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Ananova :

35 priests committed child sex abuse, says US archdiocese

The Archdiocese of Philadelphia in the US says it has found "credible evidence" that 35 priests sexually abused children over five decades.

Several of the priests have now been relieved of their duties.

About 50 children were victims, diocesan spokeswoman Catherine Rossi says.

Ms Rossi could not say how many of the 35 names had been given to police when the allegations were made. She says the archdiocese followed state law.

The archdiocese will not turn over the names of the priests now because the statute of limitations has expired in all of the cases, she said.

"We will follow the letter of the law 100%, but we are not going to go back and release the names of priests from years ago," Ms Rossi said. "We don't see any good that would come from that, for either the victim or the priest."

She says that fewer than 10 priests had faced "credible" abuse

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allegations years ago and had been working in administrative jobs since then.

Of the remaining accused priests, four were diagnosed as paedophiles and either left the priesthood or retired. The others were either relieved of their duties, retired, left the priesthood or died.

The archdiocese said it reviewed records dating to 1950, prompted by a sex-abuse scandal in Boston, where church leaders admitted they knew about abuse allegations against a priest but did little to stop him.

Story filed: 03:45 Saturday 23rd February 2002

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