

Archdiocese of Cologne asks for support with reconnaissance

Appeal addresses unknown abuse victims of the late priest Msgr. P.

29. June

Archdiocese of Cologne. The Intervention Office of the Archdiocese of Cologne has received the following reports about a deceased priest. Therefore, it now appeals to possible, previously unknown abuse victims at the former deployment sites of the said priest.

The priest in question is Father P., who later died in February 2019. He has been accused of having sexually abused a vulnerable adult in the 1970s. The individual concerned had approached the Archdiocese of Cologne in 2012. As a result, the archdiocese initiated an investigation and forwarded the results of the investigation to The Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith in Rome.

During the investigation, owing to a lack of recollection on the part of the individual concerned, it could not be conclusively clarified whether he or she had already reached the age of 18 at the time of the incident. However, as the individual was working, in context of an employment relationship for P., he or she was by all accounts considered a vulnerable adult.

Since the allegation was partially confirmed during the course of the investigation, in February 2014 Cardinal Joachim Meisner issued a reprimand to Fr. P. and imposed a fine on him. In addition, the priest, who was already retired at the time, was forbidden from having contact with minors in the absence of other adults.

During the course of the Archdiocese of Cologne's investigation, the case was reported to the responsible public prosecutor's office in 2018, which did not open an investigation because the statute of limitations had already expired. In 2021, there were indications of possible further individuals affected at the hands of P., which the Department of Intervention at Archdiocese of Cologne investigated. Since P. was already deceased by this time and his professional sphere of activities extended far beyond the Archdiocese of Cologne, the necessary investigations were highly complex.

Since the investigation has now been completed, the information will now be made available to the public. For this purpose, calls will be made in the period from 02.07.2022 to 10.07.2022 to possible, and yet unknown affected individuals at all of the previous employment locations of Fr. P.

The details of his employment locations are as follows:

02.1966 - 03.1971	Chaplain at Herz Jesu, Euskirchen
03.1971 - 10.1972	Chaplain at St. Joseph, Bonn
03.1971 - 10.1972	City youth chaplain in the city deanery of Bonn
12.1972 - 10.1989	Rector of the youth training center Haus Altenberg and
11.1972 - 10.1989	Diocesan Youth Chaplain of the Boys' Youth in the Archdiocese of Cologne
11.1977 - 12.1983	Instructor for religious education at the Jugendhaus Düsseldorf e.V.
10.1989 - 02.2000	Parish Priest at St. Martinus, Kaarst

02.2000 - 03.2010 President of the Kindermissionswerk 'Die Sternsinger', Aachen
07.2010 - 07.2012 Pastoral work in the German-speaking chaplaincy in Prague

In the 1970s, P. was also active as a spiritual advisor to the Catholic Homestead Movement in the Archdiocese of Cologne and as diocesan president of the BDKJ Diocesan Association of Cologne.

Even if a conclusive investigation of accused individuals who have already been deceased is only possible in rare cases, the Archdiocese of Cologne considers itself obligated to the victims of sexualized violence to follow up on all leads in order to resolve the allegations as comprehensively as possible. Therefore, the Archdiocese of Cologne considers every allegation or suspicion of sexual abuse and sexualized violence most seriously and intends to provide each affected individual with the necessary help and support. It is only through concrete information that each (suspected) case can be processed as comprehensively as possible.

In light of this, the Archdiocese of Cologne encourages and request affected individuals and/or material witnesses to contact the below mentioned External Contact Persons:

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