

Statement on the Arrest of Mike Breeding

Assumption and Sacred Heart Catholic Parishes, Bellingham, WA

September 28, 2021

Dearest Catholics of Bellingham,

We recently learned that Mike Breeding was arrested on charges of child sexual abuse. Mike has been a long-term volunteer in our youth ministry program, and so we feel a responsibility to share this news with you.

Regarding the specific charges in this case, we defer to the Bellingham Police Department and Whatcom County Prosecuting Attorney's Office, and we pledge our full cooperation with any investigation. If you or anyone in your family has concerns about interactions with Mike Breeding, please reach out directly to the Bellingham Police Department.

Child sexual abuse continues to be a scourge in our society, so regardless of the outcome of this investigation, it is important to speak once again about our children and how to keep them safe. Our parishes will continue to educate volunteers and students through our safe environment trainings, and we hope that parents will use this as an opportunity to speak directly with their children. We hope that these conversations will help to prevent sexual abuse from happening in the first place, by giving children the tools they need to recognize grooming and speak up before potential abuse advances. We hope that these conversations will create a safe space for our children, so they know they can always speak to trusted adults, especially their parents. And we hope that, if children have already experienced sexual abuse, such a conversation will help them bring that abuse forward now, so that they can seek justice and healing as soon as possible.

If you feel that you have been harmed by a member of the clergy or lay person working on behalf of the Church, or know others who have, please contact law enforcement. You are also encouraged to call the Archdiocesan Abuse Helpline (1-800-446-7762). You may also wish to read more about our commitment to healing on the Protect and Heal website (<http://protectandheal.seattlearchdiocese.org>).

Please join us in prayer for all victims of sexual abuse, particularly those in our Bellingham Catholic community, that they might find the healing and support that they need; and for an end to all sexual abuse.

In Christ, Our Lord,



Fr. Jeffrey H. Moore
Priest Administrator
Assumption Parish



Fr. Cody Ross
Pastor
Sacred Heart Parish