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Firm lists priests accused of abuse

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By Katherine Long, Editor

The names of priests of the Diocese of Syracuse accused of sexually abusing minors were presented in a report compiled by Minnesota-based law firm Jeff Anderson & Associates at a press conference organized by the firm in Syracuse March 14.

Eighteen of the 19 names have been reported publicly before, diocesan Chancellor and Director of Communications Danielle Cummings confirmed, and the diocese has previously received allegations against those 18 clerics. The remaining cleric, Father Thomas Trane, is not a priest of the Diocese of Syracuse, she said. Eleven of the clerics named are deceased and none of those living remain in active ministry, Cummings said.

The clerics named in the report are Father Daniel W. Casey, Jr. (deceased); Father Felix R. Colosimo (deceased); Father Donald J. Crosby (deceased); Father Charles H. Eckermann (deceased); Father Francis J. Furfaro (deceased); Father Bernard Garstka (deceased); Father John H. Harrold; Father James C. Hayes; Father Donald J. Hebert; Father Thomas F. Keating (deceased); Father William A. Lorenz; Father Chester Misercola; Father Thomas E. Neary (deceased); Father Robert A. Ours; Father Albert J. Proud; Father James F. Quinn (deceased); Father Henry C. Sewall (deceased); Father Thomas Trane; and Father John M. Zeder (deceased).

The diocese announced in February the [establishment of its Independent Reconciliation and Compensation Program for those abused by diocesan clergy](#). Seventy-six individuals who previously reported their abuse to the diocese have been invited to participate in the program.

“Bishop Cunningham has initiated the Independent Reconciliation Compensation Program in an effort to reach out to those who have been harmed by members of the clergy,” the diocese said in a statement. “The Diocese of Syracuse has made efforts to contact all those who have come forward to the diocese to report abuse in the past to invite them to be a part of this program. We pray that any publicity helps victims participate in the program.

“As Bishop Cunningham has explained, he recognizes that some victims would like the names released and other victims have asked him directly to not release the names of their abusers. In order to respect both requests, the diocese has confirmed names of abusers if a victim has brought them forward and they were found to be credible allegations. The names discussed today have been reported publicly in the past except Rev. Thomas Trane. Thomas Trane is not a priest of the Diocese of Syracuse.

“Bishop Cunningham and the Diocese of Syracuse continue to ask for forgiveness for the sins of past abusers. Over the past 15 years, since the crisis broke in 2002, the Diocese of Syracuse has addressed this problem aggressively by reporting all allegations to the appropriate district attorney, ensuring that no priest with a credible allegation of abuse remains in ministry, and preventing acts of abuse through our highly successful Safe Environment Program. There are now nearly 40,000 individuals trained in child sexual abuse prevention as well as criminally background checked. We will continue to be diligent in these efforts to safeguard all children and vulnerable adults.”

This story has been updated to reflect that Father John M. Zeder is deceased.

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