Tuesday, May 3, 2022

Statement regarding Father Benedict Jurchak, T.O.R.

On Friday, April 29, 2022, Father Benedict Jurchak, T.O.R. was removed from ministry by the Archdiocese of Washington, where he had been ministering as a chaplain in a veterans' retirement home.

In 2019, Father Benedict had been temporarily removed from ministry when a single allegation of sexual misconduct involving an adult woman was reported to the Franciscans. In the following years, both the police and an independent lay investigator reviewed the claim and found that it could not be substantiated. A female lay canonist also conducted an investigation in accord with canon law and made the same finding, which was accepted by the Franciscans after consultation with a lay review board. The review board also accepted the recommendation of the canonist that some financial assistance be offered to the complainant, to assist with therapeutic costs.

While the Franciscans disclosed all this to the Archdiocese of Washington prior to Father Benedict’s assignment there, the recent public attention given once again to this single, unsubstantiated allegation has made it impossible, from the perspective of the Archdiocese, for him to continue to minister effectively there.

The Province urges anyone who wishes to make a complaint of misconduct by a Franciscan friar both to contact law enforcement and to report to the Franciscan’s Survivor Assistance Coordinator at safeguarding@franciscanstor.org.

Please pray for peace and healing for all those negatively impacted by the conduct of any friar.