

***** Media Advisory - Statement For Immediate Release *****

New York Attorney General Sets Low Bar for the Investigation of Churches

James Faluszczyk, himself a victim of abuse by a priest, and still feeling called to the priesthood, left active ministry because the Church ignored his claims. He testified before the 40th Pennsylvania Grand Jury as it investigated six dioceses in Pennsylvania.

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WHAT: Responding to the apparent conclusion of the state Attorney General's investigation into the Diocese of Buffalo, while the investigation of other New York dioceses remains pending.

WHEN: Available anytime by arrangement.

WHERE: Anywhere by arrangement.

WHO: Victim advocate James Faluszczyk, a participant in the Pennsylvania 40th Statewide Investigating Grand Jury, alumnus of Christ the King Seminary, and resident of Buffalo.

BUFFALO, NY. Tuesday, October 25, 2022 – While giving retired bishops who engaged in coverup a slap on the wrist, NY AG Letitia James leaves multiple questionable fiduciary overseers in position as heads of parishes, in active ministry, in control of charitable donations, and able to publicly represent the Church. This sends the message that if you conceal the abuse of children and vulnerable adults you can still be in a parade, stand at the altar, and control charitable donations in a parish.

The AG's original Complaint, filed almost two years ago, named 25 alleged perpetrators to illustrate the Diocese of Buffalo's failure to respond to complaints of clergy sexual abuse. Survivors of clergy sexual abuse in the Diocese of Buffalo were led to believe that this state AG would eventually release more than just 25 names already identified by public means.

While giving assurances that new procedures imposed on the Catholic Church by the State of New York will result in greater transparency moving forward, this settlement does not release any historical information to the public or result in meaningful restitution by offenders. The effects of trauma are not relieved by today's action, and it is incumbent on the AG to show how courageous survivors of crime drove the process in any way.

The oversight imposed today on the Diocese of Buffalo is one laudable result of a four year investigation, and was agreed to by retained counsel for the Diocese of Buffalo. That firm was fired by another diocese for being too aggressive with victims of clergy sexual abuse.

If this action of the Office of New York Attorney General is the last thing we hear about their inquiry into the Diocese of Buffalo I fear it will be regarded as a dereliction of duty.

