

**The Annual Update to the Faithful of Southeastern Wisconsin  
Regarding the Archdiocesan Response to Sexual Abuse of Minors by Clergy**  
*September 2006*

*There is deep regret and profound sorrow that any child or young person was ever harmed by a clergy member or by anyone serving on behalf of the Church. For such a tragedy to happen in the Church is contrary to the will of Christ, who showed such tender care for children, and is in violation of everything the Church and the priesthood represent. Healing the suffering associated with clergy sexual abuse remains an important pastoral concern of the Catholic Church, particularly in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee. We know much has been accomplished during these past several years, but we also know there is more we can do. We ask anyone who is a victim to come forward.*

*I have promised to keep you informed of our work addressing clergy sexual abuse, and have done so annually since my arrival as your archbishop. The Archdiocese of Milwaukee remains committed to working with victims/survivors and their families to bring aid in healing and reach resolution with all who have come forward for help. We also are dedicated to continuing the programs, education, and training designed to protect children and young people.*

*The Archdiocese of Milwaukee upholds the Church's commitment that no priest with a substantiated report of sexual abuse of a minor serves in active ministry in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee.*

*This, my fifth annual accountability statement to the faithful of southeastern Wisconsin, provides information on the actions taken and progress made by the Archdiocese of Milwaukee.*

*Faithfully in Christ,*



*Most Reverend Timothy M. Dolan*

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**Outreach to Victims/Survivors**

The Archdiocese of Milwaukee's pastoral outreach to victims/survivors of sexual abuse by clergy has been strengthened during the last year.

Amy Peterson has served as the full-time victim assistance coordinator since the fall of 2004. During her tenure, she has coordinated the archdiocesan response to victims/survivors, met privately and frequently with victims/survivors and their families, managed the archdiocesan prevention and response services, and directed outreach and educational services. These activities include:

- Creating an on-line needs assessment to help the archdiocese do a more efficient and effective job of assisting and understanding victims.

- Working with a panel of victims/survivors advocates who assessed the Sexual Abuse Prevention and Response Services Office and made recommendations.
- Developing ongoing training on mandatory reporting responsibilities for school and parish staff and clergy.
- Working with local and state sexual assault service providers to improve the archdiocesan response to victims/survivors.
- Providing referral and resource information on a daily basis.

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- Coordinating a diocesan-wide outreach campaign that included a newspaper advertisement, parish bulletin and newsletter insert, and poster.
- Overseeing the re-design of the archdiocesan web site so that information related to clergy sexual abuse is more accessible.
- Working with service providers and survivors to plan a free, day-long “Day for Healing” retreat for victims/survivors, as well as their families and supporters, in the fall of 2005.
- Expanding the Community Advisory Board membership to include more victims/survivors.
- Providing sensitivity training for clergy and other archdiocesan staff.

### **Supporting Individuals Who Have Experienced Sexual Abuse by Church Personnel**

Believing, supporting, and caring for individuals who have experienced sexual abuse by clergy or other Church personnel is an important pastoral concern for the Archdiocese of Milwaukee. When a person contacts the victim assistance coordinator, a variety of resources are offered. These may include counseling referrals, spiritual direction, therapy support or other services to assist people who have been abused or who have been affected by abuse.

### **Meeting with Victims/Survivors**

Archbishop Dolan has extended an invitation to individuals who have experienced or been affected by sexual abuse by clergy and anyone from the community to meet with him and share how the Archdiocese of Milwaukee can effectively address the issue of sexual abuse by clergy or other Church personnel, an invitation that some have indeed accepted.

### **Reporting Abuse**

Victims/survivors of clergy sexual abuse can make reports to these organizations/agencies:

- Civil authorities in the city or county where the abuse occurred;
- One of the various agencies that offer free services to sexual abuse victims/survivors. A comprehensive list of these agencies is available at this link on the archdiocesan web site – <http://www.archmil.org/CommunityContacts>;
- The Healing Center at (866) 302-9215;
- The Archdiocese of Milwaukee's Sexual Abuse Prevention and Response Services Office at (414) 769-3436.

The archdiocese requires all adults to exercise reporting responsibilities for any suspected physical or sexual abuse of minors, whether or not designated as a mandatory reporter under Wisconsin law.

### ***Safeguarding All of God's Family Program***

The Archdiocese of Milwaukee has implemented the *Safeguarding All of God's Family* program to protect children and all family members from sexual abuse and related dangers.

The *Safeguarding All of God's Family* program increases awareness and knowledge of child sexual abuse to prevent any child from suffering this trauma from school or Church personnel, family members, or other adults. All adults who work with children and participate in this program become familiar with the warning signs of abuse, learn strategies for handling suspicions of abuse, and identify ways to respond to abuse.

Archdiocesan, parish and school staff, as well as volunteers who regularly interact with minors, are required to participate in a three-hour "Protecting God's Children" Safe Environment Education session. A quarterly newsletter with safe environment information is produced and distributed throughout the archdiocese. Age-appropriate abuse prevention education materials are incorporated into Catholic school and religious education instruction.

Since the inception of the *Safeguarding All of God's Family* program, more than 23,000 people have attended or registered for training sessions. Employees and volunteers also have the opportunity to attend training sessions on the topic of mandatory reporting provided by Children's Hospital of Wisconsin.

A full-time coordinator oversees the implementation of the *Safeguarding All of God's Family* program. To date, the Archdiocese of Milwaukee has spent more than \$138,000 implementing the *Safeguarding All of God's Family* program.

### **Independent Clergy Sexual Abuse Mediation System**

In January 2004, the Archdiocese of Milwaukee announced the establishment of an independent, voluntary mediation system to address claims of diocesan clergy sexual abuse of a minor. Working with the director of the internationally-acclaimed Center for Dispute Resolution at Marquette University, the system was created to assist victims/survivors who were hesitant to contact the

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archdiocese's own existing mediation process, and who shared their belief that mediation should be initiated and carried out by a respected, neutral third party.

To date, the archdiocese has reached resolution with more than 120 individuals through the independent mediation system.

For all cases in which no prior reports had been made to the Archdiocese of Milwaukee about a specific cleric who is still alive, the appropriate county district attorney was informed.

The independent system administrator can be contacted at (866) 302-9215. All information is confidential.

### **Archdiocese of Milwaukee Found Fully Compliant with USCCB *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People***

Three outside, independent, professional audits have shown the Archdiocese of Milwaukee to be in full and complete compliance with the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*, adopted by the U.S. Bishops in June 2002.

The compliance audits were coordinated by the USCCB National Review Board and assessed how Catholic dioceses throughout the nation performed in their efforts to integrate the *Charter's* standards into their administration. The Compliance Audit examined the four main sections of the *Charter*:

- Promote healing and reconciliation;
- Guarantee effective response to allegations of sexual abuse of a minor;
- Ensure accountability of procedures;
- Protect the faithful in the future.

The audits affirmed "Additional Actions to Protect Children" believed to exceed and/or enhance the requirements of the *Charter*, including:

- the Independent Mediation System and
- the Community Advisory Board.

The archdiocese also was recognized for its foresight in implementing an outreach program in 1989, as well as establishing the 2002 Eisenberg Commission to review policies and procedures.

### **Distribution of Names and Status Updates of Priests**

In July 2004, the Archdiocese of Milwaukee published and distributed the names of diocesan priests of the archdiocese who have been (or would be if they were still alive) restricted from all priestly ministries, may not celebrate the sacraments

publicly, or present themselves as priests in any way because of substantiated reports of sexual abuse of a minor. This information is available at this link – [www.archmil.org/July2004news](http://www.archmil.org/July2004news).

In accordance with the canonical norms that have been established, the allegations against any living priest are sent to the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith in Rome. Since the 2005 Accountability Report, one cleric against whom there was a substantiated report of sexual abuse of a minor was laicized.

### **Canonical (Church) Trials**

Priests against whom there are substantiated reports of sexual abuse of a minor may be subject to various canonical processes, including a canonical trial.

It is the responsibility of the Metropolitan Tribunal of the Archdiocese of Milwaukee to conduct canonical trials when it is believed that, under canon law, crimes may have been committed. These are church trials, as opposed to civil trials that may carry jail terms or other penalties. A full investigation occurs to determine if a canonical trial is warranted. A canonical trial consists of testimony of parties and witnesses, as well as deliberation by the ecclesiastical judges. A decision may result in canonical penalties against the cleric member. The decisions and penalties of the diocesan court can be appealed to the Vatican's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

More information on canonical trials is available at this link – <http://www.archmil.org/canonicaltrials>

### **Priests who are Members of Religious Communities**

The Archdiocese of Milwaukee requires the following from religious communities:

- A copy of the religious community's policy on its response to sexual abuse must be filed with the archdiocese before any of its members can minister within the archdiocese.
- The superior of each religious order must provide the archdiocese with written documentation that no substantiated reports exist against any individual seeking to minister within the archdiocese.

If the archdiocese receives a report of sexual abuse of a minor by a religious order priest, the archdiocese immediately reports the incident to the district attorney and/or law enforcement officials in the respective county.

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### Diocesan Review Board

The Diocesan Review Board, which oversees the Archdiocese of Milwaukee's response to clergy sexual abuse, was appointed by Archbishop Dolan and has met regularly since January 2003.

Appointed to five-year board terms are: Rev. James E. Connell, an Archdiocese of Milwaukee priest; Margaret A. Farrow of Pewaukee, a former Wisconsin Lieutenant Governor; Rev. Donald Hands of Milwaukee, an ordained Episcopal priest and psychologist-supervisor at the Milwaukee Secure Detention Facility; Dr. Anthony M. Kuchan of Milwaukee, a licensed psychologist and retired Marquette University assistant professor of psychology; Dr. Charles Lodl of Mequon, a clinical psychologist in private practice; and Stephanie Russell of Milwaukee, the executive director of Mission and Identity at Marquette University.

The board's mandate is to:

- Assess allegations of sexual abuse of minors.
- Provide counsel regarding suitability for ministry.
- Review diocesan policies for dealing with sexual abuse allegations to make sure they are in compliance with the promises given in the USCCB *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*.
- Offer counsel on all aspects of sexual abuse cases, whether retrospectively or prospectively.

### Community Advisory Board

The Community Advisory Board reviews and improves the response of the Archdiocese of Milwaukee to those who have experienced or been affected by sexual abuse by Church personnel. Members of the Community Advisory Board include victims/survivors of clergy sexual abuse, victim advocates, professional psychologists and therapists who work with sexual abuse victims or perpetrators, and members of the archdiocesan staff.

The board makes policy recommendations to the Diocesan Review Board.

The members of the Community Advisory Board are: Al Castro, Carol Chichon, Maryann Clesceri, Kathy Coffey-Guenther, Barbara Anne Cusack, Archbishop Timothy M. Dolan, Marilyn Gierczak, Sr. Mary Howard Johnstone, Rev. Charles Keefe, Diane Knight, Marie Kingsbury, Dr. Anthony Meyer, Jill Maria Murdy, Amy Peterson, Auxiliary Bishop Richard J. Sklba, and Kathy Lyn Walter.

### California Clergy Sexual Abuse Lawsuits

On September 1, 2006, the Archdiocese of Milwaukee announced it had reached resolution with all 10 victims/survivors of clergy sexual abuse in California.

The global agreement, which will pay the 10 victims/survivors \$16.65 million, resulted from a two-day court-ordered mediation. Under the agreement, the archdiocese will pay \$8.25 million – approximately half the amount – with the remainder being paid by insurance.

The archdiocese's financial responsibility will be fulfilled through current financial holdings, including properties owned by the archdiocese and the liquidation of some short- and long-term investments. Included in this will be the proceeds from the sale of the Archbishop Cousins Catholic Center, which were initially intended to benefit Saint Francis Seminary and the future formation of men preparing for priesthood, and other property that had been designated for future pastoral, educational or charitable ministries of the Church. This agreement will not affect any parish property or pension funds.

**Gifts that have been restricted by donors to the Catholic Stewardship Appeal, Catholic Charities, Saint Francis Seminary, to parishes or other charitable causes, will not be used for this purpose.**

Each of the 10 cases was filed in California under a controversial law passed by the California Legislature in 2002 that suspended the statute of limitations on clergy sexual abuse cases for one year. The abuse was committed in California by two former diocesan priests – Siegfried Widera, now deceased, and Franklyn Becker, now laicized.

“Our hope, always, is to continue our progress in reaching resolution with anyone who was a victim of clergy sexual abuse,” said Archbishop Dolan. “We believe this agreement brings closure to all the cases in California and, hopefully, provides healing for these victims/survivors.

“It also allows the archdiocese to continue its work toward resolution with victims/survivors, and, through sacrifice, continue its ministry and work throughout southeastern Wisconsin. A priority in that ministry is continued outreach to victims/survivors here at home and diligent attention to our effective policies to see that such abuse will not occur in the future.”

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### Financial Impact

During the fiscal year from July 1, 2005 to June 30, 2006, the financial impact of sexual abuse cases involving a diocesan clergy member and a minor was \$3,149,973.02 after reimbursement from insurance for settlements and attorney fees of \$316,117.00. This includes \$2,202,674.17 for therapy-related and victim assistance costs, including mediation agreements; \$54,872.07 for mediator fees for mediation; \$17,240.61 for other expenses, including costs of the compliance audit, and \$1,191,303.17 for general attorney fees. The general attorney fees included amounts spent on cases involving litigation and litigation against insurance companies.

Through June 30, 2006, the comprehensive financial impact to the archdiocese of the clergy sexual abuse crisis involving a priest and a minor was \$14,190,391.

**Gifts to the Catholic Stewardship Appeal are not used for settlements with victims/survivors of clergy sexual abuse.** These expenses were paid for by monies accumulated in the Properties and Building Fund and from insurance reimbursements.

As the result of a global agreement reached in August 2006, 10 victims/survivors of clergy sexual abuse in California will receive \$16.65 million. The archdiocese will pay \$8.25 million, with the remainder being paid by insurance.

**No money from the Catholic Stewardship Appeal, from parish resources, or from any funds solicited or designated for other purposes were used to pay these costs.** Contributions are used to meet the educational, spiritual and social justice needs of individuals, families, parishes and schools. The annual Catholic Stewardship Appeal funds pastoral ministries that impact the lives of nearly 720,000 Catholics who belong to the Church of southeastern Wisconsin.

### Conclusion

This report is a reaffirmation of the Archdiocese of Milwaukee's public commitment to addressing issues related to clergy sexual abuse. Working together with a sense of openness, truthfulness, responsiveness, and engagement, trust can be restored and maintained and the Church can be strengthened.

We continue to pray for healing for all those who have suffered as a result of this crisis and ask that you continue to keep the Church of southeastern Wisconsin in your prayers.

