



JEFF ANDERSON & ASSOCIATES PA  
REACHING ACROSS TIME FOR JUSTICE

## Press Release

Tuesday, September 18, 2012

# 9 Victims of Sexual Abuse by 7 Philadelphia Archdiocese Priests filed New Lawsuits Today

**Victim/Survivor: “It is today that courage brings me here,  
it is today that more will be revealed”**

**Attorney says multiple cases are “all one conspiracy”**

**(Philadelphia, PA)** At a news conference today in Philadelphia, attorney Jeff Anderson and co-counsels Marci Hamilton and Dan Monahan announced the filing of eight new lawsuits for nine survivors of clergy abuse against the Philadelphia Archdiocese, Archbishop Charles J. Chaput, Cardinal Justin Rigali, Msgr. William Lynn and the seven individual priests accused of the sexual abuse. The filing of these lawsuits brings the total number filed against the Archdiocese by Jeff Anderson & Associates to 16 complaints on behalf of 17 survivors.

Speaking at the news conference, Michael W. McDonnell, whose complaint alleges abuse by two of the named priests, said in part: “As a survivor of childhood sexual abuse by the clergy, I can tell you that there is no doubt that the conspiracy to cover-up the grave moral actions by the clergy started long before these tragedies ever became public. It was protocol. It is today that courage brings me here, it is today that more will be revealed.”

Co-counsel Marci Hamilton said, “It is not easy for these survivors to come forward. But, after have been frustrated by the Archdiocese's persistent failures to protect children and its ongoing failure to take responsibility for the horrendous abuse suffered by so many at the hands of its priests and employees, their courage is surely demonstrated today.”

Also attending the news conference was victim/survivor Andy Druding, who said he was sexually abused by Msgr. Francis Feret at St. Timothy in Northeast Philadelphia, “a place that was sacred to my family and grandparents, who were married in that church.”

Citing the recent criminal conviction of Msgr. William Lynn and the guilty plea taken by defrocked priest, Edward Avery, Hamilton observed that many survivors of sexual abuse in the Philadelphia Archdiocese are now emboldened to come forward and demand justice.

“Moreover,” Hamilton added, “The defense by Msgr. Lynn that he should not be held responsible as the Vicar for Clergy for the placement of known pedophiles, because he was just a minion required to follow orders, was an insult to the survivors and good reason for these survivors to want to come forward now. Obviously, we are filing eight cases for these nine victims all at once because the Archdiocese, its hierarchy, and the seven priests, are all one conspiracy.”

Philadelphia-based attorney Dan Monahan, the third member of the team of lawyers put together by nationally prominent clergy abuse attorney Jeff Anderson said, "In the cases filed today, it is clear the Archdiocese and its bishops covered up abuse from the Northeast to Manayunk to Delaware County. We applaud these survivors today for their willingness to stand up to the institution and their leaders who put them and so many other children at risk. Though sadly, we know there are many more survivors who have yet to speak up.”

Anderson, who is also handling cases for victims of sexual abuse by Jerry Sandusky at Penn State, said “bringing these cases is important because until there is accountability it is difficult to begin a journey of healing. With the filing of these cases today, these courageous survivors can start to heal.”

#### **Priests named as defendants in the lawsuits:**

**Msgr. Francis Feret**, St. Timothy's School, Northeast Philadelphia

**Fr. John H. Mulholland**, Holy Child Parish, Manayunk

**Fr. John P. Schmeer**, Roman Catholic High School, Philadelphia; St. Anastasia School, Newtown Square, PA

**Edward Avery (Defrocked)**, St. Bernadette's, Drexel Hill, PA.;

**Father Robert L Brennan**, St. Marks School, Philadelphia; Resurrection of our Lord, Philadelphia

**Father Joseph J Gallagher**, Ascension of our Lord, Philadelphia

**Father Francis X. Trauger**, St. Titus, Norristown

**Find copies of the eight civil complaints and statements of survivors Michael McDonnell and Andrew Druding here:**

[www.AbusedinPhiladelphia.com](http://www.AbusedinPhiladelphia.com)

[www.AndersonAdvocates.com](http://www.AndersonAdvocates.com)

#### **Attorney Bios:**

**Attorney and Professor Marci Hamilton** is one of the United States' leading church/state legal scholars, as well as an expert on child sex abuse in religious and secular institutions. Professor Hamilton holds the Paul R. Verkuil Chair in Public Law at the Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law, Yeshiva University, and is the author of [\*God vs. the Gavel: Religion and the Rule of Law\*](#) (Cambridge University Press 2005), and [\*Justice Denied: What America Must Do to Protect Its Children\*](#) (Cambridge 2008, 2012). Professor Hamilton is a 1988 magna cum laude graduate of the University of Pennsylvania Law School and served as Editor-in-Chief of the University of Pennsylvania Law Review. She clerked for Judge Edward R. Becker of the United States Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit and Justice Sandra Day O'Connor of the United States Supreme Court. **Contact: Mobile 215.353.8984**

**Attorney Dan Monahan** has represented thousands of individuals including victims of crime in personal injury cases throughout Pennsylvania since graduating from Villanova Law School in 1978. He is a Board Certified Trial Advocate and admitted to practice law before the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania, the Federal District Court and the Federal Circuit Court of Appeals. He is a Fellow of the Academy of Advocacy. **Contact: office/610.363.3888/Mobile/484.883.2901**

**Attorney Jeff Anderson (available by phone)**, is a St. Paul, Minnesota-based, trial lawyer widely recognized as a pioneer in sexual abuse litigation. One of the first trial lawyers in America to publicly and aggressively initiate suits against religious organizations and hold them responsible by utilizing the American civil justice system, Anderson has represented thousands of survivors of sexual abuse by authority figures and clergy. **Contact Jeff Anderson: Office/651.227.9990 Mobile/612.817.8665**