



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Statement of the Diocese of Crookston re: Release of Depositions and Other Files

CROOKSTON, MINNESOTA, November 5, 2019 – In August, Bishop Hoepfner shared some of the non-economic protocols of the settlement that was reached between the Diocese of Crookston and claimants represented by Jeff Anderson and Associates. In addition to making available for public release the names of all clergy who have worked in the Diocese of Crookston at any time who have been credibly accused of child sexual abuse or possession of child pornography, the diocese also agreed to make available for review and publication by plaintiff's counsel all documents on Fathers Roger Grundhaus, Patrick Sullivan and Joseph Richards. More information on the status of these priests can be found in the August 21, 2019 Voice from the Valley column published by *Our Northland Diocese* (<http://bit.ly/VFTV082119>).

Also, in a good faith effort, the Diocese of Crookston agreed to obtain a signed written statement from each and every clergy person working in the diocese – bishop, priest or deacon – acknowledging the following: they have received a copy of the Diocese of Crookston Code of Conduct; they understand their responsibility as a mandatory reporter; they have never abused a minor; and they have no knowledge of child sexual abuse by a priest, deacon or employee within the diocese that has not been already reported to law enforcement and the Diocese of Crookston. These actions are an expression of our continuing effort to the Church and world that we are committed to providing a safe environment for all.

In September, it was announced that the Congregation for Bishops authorized Archbishop Bernard A. Hebda, Metropolitan of the Ecclesiastical Province of Saint Paul and Minneapolis, to commence a preliminary investigation into an allegation he received that Bishop Hoepfner violated a portion of Article 1 of Pope Francis's recent motu proprio *Vos estis lux mundi* which deals with "actions or omissions intended to interfere with or avoid civil investigations or canonical investigations, whether administrative or penal, against a cleric or a religious" regarding clerical sexual misconduct. Bishop Hoepfner has fully cooperated with the preliminary investigation, supplying the materials that were sought. We await a response and remain hopeful that justice will prevail for all impacted by this action.

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