



Office of the Bishop

Recently, it was learned that civil officials in Wyoming have decided not to prosecute former Bishop Joseph Hart, formerly a priest in the Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph. It is my hope that the District Attorney's Office will eventually provide more information as to why this decision was made to assist understanding.

I echo the words of Cheyenne Bishop Stephen Biegler that a decision not to pursue criminal prosecution does not mean that the victims involved are not credible. Any victim who has courageously come forward to speak of their abuse is to be commended. I recognize the decision not to prosecute has had a strong impact for them and their families. I stand by the determinations made by the Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph's Independent Review Board that allegations of sexual abuse against former Bishop Hart are credible. Likewise, the Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph is eager for a just resolution for everyone.

Distinct from the civil process, it is important to know that a canonical process remains before the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith in Rome. Our diocese has not received any new information related to this Roman matter.

+ James V. Johnston, Jr.

Most Reverend James V. Johnston, Jr.
Bishop of Kansas City-St. Joseph

Report suspicions of abuse:

- 1. Call the **Missouri Child Abuse Hotline** at **1.800.392.3738** (if the victim is currently under the age of 18), and*
- 2. Contact your local law enforcement agency or call 911, and*
- 3. After reporting to these civil and law enforcement authorities, report suspected sexual abuse of a minor or vulnerable adult to the Diocesan Ombudsman, **Joe Crayon**, at **816.812.2500** or **crayon@ombudsmankcsj.org**, if the abuse involves a priest, deacon, employee or volunteer of the Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph.*
The Diocese has a sincere commitment to providing care and healing resources to victims of sexual abuse and their families. Please contact the Victim Advocate, Kathleen Chastain, at 816.392.0011 or chastain@diocesekcsj.org for more information.