

Annual Report of the Archdiocese of Dubuque
Implementation of the *Policy for the Protection of Minors*
April 26, 2010

This report covers the period from January 1, 2009, to December 31, 2009. The *Policy for the Protection of Minors* of the Archdiocese of Dubuque was initially approved and adopted on July 1, 2003. Revisions of the *Policy* were approved on March 10, 2006.

On December 29, 2009, Archbishop Jerome Hanus approved and promulgated changes to the *Policy* recommended by the Archdiocesan Review Board. Section V of the *Policy* was revised to clarify the procedures by which cases of sexual abuse of minors committed by any personnel of the Archdiocese are reported to civil authorities. Section VI of the *Policy* was revised to clarify how investigations are conducted.

The revised *Policy* (December 2009) may be found on the Archdiocesan Web site: www.arch.pvt.k12.ia.us, along with reports from previous years and other information. Click on the link "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 anyone in church service 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. Ms. Joanne Pohland is the Director (DOPC). She receives secretarial assistance from Ms. Barbara Gleason. With this report, gratitude is expressed to Ms. Pam Gehl, former director who retired in October, for her sensitive attention to victims and her assistance to the Archdiocesan Review Board for the Protection of Minors, as well as to the Archdiocese.

Assistance to Victims and Their Families

During the calendar year 2009, Archbishop Hanus met with several victims and communicated by letter or telephone with others, striving to listen with compassion to their experiences and concerns. The Archdiocese also provided services (counseling, psychotherapy, spiritual assistance, reading materials) to victims. The Archdiocese incurred expenses of \$87,000.00 for settlements, therapy for victims, and attorneys' fees.

Victim Assistance Coordinators, as well as officials of the Archdiocese, continued to work with several individuals who previously had made reports of sexual abuse of minors by anyone in church service.

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

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 2009, the Archdiocese received two new credible allegations of sexual abuse of a minor. They were against priests who were removed from priestly ministry years ago.

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).

TO ENSURE ACCOUNTABILITY

Archdiocesan Review Board

The Archdiocesan Review Board for the Protection of Minors continued to fulfill its responsibilities according to the *Policy*. The Review Board, a confidential consultative body, composed primarily of laypersons, strives to hold all in the Archdiocese accountable in its mission to ensure the protection of minors by monitoring procedures and advising the Archbishop on all aspects of cases of sexual abuse, according to the principles of the *Charter* and the *Essential Norms*.

The following individuals served as members of the board during part or all of the year: Mr. James Anastasi (Clear Lake), Mr. John E. Beckman (Waterloo), Ms. Cherie Casey (Dyersville), Ms. Elizabeth Corken Deegan (Cedar Rapids), Dr. Thomas R. Feld (Marion), Pastor Darrel Gerrietts (Waverly), Sr. Corita Heid, R.S.M. (Mason City), Ms. Kathy Loch Klein (Dubuque), Very Rev. Jerry F. Kopacek (Waterloo), Hon. Randall Nigg (Dubuque), Ms. Pam Whitters (Clarion), and Dr. Barbara Sullivan Woodward (Dubuque). Deacon Gerald T. Jorgensen, Ph.D., J.C.L. serves as Promoter of Justice for the Board.

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 Secretariat 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.

The Archdiocese of Dubuque participated fully in the annual audit and the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA) report for calendar year 2009. The Archdiocese received a letter dated October 18, 2009, from the Gavin Group indicating that the Archdiocese continued to be in compliance with the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*. That letter is posted on the Archdiocesan Web site at: www.dbqarch.org/protectionofchildren/pdf/2009AuditGavinGroup.pdf.

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 Catholic schools publish information on child abuse prevention in parent newsletters, and *The Witness* publishes articles on child abuse prevention.

Background Checks

Criminal and abuse background checks continue to be made on all Archdiocesan personnel, as defined in Appendix A of the *Policy*. In 2009, 1,220 background checks were completed on personnel. These background checks were in addition to the 12,767 previously completed. This screening is required of all new employees in Archdiocesan parishes and schools. In calendar year 2009, \$9,454.75 was expended for these measures.

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 Catholic 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. The *Virtus* program 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 2009, 1,427 individuals participated in the *Virtus* program training. This is in addition to the 13,971 people who received the training prior to 2009. The annual expenses for the *Virtus* program were \$14,492.50.

Screening of Candidates for the Priesthood/Diaconate

The Archdiocese has an established strict screening process of candidates for priesthood and the diaconate.

a. Priesthood

Two psychologists, independently, assess each priesthood 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 asked to verify that they have read and understood the *Archdiocese of Dubuque Sexual Misconduct Policy*, the *Policy for the Protection of Minors*, and the *Standards of Conduct for Personnel in Archdiocesan Entities*, and he testifies that he has no record of having committed sexual abuse. As soon as possible, the candidate completes *Virtus* training.

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

b. Diaconate

A psychologist assesses each diaconate candidate. Letters of reference are acquired from the pastor and four other references who know the candidate. Before beginning studies, complete background checks are carried out. The candidate is interviewed by the Diaconate Admissions Board, which examines carefully all the admissions materials.

The candidate is asked to verify that they have read and understood the *Archdiocese of Dubuque Sexual Misconduct Policy*, the *Policy for the Protection of Minors*, and the *Standards of Conduct for Personnel in Archdiocesan Entities*, and he testifies that he has no record of having committed sexual abuse. As soon as possible, the candidate completes *Virtus* training.

An annual evaluation is conducted for each candidate. People in pastoral settings have the opportunity to observe and evaluate any behaviors that might raise concerns.

Collaboration With Superiors of Religious Communities of Men

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

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 Website address is: www.dhs.state.ia.us/consumers/safety_and_protection/abuse_reporting/childabuse.html.