
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

In December of 2018, the Reveal Network released a podcast called *Sins of the Fathers*, which was adapted for print by the Associated Press and picked up by newspapers and online outlets. Jesuits West Province offers the following questions and answers to clarify some of the reporting in this story.

Q. For a number of years, priests from the former Oregon Province Jesuits with credible allegations of sexual abuse of minors were sent to live at Cardinal Bea House adjacent to the campus of Gonzaga University in Spokane, Washington. Why weren't these priests prosecuted? Why were they sent to Bea House?

A. The priests at Bea House were no longer subject to criminal prosecution. Cases are sometimes not prosecuted for a number of reasons, including a lack of evidence and because the length of time between when the abuse is alleged to have occurred and when it was reported.

Priests with credible allegations who were assigned to Bea House were monitored on Safety Plans. (See below for more information on Safety Plans.) While Bea House is adjacent to Gonzaga University, it is not part of the campus community.

In 2016, as the Oregon and California Provinces were preparing to come together to form the Jesuits West Province, all men on Safety Plans were moved from Bea House to Sacred Heart Jesuit Center, the Province's senior healthcare facility, in Los Gatos, California.

Q. What is a Safety Plan?

A. Safety Plans define risk reduction strategies, such as a Jesuit's required intervention programs, restrictions (including technology and travel), access by visitors, and more. Jesuits on Safety Plans have a designated supervisor who monitors their adherence to the plan. No Jesuit on a Safety Plan may have unsupervised contact with minors.

Safety Plans are reviewed annually and audited by outside safety consultant, Praesidium, an organization providing consultation, risk management assessment, policy development, and training materials for use in preventing sexual misconduct and responding to allegations of sexual misconduct. The Province remains accredited through regular reviews by Praesidium's auditors.

Q. Will priests on Safety Plans ever be assigned to Bea House again?

A. No Jesuit with a credible allegation of sexual abuse of a minor is currently or will ever be knowingly assigned to Gonzaga University or the Jesuit community on its campus nor to any Jesuit work of the Province.

Q. Why do the Jesuits provide homes for men with credible allegations of sexual abuse of a minor? Why aren't they dismissed from the order?

A. If a Jesuit is not dismissed, yet credibly charged with abuse of a minor or vulnerable adult, he is sent to live on a Safety Plan at Jesuits West's senior healthcare facility, Sacred Heart Jesuit Center in Los Gatos, California. This facility is far removed from minors. In caring for these men, Jesuits also safeguard society by keeping these men out of ministry and supervised in a Jesuit community where they cannot re-offend.

Jesuits are committed to caring for these Jesuits, as they feel a strong sense of responsibility to make sure the men don't re-offend.

Q. What does it mean for a Jesuit to be dismissed from the Society of Jesus?

A. Any man who leaves the Society of Jesus, either voluntarily or by decision of his Jesuit superiors, is considered dismissed.

Q. What happens when a claim is received?

A. When a claim is made against a Jesuit, the Province immediately reports it -- verbally and in writing -- to law enforcement if it involves the abuse of a minor. The Province fully cooperates throughout the investigation. Upon receipt of a claim involving sexual misconduct with a minor, the accused Jesuit is suspended from ministry pending the outcome of the investigation. The Province offers pastoral and therapeutic services to the victim. If law enforcement decides to pursue a criminal investigation, the Province initiates its own investigation only after the conclusion of the one conducted by law enforcement.

The results of the Province's internal investigation are presented to an independent lay [review board](#) comprised of professionals from the fields of psychology, law enforcement and human resources. The review board decides whether a claim is credible and makes its recommendation to the Provincial of Jesuits West, Fr. Scott Santarosa, SJ, who decides as to the future status of the accused priest. No Jesuit who has a credible claim of sexually abusing a minor or vulnerable adult is allowed to remain in public ministry.

Q. Does the Province work with law enforcement to investigate reports of abuse?

A. The Province reports any allegation of sexual abuse of a minor or vulnerable adult to law enforcement and appropriate child protection agencies, as required by applicable state law. Additionally, the Province cooperates with investigations undertaken by law enforcement.

Q. Why aren't these men charged with a crime?

A. When a claim is made against a Jesuit, the Province immediately reports it -- verbally and in writing -- to law enforcement if it involves the abuse of a minor or vulnerable adult. The Province fully cooperates throughout the investigation. The decision to prosecute rests solely with law enforcement and not with the Province. Cases are sometimes not prosecuted because of the length of time between when the abuse is alleged to have occurred and when it was reported.

Q. Were there any reports of abuse against priests on Safety Plans living in Bea House?

A. The Province has not received any allegations of abuse that occurred by Jesuits on Safety Plans at Bea House.

Q. Are any Jesuits who are accused of sexual abuse of a minor or vulnerable adult still in public ministry?

A. No Jesuit with a credible accusation of sexual abuse of a minor or vulnerable adult will ever serve again in public ministry.

Q. What is the Province doing to make sure that Jesuits are safe for ministry?

A. Jesuits have a zero-tolerance policy regarding instances of inappropriate conduct between a Jesuit and a minor. Both the California and Oregon Provinces (the predecessor Provinces of Jesuits West) had formal policies in place since the 1990s. In 2002, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops issued the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People, a comprehensive set of procedures for addressing claims of sexual abuse of minors. The Charter includes guidelines for reconciliation, healing, accountability and prevention of future acts of abuse. These norms have been made specific for religious life by the Conference of Major Superiors of Men in its Standards for Accreditation. Both the California and Oregon Provinces, as well as Jesuits West, have been following these protocols since 2002. The Province is accredited by Praesidium, an organization providing consultation, risk management assessment, policy development, and training materials for use in preventing sexual misconduct and responding to claims of sexual misconduct. The Province maintains accreditation through regular audits by Praesidium's auditors.

In addition, the Province has enhanced its screening process for men interested in becoming Jesuits. Before a Jesuit is accepted as a novice, he undergoes in-depth screening, including psychosexual screening, and an extensive criminal background check. Our formation program fosters healthy development both in terms of the spiritual life of the Jesuit as well as his psychosexual health and well-being. Jesuits at every state of their ministry and formation receive regular safe-environment training to promote ethical conduct in ministry and awareness and sensitivity of professional boundaries.

Q. Who are the members of the independent review board?

A. As required by the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People, the standards of which are adapted for religious men in the Conference of Major Superiors (CMSM) Standards for Accreditation, the Province established a Review Board whose purpose is to provide consultation to the provincial in addressing all reports of sexual abuse of a minor or vulnerable adult by current, former and/or deceased Jesuits. The Review Board, a consultative body to Jesuits West's Provincial, Fr. Scott Santarosa, SJ, is comprised of lay professionals from the fields of psychology, law enforcement and human resources. The Review Board decides as to whether a claim is credible and makes its recommendation to Fr. Santarosa.

Q. What training does a member of the Province receive regarding the Province’s Safe Environment Program?

A. Every member of the Province annually completes two units of Praesidium-approved training modules and signs the Province’s Code of Ethical Conduct, affirming that he has read and accepts the policies and protocols of the Province regarding abuse. In addition, all members of the Province annually renew their training by participating in “Conversations that Matter,” a program mandated by the Jesuit Conference of Canada and the United States, designed to foster within Jesuits a deeper understanding of healthy relationships and awareness of appropriate boundaries.

Q. What should I do if I have been abused by a Jesuit?

A. Anyone who has felt victimized by a Jesuit should contact both Mary Pat Panighetti, Advocacy Coordinator for Jesuits West, at 408-893-8398 or at her confidential email address, mpanighetti@jesuits.org, and appropriate law enforcement and child-protective agencies. If the victim is currently a minor, we are required to report the incident to civil authorities.