

Annual Report of the Archdiocese of Dubuque  
Regarding the Implementation of the *Policy for the Protection of Minors*  
April 20, 2009

This report covers the period from January 1, 2008, to December 31, 2008. The *Policy for the Protection of Minors* of the Archdiocese of Dubuque was initially approved and adopted on July 1, 2003. A revision of the *Policy* was approved on March 10, 2006. There were no changes in the *Policy* during 2008. The *Policy* may be found on the Archdiocesan Web site: [www.arch.pvt.k12.ia.us](http://www.arch.pvt.k12.ia.us), along with reports from previous years and other information. Click on the icon "Protection of God's Children."

#### Goals of the Charter

In June 2002, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops developed the framework for all dioceses throughout the United States to develop programs to reach out to persons who as minors had been sexually abused by clergy and also to provide a safe environment for all God's children. The *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People* included four main goals:

1. To Promote Healing and Reconciliation With Victims/Survivors of Sexual Abuse of Minors.
2. To Guarantee an Effective Response to Allegations of Sexual Abuse of Minors.
3. To Ensure the Accountability of Our Procedures.
4. To Protect the Faithful in the Future.

#### TO PROMOTE HEALING AND RECONCILIATION

#### Office for the Protection of Children

The Archdiocese continues to have an Office for the Protection of Children, staffed by Ms. Pam Gehl, who receives secretarial assistance from Ms. Barbara Gleason. With this report, gratitude is expressed to Ms. Gehl for her sensitive attention to victims and her assistance to the Archdiocesan Review Board for Sexual Abuse of Minors by Clergy and Other Church Personnel, as well as to the Archdiocese.

#### Victim Assistance Coordinators

In 2003, the Archdiocese established the position of Victim Assistance Coordinator. The position has been staffed continuously since that date. The current Victim Assistance Coordinators are: Dr. Thomas Anderegg (563-556-1225) and Ms. Joan Hoffmann (866-319-4636). Allegations of abuse may also be made to civil authorities or the Iowa Child Abuse Reporting Line (800-362-2178).

#### Assistance to Victims and Their Families

During the calendar year 2008, Archbishop Hanus met with several victims and their families and communicated by letter or telephone with others, striving to listen with patience and compassion to their experiences and concerns. The Archdiocese also provided services (counseling, psychotherapy, spiritual assistance, reading materials) to victims. The Archdiocese paid \$57,416 for therapy for victims in 2008.

#### Settlement of Cases

Following mediation, the Archdiocese of Dubuque announced on April 10, 2008, that it had reached a settlement agreement with eighteen individuals who had retained the services of a Waterloo law firm to

present their cases. All of the abuse, according to the claims, took place before June 1996. In addition to this agreement, settlements were reached without mediation with several other victims.

Of the priests accused by these victims, seven had been named previously and were already included in the “Table of Accused Priests” found on the Archdiocesan Web site. This was the first time that public accusations were made against Reverend John Reed (deceased 1976) and Reverend Louis Wendling (deceased 1969). Several claimants made accusations against Reverend Timothy DeVenney, who later in the year received a dispensation from all the obligations and rights arising from Holy Orders.

## TO GUARANTEE AN EFFECTIVE RESPONSE TO ALLEGATIONS

### Reports and Instances of Abuse

The procedures for reporting cases of alleged, suspected, or known sexual abuse of a minor committed by any personnel of Archdiocesan entities are described in Section V of the *Policy*. During the calendar year 2008, the Archdiocese received reports from thirty-two new individuals. Of these eight made their reports either directly to an official of the Archdiocese or through a Victim Assistance Coordinator. Twenty-four persons made their claims through attorneys. Most of the instances of abuse took place in the 1950s and 1960s.

Victim Assistance Coordinators, as well as officials of the Archdiocese, continued to work with several individuals who previously had made reports of abuse.

The Archdiocese places paid announcements on how to report abuse in the Archdiocesan weekly newspaper, *The Witness*, and major secular newspapers in the Archdiocese several times a year.

## TO ENSURE ACCOUNTABILITY

### Archdiocesan Review Board

The Archdiocesan Review Board continued to fulfill its responsibilities according to the *Policy*. The following individuals served as members of the board during part or all of the year: Mr. James Anastasi (Mason City), Mr. John E. Beckman (Waterloo), Mr. F. James Bradley (Cedar Rapids), Ms. Elizabeth Corken Deegan (Cedar Rapids), Dr. Thomas R. Feld (Marion), Ms. Jeananne Freymann (Dubuque), Pastor Darrel Gerrietts (Waverly), Sr. Corita Heid, R.S.M. (Mason City), Ms. Kathy Loch Klein (Dubuque), Rev. Jerry F. Kopacek (Waterloo), Ms. Pam Whitters (Clarion), and Dr. Barbara Sullivan Woodward (Dubuque).

This report affords the opportunity to express gratitude to all members of the board, past and present, for their careful work and dedication to the protection of children and young people.

### Independent Audit for Compliance

According to the *Charter*, the national Office for Child and Youth Protection of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops is to be a resource for dioceses for the implementation of “safe environment” programs and for suggested training and development of diocesan personnel responsible for child and youth protection programs. This office also is charged with producing an annual public report

on the progress made in implementing and maintaining the standards of the *Charter*. The report is to be based on an annual audit process.

On November 18, 2008, the Archdiocese received a letter from the auditing firm with the information that the Archdiocese of Dubuque was found to be in compliance with the *Charter*. A copy of the letter can be found on the Archdiocesan Web site.

## TO PROTECT THE FAITHFUL IN THE FUTURE

### Child Abuse Prevention Month

April has been designated nationally as Child Abuse Prevention Month. In the Archdiocese, parishes publish notices in the weekly bulletin. The notices explain different aspects of child abuse. Prayer cards are distributed, and liturgy guides that incorporate the theme are used. Archdiocesan schools publish information on child abuse prevention in parent newsletters, and *The Witness* dedicates a page to child abuse prevention.

### Background Checks

Background checks continue to be made on all personnel listed in Appendix A of the *Policy*. In 2008, 1,472 background checks were performed on personnel. These background checks were in addition to the 11,562 already performed.

### Safe Environment Programs

Safe Environment training programs for youth and adults were held in every Catholic school and religious education program throughout the Archdiocese. Concern for child safety is a hallmark of our schools, religious education programs, and other educational and parish activities.

The youth programs that are incorporated into the curriculum provide age-appropriate education on creating a safe environment. The curriculum emphasizes respect and provides information on maintaining appropriate boundaries and recognizing inappropriate forms of touch and behavior.

All new volunteers and employees of the Archdiocese are required to attend a safe environment training session using the *Virtus* program. *Virtus* outlines criteria for appropriate behavior between an adult and a child. It emphasizes respect for boundaries between persons and empowerment of young people to resist what makes them uncomfortable. In 2008, 1,442 individuals participated in the *Virtus* training. This is in addition to the 13,053 persons who received the training prior to 2008.

### Screening of Candidates for the Priesthood

The Archdiocese has an established strict screening process for priesthood candidates. Two independent psychologists assess each candidate. Letters of reference are acquired from several persons who know the candidate. Before beginning formal seminary studies, complete background checks are carried out. The candidate is interviewed by an admissions board, which examines carefully all the admissions materials.

The candidate is given a copy of the sexual abuse policy of the Archdiocese and he testifies that he has no history of sexual abuse. As soon as possible, the candidate completes *Virtus* training.

At least six years of close scrutiny then follow during seminary, when seminary faculty and staff, personnel of the Archdiocese, and many persons in pastoral settings who have the opportunity to observe any behaviors that might raise concerns frequently evaluate the candidate.

#### Collaboration With Superiors of Religious Communities of Men

The officials of the Archdiocese met with the superiors of religious communities of men with members in the Archdiocese to coordinate their roles should an allegation of sexual abuse of a minor be made against a member of a religious community in the future.

#### Encouragement to Report Abuse

When any adult in the community has reason to suspect that a child is being or has been abused, he or she has a moral (and often a legal) responsibility to report those suspicions to civil authorities. Reporting suspected abuse takes courage. However, adults who take a stand for children and make the call are often responsible for saving a child from terrible torment. To report any and all child abuse, contact the Iowa Department of Human Services Hotline: 1-800-362-2178. Their Web site address is: [www.dhs.state.ia.us/consumers/safety\\_and\\_protection/abuse\\_reporting/childabuse.html](http://www.dhs.state.ia.us/consumers/safety_and_protection/abuse_reporting/childabuse.html).