
[USF President] Important information released by Jesuits West Province

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Dear USF Community,

Today, the Jesuits West Province released the names of 110 priests and brothers against whom credible claims of sexual abuse of a minor or a vulnerable adult have been lodged since 1950.

The release of the Province's list comes on the heels of previously disclosed reports (the Pennsylvania grand jury's deliberations and report in August, and the October announcements by attorneys general in Washington, D.C. and Virginia and the Diocese of San Jose). **As I wrote to you in the fall**, we are continuing to discover a Church leadership that has ignored, hidden, or lied about the abuse for decades.

At USF we stand in solidarity with, and compassionate care for, all victims of sexual assault, abuse, and harassment, as well as their families and loved ones. We recommit our community to the highest ideals of respect, safety, and accountability.

Today's list from the Province adds to our collective anger and disillusionment. This list also hits close to home, with 11 of the 110 Jesuits named having had an association with the University of San Francisco. Nine of these men are deceased; two others are reported as dismissed from the Jesuits. Many of the claims against the 110 listed were made after their deaths, and in those instances, the accused were unable to defend themselves or deny the charges. But inclusion on the list means a credible claim was made.

While the number of Jesuits named on the list (110 since 1950) may strike some as a high number, the total number of Jesuits in the Province since 1950 is 3,567. That means the Jesuits named on this list as a percentage of the whole is 3 percent.

USF has created a **resource page** with information on the Jesuits West Province

disclosures, including the names of the Jesuits with a USF association. You will read that while the Province has attempted to be as thorough and accurate as possible in compiling the list, Jesuits West will undergo a review of all files in spring 2019. If additional cases of Jesuits against whom allegations of abuse are identified, the Province will release those names as well.

The resource page contains information on the support our own USF community can provide our members who are struggling with this news. It also gives you additional background from the Jesuits West Province on its development of the list, as well as how to report information if you have ever felt victimized by a Jesuit.

USF has reviewed our own available files and we are not aware of any complaints from our community against any of the men on the list. However, we know there may be new information that will come forward. We are committed to receiving such information and will fully cooperate with all authorities to investigate and respond. We encourage anyone who has questions, concerns, or information to share to come forward.

Today's news represents another deeply distressing chapter in the Catholic Church's history of sexual abuse by priests. Yet it is necessary to share in the responsibility we have for even greater transparency and accountability. We must all work to promote a culture that prevents abuse; hears and supports survivors; seeks transparency; and advances reform. I write to assure you that I am committed to acting against all forms of abuse of power by any member of our community, including the Jesuits. In fact, the findings from our Campus Climate survey made clear that we still have a great deal of work to do in terms of improving campus safety, raising awareness of and combatting sexual assault and harassment. This is a priority of our work going forward.

In this season of Hanukkah and Advent, we pray for light – and that we join together to honestly, directly, and persistently change the culture that allows abuse to happen.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Paul J. Fitzgerald". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping tail on the final letter.

Paul J. Fitzgerald, S.J.
President