



November 22, 2015

STATEMENT ON RELEASE OF FILES:

The law firm of Jeff Anderson & Associates, in cooperation of Saint John's Abbey, is releasing portions of the personnel files of monks against whom there have been credible allegations of misconduct involving minors. We expect the first batch of files to be published on Jeff Anderson & Associates' website on Tuesday, November 24, 2015.

The Abbey provided Anderson's office with complete personnel files. Anderson's office has reviewed the files and made decisions on what information to publish. The materials to be published include the monks' work histories, the accusations made against them and personal correspondence.

The files provided include those of monks currently living on the Saint John's campus under safety plans. Their actions are limited and they are closely supervised. Files also include nine monks who are deceased and two men who have left Saint John's and the Benedictine order. The allegations against these men involve incidents that occurred more than two decades ago; some of the incidents are 30 or 40 years old.

There are documents in each file which may be quoted and framed in a lurid context. But the huge majority of the documents in each of these files acknowledges the very real failures of some monks while showing each of the accused monks as a fallible, relatable person. The files also show that the Abbey did not try to cover up allegations and did a reasonable job of managing the monk and the problem. St. John's Abbey has been and is proactive in dealing with problems of child sexual abuse, and the Abbey is voluntarily sharing these documents (with the permission of the accused monks) out of a sincere desire to achieve transparency and in furtherance of healing for victims.

Saint John's Abbey began publicly disclosing the names of those against whom there were credible allegations of misconduct against minors in 2002 and voluntarily released additional names periodically as new claims were presented and evaluated.

Anderson's law firm has files of all monks against whom there have been credible allegations of misconduct involving minors and it is likely that some or all will be released in the coming weeks or months as Minnesota approaches the May 2016 expiration of legislation that suspended the statute of limitations for such cases.

"The Abbey has striven to be both transparent and thorough in confronting credible allegations. The Abbey has accepted full responsibility for abuses that have been committed and has made sincere and heartfelt apologies directly to victims and their families as well as through the media and in other public forums," said Abbot John Klassen, OSB. "We are hopeful that, with this disclosure, we can help survivors find peace and resolution."