

The logo for FRONTLINE, featuring the word "FRONTLINE" in white, bold, sans-serif capital letters on a red rectangular background.

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## FRONTLINE INVESTIGATES CHURCH SEX ABUSE IN ALASKA

### *The Silence*

Lead Segment of FRONTLINE's new multi-story magazine hour

Tuesday, April 19, 2011, at 9 P.M. ET on PBS

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#Frontline

FRONTLINE reveals a little-known chapter of the Catholic Church sex abuse story: decades of abuse of Native Americans by priests and other church workers in Alaska.

In *The Silence*, the first of two magazine segments airing Tuesday, April 19, 2011, at 9 P.M. ET on PBS, FRONTLINE producer Tom Curran and reporter Mark Trahan examine the legacy of abuse by a number of men who worked for the Catholic Church along Alaska's far west coast in the late 1960s and early 1970s. They would leave behind a trail of hundreds of claims of abuse, making this one of the hardest hit regions in the country.

"I was just a kid," Ben Andrews tells FRONTLINE of the years of abuse he suffered at the hands of Father George Endal and Joseph Lundowski, a layman who was training to be a deacon. "Father Endal and Joseph Lundowski, they couldn't stop molesting me once they started. It was almost an everyday thing. Father Endal kept telling me that it would make me closer to God."

"I'm still having nightmares of Joseph Lundowski molesting, having sex with me," says Peter "Packy" Kobuk. "I get up sweating, angry, feel like I could hurt somebody, but I never meant [sic] to get angry at my children, but the anger went on my children also."

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“This was 1970,” says Anchorage attorney Ken Roosa, who represented the Alaska victims in a class action suit against the church. “It was absolutely unthinkable that the Catholic Church could be involved in the sexual abuse of children. There was nowhere for the kids to hide. There was no one they could talk to. The adults believed the abusers over their own children. It was a perfect storm for molestation.”

As part of the church’s class action settlement with the victims, the bishop of Fairbanks, Donald Kettler, was asked to do something that no other bishop in the country had done on this scale: return to all of the villages where the abuse occurred and apologize to the victims in person. In December 2010, FRONTLINE gained unique access to Bishop Kettler’s visit to the village of St. Michael—frequently referred to as “ground zero” for the abuse—where the bishop would come face-to-face with the reality of the abuse that the church had refused to acknowledge for years.

“In St. Michael, we’ve had a great deal of our sexual abuse happen there,” Bishop Kettler tells FRONTLINE. “So I am certainly conscious of the importance of this visit. I’m anxious insofar as I’m wondering how I will be received. What will happen? What I can do?”

In the days before the bishop arrived, Elsie Boudreau, one of the first Alaska survivors to go public with her claims against the church, said: “I’ve seen how important it would be to have someone from the church say they’re sorry. The bishop has that power to reach that little kid and say, ‘It wasn’t your fault; you did nothing wrong.’ And I don’t know if he’s able to do that.”

**Also in this hour:** An encore presentation of *Flying Cheaper*, a January 2011 investigation into the outsourcing of major airline repair work to lower-cost

independent maintenance operations in the U.S. and abroad ([www.pbs.org/frontline/flying-cheaper](http://www.pbs.org/frontline/flying-cheaper)). Closing the hour, a news update on *Flying Cheaper* from correspondent Miles O'Brien, as well as a follow-up on the story of Chinese artist and activist Ai Weiwei, who was taken into custody by government authorities days after FRONTLINE's March 29 newsmagazine profile of him, as part of a larger crackdown on artists, bloggers and human-rights advocates.

*The Silence* is a Lower 48 Films production for WGBH/FRONTLINE and Native American Public Telecommunications (NAPT). The writer and producer is Tom Curran. The reporter is Mark Trahant. The executive producer for NAPT is Shirley K. Sneve.

*Flying Cheaper* is a FRONTLINE co-production with the American University School of Communication's Investigative Reporting Workshop. The producers are Rick Young and Catherine Rentz. The writer is Rick Young. The correspondent is Miles O'Brien.

The series senior producer of FRONTLINE is Raney Aronson-Rath. The executive producer of FRONTLINE is David Fanning.

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