

**Annual Report of the Archdiocese of Dubuque
Implementation of the Policy for the Protection of Minors
May, 2014**

This report covers the period from January 1, 2013, to December 31, 2013. The *Policy for the Protection of Minors* (hereafter *Policy*) of the Archdiocese of Dubuque was initially approved and adopted on July 1, 2003. Revisions of the *Policy* were approved on March 10, 2006 and on December 29, 2009.

The Archdiocese and the Review Board have studied and revised documents relating to sexual abuse of minors and standards of conduct. The Review Board also developed standards of ethical, "Standards of Conduct for Personnel in Archdiocesan Entities." The "Standards of Conduct" may be found on the Archdiocesan Web site: www.dbqarch.org 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 (hereafter USCCB) 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 USCCB revised the *Charter* in June, 2011. The *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People* includes 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. Carol Gebhart is the current Director (DOPC). Administrative expenses for the Office for the Protection of Children incurred by the Archdiocese, in addition to those outlined below, were \$39,130.

Assistance to Victims and Their Families

During the calendar year 2013, Archbishop Hanus and Archbishop Jackels 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 structured settlements and services (counseling, psychotherapy, spiritual assistance, and reading materials) to victims.

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

The Archdiocese placed paid announcements about how to report sexual abuse in the Archdiocesan newspaper, *The Witness*, and major secular newspapers in northeast Iowa 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 2013, the Archdiocese received 5 new allegations claiming sexual abuse of a minor. In each case, appropriate civil and canonical responses were implemented.

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 Ottavi (563-584-3000) 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 Archdiocese of Dubuque 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. John E. Beckman (Waterloo), Ms. Cherie Casey (Dyersville), Pastor Darrel Gerrietts (Waverly), Hon. Randall Nigg (Dubuque), Deacon Mike Klappholz (Cedar Rapids), Rev. Michael Schueller (Epworth), and Dr. Barbara Sullivan Woodward (Dubuque). Deacon Gerald T. Jorgensen, Ph.D., J.C.L. who serves as Promoter of Justice for the Archdiocese, is an ex-officio member of 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 USCCB 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 and is published on the USCCB website: www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/child-and-youth-protection/upload/2012-annual-report.pdf

The Archdiocese of Dubuque fully participated in the annual audit and the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA) report for calendar year 2013. Stonebridge Business Partners conducted a site audit of the Archdiocese on October 2-3, 2013. Stonebridge Business Partners sent a letter dated October 16, 2013, indicating that the Archdiocese continued to be in compliance with the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*. The letter from the audit firm is posted on the Archdiocesan Website at: www.dbqarch.org/protectionofchildren/pdf/2013ComplianceLetter

TO PROTECT THE FAITHFUL IN THE FUTURE

Background Checks

Criminal and abuse background checks continue to be made on all Archdiocesan personnel, as defined in Appendix A of the *Policy*. In 2013, 1,816 background checks were completed on personnel. These background checks were in addition to the 16,474 previously completed. In calendar year 2013, \$33,418 was expended for background checks.

Safe Environment Programs

Safe Environment educational 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 Archdiocesan Catholic schools, religious education programs, and other educational and parish activities. The youth programs that are incorporated into the curriculum provide age-appropriate education about 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 Protecting God's Children for Adults* 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 2013, 1,809 individuals participated in the *Virtus* program training. This is in addition to the 20,023 people who received the training prior to 2013. The annual expense for the *Virtus* program was \$9,679.

Screening of Candidates for the Priesthood/Diaconate

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

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 conducted. The candidate is interviewed by an admissions board, which examines carefully all the admissions materials. The candidate is asked to verify that he has 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. The candidate completes *Virtus* training within thirty days.

At least six years of close scrutiny 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.

Diaconate

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

The candidate is asked to verify that he has 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. The candidate completes *Virtus* training within thirty days.

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. Adults who make the call are often responsible for saving a child from terrible torment. To report any and all suspected 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