News



Maryland Attorney General Anthony Brown comments about releasing the redacted report on child sexual abuse in the Catholic Archdiocese of Baltimore on April 6, 2023, in Baltimore. Brown released some previously redacted names in its staggering report on child sex abuse in the Archdiocese of Baltimore on Tuesday, Sept. 26, 2023. (Kim Hairston/The Baltimore Sun via AP, File)

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Baltimore — September 27, 2023
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Maryland’s attorney general released some previously redacted names in its staggering report on child sex abuse in the Archdiocese of Baltimore on Sept. 26, but the names of five Catholic Church leaders remained redacted amid ongoing appeals, prompting criticism of the church by victims’ advocates.

While the names of the high-ranking church leaders already have been reported by local media, the Maryland director of Survivors of those Abused by Priests said he was disappointed, but not surprised that resistance continues against transparency and accountability.

"Once again, it just shows that the church is not doing what they say they’re doing," said David Lorenz. "They’re just not. They’re not being open and transparent, and they should be, and they claim to be."

Lorenz said he questioned whether the names in the report would ever be made public.

"I don’t have a ton of confidence, because the church is extremely powerful and extremely wealthy and they are paying for the lawyers for these officials," Lorenz said. "We know that. They are paying the lawyers of the officials whose names are still being redacted."

Christian Kendzierski, a spokesperson for the archdiocese, said the archdiocese has cooperated with the investigation, which began in 2019.

"At the same time, we believed that those named in the report had a right to be heard as a fundamental matter of fairness," Kendzierski said. "In today’s culture where hasty and errant conclusions are sometimes quickly formed, the mere inclusion of one’s name in a report such as this can wrongly and forever equate anyone named — no matter how innocuously — with those who committed the

evilest acts."

The Maryland Attorney General’s Office said in a statement last month that the five officials whose names remain redacted "had extensive participation in the Archdiocese’s handling of abuser clergy and reports of child abuse." The attorney general's office noted a judge's order that made further disclosures possible.

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"The court’s order enables my office to continue to lift the veil of secrecy over decades of horrifying abuse suffered by the survivors," Attorney General Anthony Brown said at the time.

The names of eight alleged abusers that had been redacted were publicized in a revised report released Sept. 26.

Brown’s office said appeals are ongoing relating to further disclosure of redacted names and the agency could release an even less redacted version of the report later.

The names were initially redacted partly because they were obtained through grand jury proceedings, which are confidential under Maryland law without a judge’s order.

Those accused of perpetuating the coverup include Auxiliary Bishop W. Francis Malooly, according to The Baltimore Sun. Malooly later rose to become bishop of the Diocese of Wilmington, which covers all of Delaware and parts of Maryland’s Eastern Shore. He retired in 2021.

Another high-ranking official, Msgr. Richard Woy, currently serves as pastor of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish in a suburb west of Baltimore. He received complaints about one of the report’s most infamous alleged abusers, Fr. Joseph Maskell, who was the subject of a 2017 Netflix series "The Keepers."

In April, the attorney general first released its 456-page investigation with redactions that details 156 clergy, teachers, seminarians and deacons within the Archdiocese of Baltimore who allegedly assaulted more than 600 children going back to the 1940s. Many of them are now dead.

The release of the largely unredacted report comes just days before a new state law goes into effect Oct. 1, removing the statute of limitations on child sex abuse charges and allowing victims to sue their abusers decades after the fact.