



Archdiocese charged for 'failing to protect children'

KARE 11 Staff, KARE 9:08 p.m. EDT June 5, 2015



(Photo: KARE)

ST. PAUL, Minn. - The Ramsey County Attorney announced criminal charges against the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis Friday, in response to the way sexual abuse allegations were handled within the church.



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[Criminal charges filed against Twin Cities archdiocese](#)

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John Choi, county attorney, and St. Paul Police Chief Thomas Smith held a press conference Friday to announce six gross misdemeanors against the church and condemn the way the Archdiocese handled former priest Rev. Curtis Wehmeyer, who is currently behind bars for abusing children. A civil petition has been filed, as well.



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[Church charges: Interview with Attorney Joe Daly](#)

[\(http://ux.kare11.com/media/cinematic/video/28569103/church-charges-interview-with-attorney-joe-daly/\)](http://ux.kare11.com/media/cinematic/video/28569103/church-charges-interview-with-attorney-joe-daly/)

Wehmeyer pleaded guilty in November of 2012 to several counts of criminal sexual conduct with minors and 17 felony counts of possession of child pornography. He was also charged with criminal sexual conduct with a third victim in Wisconsin. He's currently serving a five-year sentence.



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"It is not only Curtis Wehmeyer who is criminally responsible for the harm caused, but it is the Archdiocese, as well," Choi said.



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[MN priest who molested boys removed from priesthood](#)

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He said the charges are the result of a 20-month investigation, including dozens of witnesses and hundreds of thousands of documents. Choi said the charges are not against one individual at this point, but noted the investigation is on-going.



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[Former St. Paul priest charged in Wisconsin case](#)

<http://www.kare11.com/story/news/local/2014/11/17/curtis-weymeyer-charged-wisconsin-case/19173419/>

"The facts that we have gathered cannot be ignored. They cannot be dismissed and are frankly, appalling, especially when viewed in their totality," Choi said. "More importantly, our community cannot allow them to be repeated."



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Choi said several times, the charges are in response to the Archdiocese's role in "failing to protect children," adding there were multiple opportunities for leaders to remove Wehmeyer but they chose not to.

He said "time and time again, they turned a blind eye" to what was happening.

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