

\$3.9 million settle Chicago arch. abuse cases

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CHICAGO -- The Chicago archdiocese announced July 21 that it had reached settlements totaling \$3.9 million in cases of six survivors of clergy sex abuse.

All of the cases involved abuse that happened between 1970 and 1986, and all of the priests involved have been out of ministry for almost 20 years, the archdiocese said. Two of the priests are dead; the other two have been laicized.

The announcement said the archdiocese and the survivors reached an agreement through "a comprehensive mediation process," which included sharing documents and information as well as the public disclosure of information. The parties involved also used an arbitrator to resolve any disputes.

"It has long been the process of the archdiocese to reach out to victims to try to resolve their claims without requiring them to go through lengthy court proceedings," archdiocesan chancellor Jimmy Lago said in a statement.

"We believe that negotiation and mediation are the best, most compassionate ways to resolve these cases, as it spares the survivors and their families the burdens and stresses of an extended legal process," he added.

Serving as mediator was attorney Thomas Gibbons, who is dean of Northwestern University's School of Continuing Studies in Chicago. Retired Judge Stuart Nudelman, who formerly served on the Cook County Circuit Court, was the special arbitrator.

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