



ARCHDIOCESE
OF
SAINT PAUL &
MINNEAPOLIS

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I wanted to reach out directly to you regarding the Settlement Agreement the Archdiocese and the Ramsey County Attorney's Office announced Friday morning.

From the time I first arrived here in June – two weeks after the charges were filed -- I have worked to learn as much as I can about the events surrounding Curtis Wehmeyer and his abuse of children under his care at Blessed Sacrament Church in St. Paul.

From that same time, the Archdiocese was engaged in dialogue with Ramsey County Attorney, John Choi, and his staff. We immediately realized we all had the same goal; to make sure children are safe in our churches, schools and communities. So, from the first time our team and the County Attorney's team met, we worked together to find the best ways to make that a reality.

We also involved and consulted with the Board of Directors, Archdiocesan Finance Council, the Ministerial Review Board, the College of Consultors (an advisory group of priests), and priests who have been or are currently in leadership positions. They all agreed that this Agreement is the right thing to do to provide safe environments.

All of that dialogue, collaboration and hard work came together on Friday morning when a judge accepted the Settlement Agreement with the Ramsey County Attorney's Office. Let me assure you, much of what is in the new document are things we are already doing, while others are practices and procedures that are already working in some dioceses around the country. We are agreeing to implement the plan under a set deadline and to be held accountable for that commitment.

As for what this means to you, our priests and our parishes: It will require all of us to renew our commitment to continue building a culture that makes the protection of children a priority.

This Settlement Agreement is an opportunity for us to do all we can to make sure children are as safe as possible now and into the future.

I am grateful for your prayers and support during my time in this Archdiocese and I am counting on your support moving forward. Please continue to pray for me and I assure you of my prayers for you and your families.

In Christ,

Archbishop Bernard Hebda