

PRESS RELEASE

TWO PLAINTIFFS FILE SEX ABUSE LAWSUIT AGAINST CHARLOTTE DIOCESE OF ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

WHAT: Plaintiffs John Doe 1K and John Doe 2K have filed suit against the Charlotte Diocese of the Roman Catholic Church, on grounds that they were sexually abused as children by Father Joseph Kelleher, making claims of fraud, breach of fiduciary duty, infliction of emotional distress, negligent hiring, supervision and retention, and infliction of emotional distress.

WHEN: Wednesday, September 28, 2011

WHERE: Mecklenburg County Superior Court

WHO: Plaintiffs John Doe 1K and John Doe 2K, and their attorneys:
Seth Langson (Karro, Sellers and Langson, Charlotte, NC)
Leto Copeley (Copeley, Johnson & Groninger PLLC, Chapel Hill & Charlotte, NC)

DETAILS:

The lawsuit alleges child sexual abuse and cover up by the defendant. It claims that Fr. Kelleher sexually abused the two teenage boys when one was approximately 14 years old, in about 1977 at Our Lady of the Annunciation Church in Albemarle, and when the other was approximately 13 years old, in about 1980 at Our Lady of the Assumption Church in Charlotte. The suit, seeking damages in excess of \$10,000, also alleges that the Charlotte Diocese has concealed child sex crimes by clergy since the Diocese was founded and that such cover ups continue even now. According to the lawsuit, the Charlotte Diocese knew or should have known since at least the 1970's that Kelleher was abusing minors.

Kelleher was a priest with the Raleigh Diocese from 1966 to 1971. He then worked for the Charlotte Diocese from 1972 until July 2010. He worked at St. John's Catholic Church in Waynesville; Our Lady of the Annunciation in Albemarle, Our Lady of the Assumption in Charlotte, St. Lawrence Catholic Church in Asheville, Immaculate Conception Church in Hendersonville, Our Lady of the Rosary Catholic Church in Lexington, and St. Dorothy Catholic Church in Lincolnton. He also taught at Bishop McGuinness High School in Kernersville. In the Raleigh Diocese, Kelleher served at St. Gabriel Catholic Church in Greenville, Cathedral of St. Patrick in Charlotte, Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic Church in High Point, Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church in Raleigh, St. Joseph Catholic Church in Asheboro, and St. John's Catholic Church in Waynesville. Before coming to the Raleigh Diocese, Kelleher served in Ireland and New Zealand.

Kelleher now lives in Winston -Salem.

The lawsuit bears Mecklenburg County Superior Court File No. 11-CVS18040

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