NATIONAL CATHOLIC REPORTER
Published on *National Catholic Reporter* (http://ncronline.org)

Three accused Irish priests served in Boston

G. Jeffrey MacDonald Religion News Service | Feb. 3, 2010

BOSTON -- The Archdiocese of Boston, under mounting pressure to address alleged ties to Irish priests accused of sexual abuse, acknowledged that three clerics on a list of 70 alleged abusers had in fact served in the Boston area.

One of the accused, the Rev. Dennis P. Murphy received permission to celebrate Mass at St. Cecilia's Parish in Boston during 1996 and 1997, according to an Archdiocesan statement released Jan. 26.

Another, the Rev. Joseph T. Maguire, had permission to serve in Waltham between 1981 and 1985, and a third, the Rev. Brendan Smyth, was permitted to serve for two days in 1991 at St. Camillus Parish in Arlington.

The Archdiocese also noted a pending investigation of a fourth, unnamed Irish priest who allegedly abused a child in the Boston Archdiocese about 30 years ago. That priest "has not been in the Archdiocese for decades," the written statement said, but law enforcement has nonetheless been notified.

The revelations come one month after BishopAccountability.org, a group that documents allegations of clergy sexual abuse, produced a list of 70 Irish priests who had allegedly abused children in the United States.

BishopAccountability.org co-director Terence McKiernan noted that the Archdiocese of Los Angeles has identified 17 abusive priests who came from Ireland in its records. With that in mind, he wondered whether the Archdiocese of Boston might still be withholding names of more abusers.

"I'm a little skeptical," McKiernan said. "It seems to me surprising that the list would be short in Boston and so much longer in Los Angeles when the connection with Ireland is so much stronger" in Boston.

McKiernan called on the Boston Archdiocese to follow the lead of other U.S. dioceses -- including Los Angeles, Philadelphia and Chicago -- and disclosing the names of priests accused of sexual abuse. The Archdiocese of Boston's policy is to disclose names if those individuals are removed from active ministry, censured under canon law or convicted of a crime.

In its statement, the archdiocese acknowledged that Ireland's ongoing clergy abuse crisis, which surfaced late last year, is apt to be difficult for Catholics in the Boston area, where news of America's abuse crisis first broke in 2002.

"As the news from Ireland continues to unfold, we recognize that the revelations may serve as a painful reminder of the wounds many survivors carry," the statement said.

Source URL (retrieved on *07/10/2014 - 09:41*): http://ncronline.org/news/accountability/three-accused-irish-priests-served-boston