

Sex-abuse files impugn Chicago's cardinals

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Thousands of pages of chancery files were released on January 21 as part of a court settlement with the Chicago Catholic archdiocese, which for decades failed to protect children from priestly predators. The *Chicago Tribune* said new details revealed how the archdiocese “quietly shuttled accused priests from parish to parish and failed to notify police of child sexual abuse allegations.”

The documents account for 30 out of more than 65 priests with substantiated child abuse allegations against them. Of the 30, most were not prosecuted. Fourteen have died; all but two are no longer priests, and none is active in ministry.

Accused priests were shielded by church officials who thought the men could be cured through therapy or should be given second chances.

Lawyer Jeff Anderson told a news conference that the archdiocese's actions were not mistakes but something more sinister. “What the documents demonstrate to us is that all the [Chicago] cardinals, including [Cardinal Francis] George, were complicit,” said Anderson. The attorney also said, according to WGN, that he thought the new pope should discipline George for his role.

A lawyer for the archdiocese said that 95 percent of the incidents described in the church documents occurred between 1988 and 1996. The archdiocese has paid more than \$100 million to victims in the last 25 years.