

Clergy Sex Abuse of Minors Data from CARA Released by USCCB; Most Newly Reported Incidents Occurred 1960-1984

WASHINGTON, April 11 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- Clergy sex abuse data collected by the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA) on compliance with the U.S. Bishops' charter for the Protection of Children and Young People was released by the U.S. bishops April 11. More than 99 percent of the dioceses/eparchies responded to the voluntary survey. The Archdiocese of Indianapolis was not included in the data because its figures came in after deadline. The Diocese of Lincoln, Nebraska did not respond. The CARA survey found that more than 70 percent of the incidents against minors that were reported in 2006 occurred between 1960 and 1984. The data were released by the U.S. Bishops' Office for Child and Youth Protection following the annual survey by the Georgetown University-based CARA. The report, titled 2006 Survey of Allegations and Costs: A Summary Report for the Office of Child and Youth Protection, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, is available on the USCCB Web site. The report also showed the following:

- Sixty percent of those accused in 2006 had been named previously in other abuse cases. About 10 percent of the allegations were unsubstantiated.
- Seventy percent of offenders identified in 2006 were deceased, had already been removed from ministry, or had already left the priesthood or religious order when the allegation was reported.
- Money spent on child protection efforts by the Catholic Church increased 35 percent from the previous year.
- Allegations of sexual abuse against minors by clergy fell by nine percent from the previous year.
- Seventeen of the allegations concerned young people who were minors in 2006.
- The total allegation-related expenditures by dioceses, eparchies and religious institutes decreased by 15 percent from the previous year. Costs related to allegations in 2006 were \$398,597,694. In 2005, allegation-related expenses cost \$466,933,472.

"This is a sobering report," said Bishop Gregory Aymond, chair of the U.S. Bishops' Committee for the Protection of Children and Young People. "The decline in reported cases is good. Most allegations were for behavior which took place decades ago, but the fact that there are any recent cases at all is very disconcerting." "I take heart in the increased funding for child protection efforts," he also said. "This demonstrates our commitment to creating a safe environment and a faith environment in our parishes, schools and other Catholic institutions." Patricia Ewers, PhD, chairman of the National Review Board, said she found comfort in the significant decrease in the number of recent incidents of abuse. "If there is anything we've learned from this, it's the need for zero tolerance," she said. "The risk of reassigning a molester is too high if even one child might be harmed."