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## **Statement of Jesuits West Province Regarding Fr. Richard Perry, SJ**

July 23, 2020 — Last October, Fr. Richard Perry, SJ, who served on the staff of St. Francis Xavier Parish in Missoula, Montana, was removed from ministry because of an allegation involving a boundary violation with a female adult. Fr. Perry, a member of the Jesuits West Province, was sent to live at Sacred Heart Jesuit Center in Los Gatos, California, the healthcare/retirement facility for the Province, while the claim was investigated.

When an allegation against a Jesuit is made, it triggers a series of events, including a comprehensive investigation conducted by professionals hired by the Province. The results of the Province's investigation are presented to an independent Province Review Board, comprised of lay professionals from the fields of psychology, law enforcement and human resources, which evaluates findings to determine if a claim is credible. The Province Review Board subsequently makes a recommendation to the Provincial of Jesuits West, Fr. Scott Santarosa, SJ, who makes the final determination about the credibility of a claim.

In February of this year, a second allegation was leveled against Fr. Perry by a female who claimed to have been sexually abused by him in the late 1970s/early 1980s when she was a student at Seattle Preparatory School, where Fr. Perry was serving. Province officials alerted the police, and the claim was similarly investigated and presented to the Province Review Board, which made its recommendation and referred the case to Fr. Santarosa. This week, Fr. Santarosa determined that this claim was credible.

Because this is a credible claim of abuse of a minor, Fr. Perry will be permanently removed from public ministry and will live under a [Safety Plan](#) at Sacred Heart Jesuit Center. The Jesuits West Province list released in December of 2018 of [Jesuits with Credible Claims of Sexual Abuse of a Minor or Vulnerable Adult](#) has been updated to reflect the credible allegation against Fr. Perry, including the full list of Fr. Perry's ministerial assignments. Jesuits West has both a zero-tolerance policy for credible claims made against a Jesuit involving a minor or a vulnerable adult and stringent procedures to ensure the safety of minors.

The claim involving a boundary violation with an adult stemming from Fr. Perry's time at St. Francis Xavier Parish in Missoula was investigated, reviewed and addressed. Because the case involves an adult and not a minor, Province privacy policies prevent additional release of information regarding that case.

From the moment a claim is reported to the Province — even if the allegation dates back decades — the person making the allegation is immediately offered therapy funded by the Province with a therapist of their choosing. They are also asked if they would like to tell their story, either in writing or in a meeting or phone call with Fr. Santarosa.

On behalf of the Jesuits West Province, Fr. Santarosa has [apologized](#) publicly to those “who put their trust in a Jesuit, only to have that trust so profoundly betrayed.”

Anyone who believes they have been victimized by a Jesuit should contact both Mary Pat Panighetti, Advocacy Coordinator for Jesuits West, [mpanighetti@jesuits.org](mailto:mpanighetti@jesuits.org) or 408-893-8398, and appropriate law enforcement and child-protective agencies.