

## 422 sex abuse claims filed against Christian Brothers

Roughly 160 originate from Newfoundland and Labrador; religious order declared bankruptcy in 2011

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Lawyer Geoff Budden and his Mount Pearl firm filed 90 of the claims against the Christian Brothers before the Aug. 1 deadline. (CBC)

The final number for claims against the Christian Brothers in North America is in, surprising even some of the lawyers handling them.

Christian Brothers entities in North America declared bankruptcy last year. The deadline for filing suit against the order expired Aug. 1.

The total number of claims approved is 422.

About 160 are from Newfoundland and Labrador. The rest originate from the United States.

Mount Pearl lawyer Geoff Budden and his firm filed 90 of the claims from this province.

"We knew that more claims would come forward in the bankruptcy, and that in fact happened," Budden told CBC News.

"None of us could possibly know exactly how many. I think the lawyers involved certainly were all expecting more to come forward, but we would not have necessarily expected 422 claims."

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Budden said he was surprised by the number from the United States, but was "not shocked" at the number from Newfoundland and Labrador.

The claims are for alleged sexual abuse only.

Those from this province go back as far as 1940 and continue into the early 1960s.

About a third of the American claims come from Washington state where the brothers had an orphanage.

Another third come from New York state.

The rest originate from places as scattered as New Jersey, Illinois, Montana, California and Hawaii.

Budden expects a busy couple of months, as lawyers continue to get their heads around all the claims.

"We will all be taking stock of where things stand, and the work of liquidating or otherwise creating value from Christian Brother assets will be ongoing," he said.