncalli alumni to notify them of the complaints against Brother Mueller, and to ask that they contact the Provincial of the Marianist order with any information or concerns.

As had been stated in local newspaper articles, records indicate that the Diocese of Pueblo received no complaints or reports of sexual misconduct or abuse against former Brother Mueller until the recent claims. Unfortunately, because the dates of these allegations were from the late 1960's or early 1970's, few individuals who were part of diocesan administration at that time are still living, and able to provide any further information.

In the light of new complaints being made against former Brother Mueller, I wish to state that I am truly sorry for any harm and pain that has been suffered by victims of sexual misconduct. Diocesan policy provides for assistance to any victim of clergy sexual misconduct and the Diocese has extended an offer of assistance to the gentlemen that are making the current claims. Ms. Jayne Mazur is the Victim's Assistance Coordinator for the Diocese of Pueblo and can be reached at (719) 544-4233 for information regarding no cost assistance with confidential counseling services to help with healing and reconciliation.

The Sexual Misconduct Policy for the Diocese is printed twice per year in our diocesan newspaper, and is also available on our website: www.dioceseofpueblo.com. The Sexual Misconduct Review Board of the Diocese of Pueblo is composed of a majority of lay people, with expertise in various areas, including specialists in mental health, education, and abuse survivors. It is the responsibility of the Board to review all allegations of misconduct and to make recommendations to the Bishop on how to best proceed with investigations and requests for assistance. The SMRB Board continues to review the current cases regarding Brother Mueller.

The issue of clergy sexual misconduct is difficult and painful, not only for the individuals involved, but for the people of the Diocese as a whole. Please remember that there are many priests, deacons and religious who are ministering capably and faithfully to the people of the Diocese of Pueblo; it is important that they know how much they are appreciated. We rely on these good people to provide support to our parishioners, and those in need of comfort. I ask that we all pray for all victims of abuse and for the people of the Diocese of Pueblo.