

Rev. William Bruning announced at Masses at Queen of the Holy Rosary Church, Overland Park, the weekend of March 2-3, 2019, that a woman in her early 30s has made an allegation that he abused her when she was a minor attending Most Pure Heart of Mary School, Topeka. Father Bruning emphatically denies the allegation and intends to fully defend his reputation against what he insists is a false allegation.

In June 2015, the Archdiocese of Kansas City in Kansas first learned of the allegation, which was based on recovered memories, and notified law enforcement. A thorough investigation by Archdiocesan Report Investigator Jan Saylor was completed, including but not limited to extensive interviews of Father Bruning, the person making the allegation and other individuals having knowledge of Most Pure Heart of Mary School and Parish at the time the incident was alleged to have occurred. Father Bruning, who at the time the allegation was received was residing at Blessed Sacrament Parish in Kansas City, Kansas, was asked by Archbishop Naumann to refrain from public ministry pending the outcome of the investigation and review by the Independent Review Board of the Archdiocese of Kansas City in Kansas.

After its review of the case, the Independent Review Board concluded it could not substantiate a claim against Father Bruning and recommended that Father Bruning be restored to active ministry. Archbishop Joseph F. Naumann accepted the recommendation of the Board and Father Bruning resumed public ministry. The alleged victim was informed of the IRB finding and Archbishop Naumann's concurrence with the finding.

In October 2018, the same woman notified the Archdiocese that she had recovered additional memories about the same incident reported in 2015. Law enforcement was again notified. Report Investigator Saylor reopened the investigation and re-interviewed Father Bruning, the person bringing the allegation and other knowledgeable parties. The Independent Review Board re-examined the case and found the allegation was not credible but Father Bruning's denial of the allegation was credible. The Board again concluded that it could not substantiate a claim against Father Bruning and recommended that Father Bruning is suitable for public ministry. Archbishop Naumann concurred with the Board's finding and the alleged victim was informed.

In mid-February 2019, the woman communicated to the Archdiocese that she was not satisfied with the outcome of the Archdiocesan investigation and findings. After sharing this communication with Father Bruning, Archbishop Naumann and Father Bruning mutually agreed to communicate directly to the faithful: the information regarding both the allegation and Father Bruning's denial; the reports by the archdiocese to law enforcement; the internal investigations conducted by the archdiocese; the Independent Review Board recommendations; and Archbishop Naumann's findings in support of Father Bruning's suitability for ministry. Father Bruning continues as pastor of Queen of the Holy Rosary Parish, a position he has held since July 2016; he is a priest in good standing of the Archdiocese of Kansas City in Kansas.

The Archdiocese takes very seriously any allegation brought forward, no matter how long ago the incident occurred, and is fully committed to investigating allegations to the best of its ability. It asks anyone who has knowledge of inappropriate conduct by any priest, deacon, employee or volunteer to please contact the confidential report line at [\(913\) 647-3051](tel:9136473051) to make a report to

archdiocesan Report Investigator Jan Saylor, go to archkck.org/reportabuse to report online, or call law enforcement directly.