

**Secretariat of Child and Youth Protection**

**Resource Booklet**

**September 2010**

This Resource Booklet has been compiled to provide ideas to the dioceses/eparchies on various issues for which suggestions have been requested.



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## **Supporting the Accused**

Many priests want to support their brother priests against whom an allegation of sexual abuse of a minor has been made, but they are not sure how to do that. Below are a few suggestions as to how priests can support those who have been removed from ministry, either temporarily or permanently.

- Pray for them.
- Pray with them.
- Concelebrate Mass with them in private.
- Encourage other members of the presbyterate to reach out to him.
- Talk with them.
- Pray the Liturgy of the Hours together.
- Continue social contact.
- Ask them how you can help.



## **Restoring a Cleric's Good Name**



Article 5 of the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People* states,

A priest or deacon who is accused of sexual abuse of a minor is to be accorded the presumption of innocence during the investigation of the allegation and all appropriate steps are to be taken to protect his reputation. He is to be encouraged to retain the assistance of civil and canonical counsel. If the allegation is not proven, every step possible is to be taken to restore his good name, should it have been harmed.

After an allegation of abuse is found to be false, the accused is left with a tarnished reputation. While it is hard, attempts must be made to restore the good name. Some suggestions for doing that are:

- Have the Bishop make a formal announcement declaring the outcome of the investigation, the more details about the rigor of the investigation the better.
- Have press releases sent to area media.
- Meet with the religion editor of the secular press.
- Have an article in the diocesan newspaper acknowledging the outcome of the investigation.
- Have the bishop accompany the cleric to his parish when he is reinstated.
- Have the bishop concelebrate Mass with the cleric.
- Reinstatement the cleric to all committee positions previously held.
- Meet with the presbyterate and have an open discussion.
- Meet with the parish community and have an open discussion.
  - An opportunity for discussion of the process/procedures
  - An opportunity to support the priest

## **Ideas on How to Spread the Good Audit News**

- At the end of the audit post BIG thank you's from the bishop in the diocesan paper, in parish bulletins, and on the diocesan and parish websites to all those who helped implement the *Charter* in the diocese. The goal of these efforts is to aid in the healing/reconciliation of victims and to keep children safe.
- Post audit results everywhere you can think: diocesan/parish websites, diocesan newspapers, parish bulletins, and posters in the back of churches!
- Send email thank-you notices to all personnel who helped with the audit process.
- One diocese makes bookmarks featuring some of their educational materials on the front and statistics on the back regarding the number of children/youth educated and the number of staff/volunteers screened and trained—both in their diocese and across the country. Other similar materials provide information regarding victim assistance services in the diocese. Parishes are asked to keep a supply for their parishioners in their gathering space, and diocesan personnel have circulated them at community events and diocesan-wide conferences. By focusing on what the diocese is doing, rather than pass or no pass on the audit—they spread the good news even if there are some known pockets of non-compliance.
- Have the bishop discuss the audit results and *Charter* as a whole in his weekly column and/or radio show if he has one of them.
- Have the diocesan newspaper do a feature article including information on diocesan efforts to reach out to victims/survivors, diocesan efforts to keep children safe, and the results of the diocesan audit. Focus on the goals of the diocese for healing the brokenhearted and keeping the children safe!
- Have the diocesan paper interview key diocesan people (add photos!) who are involved in the audit process, and have these people explain all that is required by the *Charter* and how much goes into fully implementing the *Charter* articles. Emphasize that their efforts are because they care about victims/survivors and the safety of children. This puts a face or faces on the *Charter* and adds the human element.
- Add interviews of those on the receiving end of safe environment training: teachers, principals, students, volunteers, and parents. Ask them questions on what they have learned and why the information is important to know. This adds a depth to the efforts, plus helps spread good safety information.
- Add an interview of me for a national perspective if you think that might help.

- Have an 'Open Letter' from the bishop to the members of the diocese stating that the audit has been completed and that it is important to show accountability to ensure children are safe. Also, add some salient facts of all the hard work done by people in the diocese to fulfill the mandates of the *Charter* while emphasizing that the diocese does what it does for the children, not just for the audit though the audit is good for accountability!
- Emphasize in all that we say and do the importance of the life and dignity of children—that is why we do what we do!
- Advertise diocesan numbers:
  - How many individuals participated in safe environment training and what did they learn (key salient facts)?
  - How many individuals had their backgrounds evaluated prior to being allowed access to children?
- Take this opportunity to:
  - Reiterate the diocesan Code of Conduct.
  - Reiterate the diocesan Policies and Procedures with regard to reporting allegations thus reinforcing the strong diocesan position of the life and dignity of children and how their safety is of prime importance to the Catholic Church.
  - Reiterate how to contact the Victim Assistance Coordinator.
- **Tap the national perspective too. This is what we share from the SCYP every chance we get:**

What the Church is now doing to protect children and reach out to victims is serving as a guide for many others, both here in the U.S. and in other countries.

Here is a quick list verified by the audits:

- Safe Environment training is taking place in 193 dioceses/eparchies of the country. Over 2 million adults have been trained to recognize the behavior of offenders and what to do about it.
- Over 5 million children have been equipped with the skills to help them protect themselves from abuse.
- Background checks are conducted on Church personnel who have contact with children. Over 2 million volunteers and employees; 52,000 clerics; 6,205 candidates for ordination have had their backgrounds evaluated.
- All dioceses/eparchies have Codes of Conduct spelling out what is acceptable behavior. This serves to let people know what can and cannot be done as well as letting others know what behavior can be expected. It encourages the reporting of suspicious behavior.
- All dioceses/eparchies have Victim Assistance Coordinators, assuring victims that they will be heard. In 2009, \$6,536,109 was spent on therapy for the victims of clergy sexual abuse.

- All dioceses/eparchies have Safe Environment Coordinators who assure the ongoing compliance to the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*.
- Bishops are meeting with victims.
- Dioceses/eparchies have Healing Masses, retreats for victim/survivors and other reconciliation events.
- There is a Zero Tolerance policy on abusers since 2002. When even a single act of sexual abuse by a priest or deacon is admitted or is established after an appropriate process in accord with canon law, the offending priest or deacon will be removed permanently from ecclesiastical ministry, not excluding dismissal from the clerical state, if the case so warrants (CIC, c. 1395 §2; CCEO, c. 1453 §1).<sup>4</sup>
- Dioceses/eparchies require intensive background screening as well as psychological testing for those wishing to enter the seminary.

*A frequent request is for a "What If?" list. Specifically, what is a priest to expect if an allegation is received by the diocese/eparchy against him? Baltimore's Policy for Addressing Allegations of Sexual Abuse of Minors by Priests is a good template. Each diocese/eparchy may have their own set of policies and procedures, but it is very helpful for priests to know exactly what to expect if this situation were to arise.*

**Archdiocese of Baltimore  
POLICY FOR ADDRESSING ALLEGATIONS  
OF SEXUAL ABUSE OF MINORS BY PRIESTS**

**I. Receipt of an Allegation**

**A. Civil Reporting Requirements**

When the Archbishop or other diocesan official is presented with an accusation that a priest has committed the offense of the sexual abuse of a minor, the Archbishop or official will promptly follow the requirements of civil law to report the accusation to the appropriate civil authorities.

**B. Notification to the Accused Priest**

Under ordinary circumstances, promptly following notification to civil authorities of the accusation the accused priest will also be made aware that an accusation has been lodged against him and that the accusation has been reported to civil authorities.

In exceptional circumstances, the Archbishop may, at his discretion, withhold from the accused priest the fact that an accusation has been lodged and that the civil authorities have been notified of the accusation if he is requested to do so by the civil authorities or if other compelling circumstances require a delay in such notification.

**C. Review of the Allegation**

If, after a review of the accusation, the Archbishop determines that the accusation carries the semblance of truth, a preliminary investigation into the accusation will then take place according to the norm of universal and particular canon law, unless conducting such an investigation would appear entirely superfluous to the Archbishop (c. 1717).



#### D. Relationship between Civil and Ecclesial Processes

All provisions contained in this policy refer to the internal, ecclesiastical process to be followed when the Archbishop is presented with the accusation that a priest has sexually abused a minor. This ecclesiastical process will be independent of any civil proceeding, whether criminal or civil, against the accused, and it is not intended to obstruct or otherwise hinder any civil, criminal investigation or action that addresses the same accusation. Accordingly, the Archbishop will work together with the appropriate civil authorities to assure that the ecclesial process does not adversely affect the civil process.

### II. The Preliminary Investigation

#### A. Concern for Good Reputation

During the course of a preliminary investigation all appropriate steps will be taken to protect the right of the accused priest to a good reputation (c. 220).

#### B. Initial Contact with the Accused

The priest will be advised of the nature of the accusation against him in the initial contact made with him by the Archbishop or his representative(s).

In this initial contact the priest will be advised that he may decline to speak regarding the accusations with any Archdiocesan personnel, except the Archbishop or his representative(s), prior to his consultation with legal counsel.

#### C. Issues Regarding Self-Incrimination

The priest will also be advised that anything he says to the Archbishop or his representative(s) is not necessarily subject to clergy privilege or confidentiality in either the civil or ecclesiastical fora. Consequently, anything he says may be discoverable in a civil court. Accordingly, the accused priest has the right to refuse to incriminate himself.

On the other hand, although ecclesiastical law prohibits forcing the priest to confess to a crime, refusal to answer other questions in the ecclesiastical process may be interpreted either for or against the interests of the accused.

#### D. Meeting with Archbishop

If he has not already been so informed, the priest will be advised of the obligation of the Archbishop to report the accusation to the appropriate civil authorities.

Arrangements will generally be made within ten days of receipt of the allegation for the priest to bring canonical and civil counsel, if he so desires, to a meeting with the Archbishop or his representative(s) to discuss with the cleric and his counsel the specifics of the accusation.

#### E. Canonical and Civil Counsel

Before the meeting with the accused, the Archbishop will offer to help the priest to appoint a canonical advisor. The Archbishop will allow the accused to appoint a competent canonist of his own choosing, subject to the provisions of canon 1483.

The Archbishop will provide for the reasonable cost of retaining the services of such a canonist according to the recommendations of the Canon Law Society of America concerning fees for canonical counsel.

At the request of the accused, the Archbishop will make available a list of competent canonists in the area. The accused will not be restricted to the use of canonists on the list provided by the Archbishop.

The Archbishop will also offer assistance to the accused priest in obtaining civil counsel acceptable to the accused to represent him in civil litigation or criminal proceedings which may ensue as a result of the accusations. Such assistance will include providing the names of attorneys. It may also include financial assistance to cover reasonable fees associated with retaining counsel.

At the discretion of the Archbishop, such assistance may continue throughout the course of civil or criminal proceedings should they continue past the conclusion of the preliminary investigation.

#### F. Revelation of Accuser and Accusation

At the meeting the priest will be informed of the name or names of those making the accusations. He will also be informed of the circumstances of the accusation as.

If due to extraordinary circumstances, the name of the accuser can not be furnished at this time, the Archbishop will explain to the accused why the name can not be revealed. The Archbishop will inform the accused priest and his counsel of the name of the accuser within a reasonable period of time.

Unless extraordinary circumstances urge otherwise, no public disclosure of the accusation against the priest will be authorized by the Archbishop until the priest who is accused has been informed of the name or names of his accuser(s), and of circumstances surrounding the accusation(s).

#### G. “Administrative Leave”

If the Archbishop deems it prudent and necessary, the accused priest may be placed on administrative leave during the course of the preliminary investigation.

If the accused priest is placed on administrative leave, he must be given, in writing at that time, the names of all accusers and the dates and times of the specific allegations being made against him -- unless extraordinary circumstances urge otherwise.

The cleric may also be informed of any other relevant information, which the Archbishop or his delegate deems appropriate to the circumstances of the case.

The accused priest will also have the opportunity at that time to make an initial response, through legal counsel if desired, to the allegations against him.

The administrative leave on which the accused priest may be placed does not constitute removal from any canonical office, and the priest’s consent to this leave does not constitute a resignation of any such office. Rather, any removal or loss of office will occur by means of the appropriate canonical provisions.

The accused priest will have the right to present to the Archbishop during the preliminary investigation and thereafter, the names of any witnesses who have relevant and material information.

#### H. Financial Considerations

During the preliminary investigation, a priest will receive full remuneration and benefits according to Archdiocesan standards, including the equivalent of professional allowance and Mass stipends.

#### I. The Conclusion of the Preliminary Investigation

The course of the preliminary investigation should proceed expeditiously and should conclude within a reasonable period of time. This period should ordinarily not exceed ninety days.

If, due to extraordinary circumstances, it is not possible to conclude the preliminary investigation within ninety (90) days, the accused must be given a written explanation of the reasons for extending the preliminary investigation and an expected date when the investigation will be completed.

At the conclusion of the preliminary investigation the accused priest and his canonical advisor will be advised of the results of the investigation, at least in summary form.

In accordance with Canon Law, the accused priest may propose recourse against an administrative decree removing him from office, removing or restricting his faculties, or limiting his exercise of priestly ministry if such a decree is issued at the outset of or during the preliminary investigation.

An accused priest may work with his canonical counsel to seek recourse within the time prescribed and in accord with the applicable provision of canon law governing recourse against administrative decrees.

### III. General Rights of the Accused during the Canonical Process

- The accused cannot be forced to undergo a psychological assessment or evaluation.
- The accused cannot be forced to take an oath, or forced to testify against himself in any canonical proceeding.
- If the accused priest decides to undergo a psychological assessment, the Archdiocese will provide for the cost.
- The accused has the right to refuse to release the results of any psychological evaluation.
- If the accused priest exercises his right to refuse a psychological assessment or to release the results of such an assessment, the lack of an assessment may bear on the question of suitability for ministry and may be interpreted either for or against the interests of the accused in an ecclesiastical process.

### IV. Following the Preliminary Investigation

#### A. No Referral to the Holy See

If, following the preliminary investigation, the accusation is deemed to be manifestly false or frivolous, no referral of the matter to the Holy See is mandated.

In such cases, the accused priest will be returned to the office he held before the accusation, or to a mutually agreeable lateral office in a different setting, without prejudice to the rights in law of the Archbishop to remove or transfer priests from office under canon law.

## B. Referral to the Holy See

If, following the preliminary investigation, the accusation is not deemed to be manifestly false or frivolous, the Archbishop will refer the matter to the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

During this period, the accused will receive remuneration in accord with the current personnel policy for compensation of priests on involuntary leave of absence.

The Archbishop will not permanently remove a priest from ministry or any office except pursuant to canon law during which process the priest has the opportunity to defend himself with the help of canonical counsel.

If the Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith decides that a canonical process to resolve the accusation should be conducted on the Archdiocesan level, and if the accused priest is also facing a civil criminal proceeding, the priest may petition the Archbishop to delay the commencement of the canonical proceeding until after the conclusion of the civil proceeding. There may also be other reasons for which the accused priest may petition the Archbishop to delay the commencement of the canonical proceeding. In any event, if the Archbishop agrees with the request, he will then request a delay from the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

In cases where an accused priest has gone through a formal canonical proceeding or trial that has resulted in his conviction of misconduct and his removal from ministry and the clerical state, the Archbishop will in charity provide appropriate levels of financial and other necessary assistance to help the individual make the transition to a new position in life and to establish himself provided no scandal will result to the Christian faithful. This assistance will follow the current procedure of the Archdiocesan Priests Personnel Policy regarding the compensation of priests on an involuntary leave of absence (3.7.1.)

- V. This policy constitutes particular law for the Archdiocese of Baltimore, and as such is without prejudice to the norm of general and special universal law, and the rights and obligations of the Archbishop contained therein.

# Checklist for Parish Internal Audit Team

## Diocese of Pittsburgh

**Parish:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Location:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date of Visit:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Visiting Team:** \_\_\_\_\_

### Meeting with Pastor:

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>See Note:</u>
Has a clear understanding of the policy for visiting priests?	_____	_____	_____
Has a clear understanding of the Safe Environment Policy?	_____	_____	_____
Has written protocol for mandated reporting of suspected child abuse?	_____	_____	_____
Knows who to contact if an adult victim of abuse would come forward?	_____	_____	_____
Special circumstances relative to safe environment exist in parish (If yes, explain _____)	_____	_____	_____

### Facility Walk Through:

CPSL Posters hanging at all building entrances?	_____	_____	_____
Clergy Sexual Abuse Misconduct Policy in church pamphlet rack?	_____	_____	_____
<i>Promise to Protect/Pledge to Heal</i> in church pamphlet rack?	_____	_____	_____
Safe Environment Policy in church pamphlet racks?	_____	_____	_____
Reporting of Child Abuse and the CPSL of PA in church pamphlet racks?	_____	_____	_____
Pastoral Code of Conduct in church pamphlet racks?	_____	_____	_____
Victims Assistance Hotline number listed in parish bulletin? (Number is to be published twice a month)	_____	_____	_____

### Individual Meetings with Key Parish Safe Environment Staff:

#### Parish Safe Environment Coordinator:

Has a clear understanding of the Safe Environment Policy?	_____	_____	_____
Is familiar with national charter, <i>Promise to Protect/Pledge to Heal</i> ?	_____	_____	_____
Knows the parish protocol for reporting suspected child abuse?	_____	_____	_____
Knows who to contact if an adult victim of abuse would come forward?	_____	_____	_____
Safe Environment documentation (receipt for Code of Conduct, Clearances, signed declaration page for applications) is on file?	_____	_____	_____
Database workshop files are up to date?	_____	_____	_____
Has the parish advertised PGC Training for parents/other adults and are copies of all ads kept on file?	_____	_____	_____

Checklist continued on Page 2

**Catechetical Administrator:**

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>See Note:</u>
Has a clear understanding of the Safe Environment Policy?	___	___	___
Is familiar with national charter, Promise to Protect/Pledge to Heal?	___	___	___
Knows the parish protocol for reporting suspected child abuse?	___	___	___
Knows who to contact if an adult victim of abuse would come forward?	___	___	___
Safe Environment documentation (receipt for Code of Conduct, Clearances, signed declarations page for applications) is on file?	___	___	___
Database workshop files are up to date?	___	___	___
Can explain diocesan policy relative to SE training for children?	___	___	___

**School Principal – Elementary/High School (If applicable):**

Has a clear understanding of the Safe Environment Policy?	___	___	___
Is familiar with national charter: Promise to Protect/Pledge to Heal	___	___	___
Knows the school protocol for reporting suspected child abuse	___	___	___
Knows who to contact if an adult victim of abuse would come forward?	___	___	___
Safe Environment documentation (receipt for Code of Conduct, Clearances, signed declarations page for applications) is on file?	___	___	___
Database workshop files are up to date?	___	___	___
Can explain diocesan policy relative to SE training for children?	___	___	___

**High School Principal Only:**

Has a clear understanding of the policy for visiting priests?	___	___	___
Special circumstances relative to safe environment exist in school. (If yes, explain_____)	___	___	___

**General Meeting with Entire Staff:**

Name & Title of staff present:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

What are the real positives (successes) of the parish safe environment program?

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Checklist continued on Page 3

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# A Parish Self-Assessment Guide

## *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*

Secretariat of Child and Youth Protection  
United States Conference of Catholic Bishops  
3211 Fourth St, NE  
Washington, DC  
202-541-5413

## Purpose and Overview

Since on-site audits occur every three years, the SCYP thought it would be beneficial to the dioceses/eparchies to create a parish self assessment guide to help dioceses and eparchies determine to what extent their parishes and schools are implementing the diocesan/eparchial policies relating to the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People* at the parish level. This self-assessment can be used by staff to determine if all diocesan/eparchial policies are being followed as well as help determine where there might be a need for more training in the implementation of the *Charter*.

If the *Charter* is going to be effective and the audit a tool for creating safe environments, it is important that parish personnel know:

- How to create safe environments in their parishes and schools
- How to implement diocesan/eparchial policies concerning training of all employees and volunteers
- How to implement diocesan/eparchial policies concerning background evaluations of employees and volunteers who work with children
- How to implement the diocesan/eparchial policy on extern/visiting priests
- The name of the people responsible for the implementation of the *Charter* at the parish level and at the diocesan/eparchial level
- Who schedules safe environment training for adults
- Who is responsible for training children both in religious education and in the parish school
- How to report allegations and to whom
- How to get outreach for a victim, his/her family, or the parish community

This self-assessment guide is not a requirement of the *Charter*, nor is it part of the annual audit. It is intended as an internal document solely for the use of the diocese or eparchy. Dioceses and eparchies should feel free to change the format and/or questions to suit their individual needs.

1. Is the existence of the diocesan/eparchial policies and procedures relating to the *Charter* publicized to parishioners?  

☐ YES    ☐ NO

  - **If Yes, describe the types and frequency of publications.** (Examples might include publication in parish bulletins, information provided at Masses, brochures and/or posters in the vestibules of Church buildings.)
  - **If No, provide explanation.**
2. Does the pastor/school principal/other know when and how to report an allegation of sexual abuse of a minor?  

☐ YES    ☐ NO

  - **If No, provide explanation.**
3. Does the pastor/school principal/other know how to obtain outreach for victims?  

☐ YES    ☐ NO

  - **If No, provide explanation.**
4. a) Are copies of the code of conduct and/or diocesan/eparchial standards of ministerial behavior made available to clergy and any other paid personnel and volunteers of the Church in positions of trust who have regular contact with children and young people?  

☐ YES    ☐ NO

  
b) Are standards of conduct for clergy and other persons in positions of trust with regard to children and young people made available and clear to all members of the community?  

☐ YES    ☐ NO

  - **If No, provide explanation.**
5. Is safe environment training provided for each of the various groups set forth in Article 12?  

☐ YES    ☐ NO

  - **If No, provide explanation.**
6. a) Is there a policy for those parents who choose not to have their child participate in the diocesan/eparchial safe environment training?  

☐ YES    ☐ NO

  
b) Does the parish/diocese have documentation of the signed parental declination?  

☐ YES    ☐ NO

  
c) Does the parish/diocese have documentation that the safe environment training materials have been offered to parents?  

☐ YES    ☐ NO

d) If parents refuse to sign any form, has a record been maintained by the parish/diocese?

☐ YES ☐ NO

- **If No, provide explanation.**

7. a) Does the pastor ensure that background evaluations are conducted on all parish personnel to include priests and deacons as well as other paid personnel and volunteers whose duties include ongoing, unsupervised contact with minors?

☐ YES ☐ NO

b) Does the principal ensure that background evaluations are conducted all school personnel, to include priests and deacons, as well as other paid personnel and volunteers whose duties include ongoing, unsupervised contact with minors?

☐ YES ☐ NO

- **If No, provide explanation.**

8. Does the pastor ensure that visiting or non permanent clergy (e.g., weekend assistants, priests who witness marriages, perform baptisms, conduct funerals or otherwise engage in supply ministry) are clergy in good standing?

☐ YES ☐ NO

- **If No, provide explanation.**

9. For those parishes directly affected by allegations of sexual abuse of children which have been brought forward during this current audit period:

a) Has the diocese/eparchy kept the parish informed?

☐ YES ☐ NO

b) Has the diocese/eparchy provided outreach to affected persons or groups?

☐ YES ☐ NO

c) Has the diocese/eparchy supported reinstatement of the accused when allegations are determined to be unfounded?

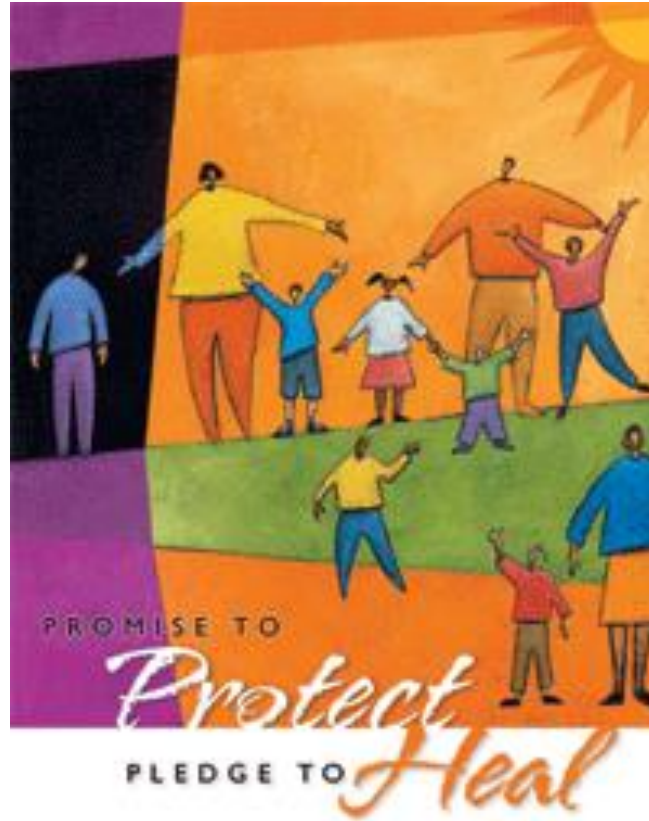
☐ YES ☐ NO

- **If Yes, describe. If No, provide explanation.**

**Name of the person completing this parish self assessment:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Title:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_



***Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People***  
**Self-Assessment Guide**

Secretariat of Child and Youth Protection  
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## Purpose and Overview

The Promise to Protect and Pledge to Heal are on-going commitments to the faithful for the bishops of the United States. It takes the concerted effort of all the people in our faith community to ensure that the children in the care of the Catholic Church are safe from harm. Catholic moral teaching makes it clear that children are to be protected from all harm. “The human body shares in the dignity of the image of God...” (CCC 364). It is this belief that compels us to protect that dignity not only because it is the right thing to do, but because of God’s love for us, it is what He calls us to do.

This resource has been prepared for dioceses and eparchies to assist them in assessing that the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People* has been integrated into the fabric of the diocese/eparchy. It is encouraged that this tool be used in the years the diocese/eparchy is not participating in an on-site audit to make sure parishes and schools are accountable for all the requirements of the *Charter*.

This self assessment is not a requirement of the *Charter*. It is not part of the annual audit. It is intended as an internal document solely for the use of the diocese or eparchy. Dioceses and eparchies should feel free to change the format and/or questions to suit their individual needs.

## Self Assessment Guide

### Article One:

Dioceses/eparchies are to reach out to victims/survivors and their families and demonstrate a sincere commitment to their spiritual and emotional well-being. The first obligation of the Church with regard to the victims is for healing and reconciliation. Each diocese/eparchy is to continue its outreach to every person who has been the victim of sexual abuse\* as a minor by anyone in church service, whether the abuse was recent or occurred many years in the past. This outreach may include provision of counseling, spiritual assistance, support groups, and other social services agreed upon by the victim and the diocese/eparchy.

Through pastoral outreach to victims and their families, the diocesan/eparchial bishop or his representative is to offer to meet with them, to listen with patience and compassion to their experiences and concerns, and to share the "profound sense of solidarity and concern" expressed by His Holiness, Pope John Paul II, in his Address to the Cardinals of the United States and Conference Officers (April 23, 2002).

☐ Yes ☐ No      Diocese/eparchy has an outreach program that offers healing and reconciliation for victims and their families.

☐ Yes ☐ No      Bishop offers to meet with the victims/families.

\*In accord with *Sacramentorum sanctitatis tutela* (SST), article 4 §1, sexual abuse, for purposes of this *Charter*, shall include any offense by a cleric against the Sixth Commandment of the Decalogue with a minor as understood in the *Code of Canon Law*, c. 1395 §2 ("A cleric who in another way has committed an offense against the sixth commandment of the Decalogue, if the delict was committed by force or threats or publicly or with a minor below the age of sixteen years [raised in SST to eighteen years which has been the age of majority for the USA since 1994], is to be punished with just penalties, not excluding dismissal from the clerical state if the case so warrants") and the *Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches*, c. 1453 §1 ("A cleric who lives in concubinage or gives permanent scandal by publicly sinning against chastity is to be punished with a suspension, to which, other penalties can be gradually added up to deposition, if he persists in the offense").



## Article Two:

Dioceses/eparchies are to have policies and procedures in place to respond promptly to any allegation where there is reason to believe that sexual abuse of a minor has occurred. Dioceses/eparchies are to have a competent person or persons to coordinate assistance for the immediate pastoral care of persons who report having been sexually abused as minors by clergy or other church personnel. The procedures for those making a complaint are to be readily available in printed form in the principle languages in which the liturgy is celebrated in the diocese/eparchy and be the subject of public announcements at least annually.

Dioceses/eparchies are also to have a review board that functions as a confidential consultative body to the bishop/eparch. The majority of its members are to be lay persons not in the employ of the diocese/eparchy (see Norm 5 in *Essential Norms for Diocesan/Eparchial Policies Dealing with Allegations of Sexual Abuse of Minors by Priests or Deacons*, 2006). This board is to advise the diocesan/eparchial bishop in his assessment of allegations of sexual abuse of minors and in his determination of a cleric's suitability for ministry. It is regularly to review diocesan/eparchial policies and procedures for dealing with sexual abuse of minors. Also, the board can review these matters both retrospectively and prospectively and give advice on all aspects of responses in connection with these cases.

☐ Yes ☐ No      Diocese/eparchy has a written procedure on how they will respond to allegations of clergy sexual abuse.

☐ Yes ☐ No      Diocese/eparchy has a Victim Assistance Coordinator.

☐ Yes ☐ No      Diocese/eparchy has a Review Board which serves as a consultative body to the bishop.

☐ Yes ☐ No      Procedures are written in all languages in which the liturgy is celebrated.

### Article Three:

Dioceses/eparchies are not to enter into settlements which bind the parties to confidentiality unless the victim/survivor requests confidentiality and this request is noted in the text of the agreement.

☐ Yes ☐ No Diocese/eparchy does not enter into confidentiality agreements without the request of the victim.

### Article Four:

Dioceses/eparchies are to report an allegation of sexual abuse of a person who is a minor to the public authorities. Dioceses/eparchies are to comply with all applicable civil laws with respect to the reporting of allegations of sexual abuse of minors to civil authorities and cooperate in their investigation in accord with the law of the jurisdiction in question.

Dioceses/eparchies are to cooperate with public authorities about reporting cases even when the person is no longer a minor.

In every instance, dioceses/eparchies are to advise victims of their right to make a report to public authorities and support this right.

☐ Yes ☐ No Diocese/eparchy reports all allegations of sexual abuse of minors to public authorities.

☐ Yes ☐ No Parishes report all allegations of sexual abuse to the diocese/eparchy.

☐ Yes ☐ No Diocese/eparchy cooperates with public authorities on all matters of sexual abuse.

☐ Yes ☐ No Diocese/eparchy advises victims of their right to make a report to public authorities.

## Article Five:

We affirm the words of His Holiness, Pope John Paul II, in his Address to the Cardinals of the United States and Conference Officers: “There is no place in the priesthood or religious life for those who would harm the young.”

Sexual abuse of a minor by a cleric is a crime in the universal law of the Church (CIC, c. 1395 §2; CCEO, c. 1453 §1). Because of the seriousness of this matter, jurisdiction has been reserved to the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (*Motu proprio, Sacramentorum sanctitatis tutela*, AAS, 93, 2001). Sexual abuse of a minor is also a crime in all civil jurisdictions in the United States.

Diocesan/eparchial policy is to provide that for even a single act of sexual abuse of a minor\*—whenever it occurred—which is admitted or established after an appropriate process in accord with canon law, the offending priest or deacon is to be permanently removed from ministry and, if warranted, dismissed from the clerical state. In keeping with the stated purpose of this *Charter*, an offending priest or deacon is to be offered therapeutic professional assistance both for the purpose of prevention and also for his own healing and well-being.

The diocesan/eparchial bishop is to exercise his power of governance, within the parameters of the universal law of the Church, to ensure that any priest or deacon subject to his governance who has committed even one act of sexual abuse of a minor \* (See Article One) shall not continue in ministry.

A priest or deacon who is accused of sexual abuse of a minor is to be accorded the presumption of innocence during the investigation of the allegation and all appropriate steps are to be taken to protect his reputation. He is to be encouraged to retain the assistance of civil and canonical counsel. If the allegation is not proven, every step possible is to be taken to restore his good name, should it have been harmed.

In fulfilling this article, dioceses/eparchies are to follow the requirements of the universal law of the Church and of the *Essential Norms* approved for the United States.

☐ Yes ☐ No Diocese/eparchy has a policy of conducting preliminary investigations.

☐ Yes ☐ No Diocese/eparchy has a competent person who is responsible for conducting the preliminary investigation.

☐ Yes ☐ No Parish personnel are aware of any diocesan priest that has been removed from ministry for *Charter*-related abuse.

☐ Yes ☐ No Pastors follow diocesan/eparchial guidelines concerning allowing any visiting clerics performing any ministerial duties.

☐ Yes ☐ No Offending priests or deacons are removed from ministry after one act of sexual abuse has been established or admitted.

☐ Yes ☐ No Diocese/eparchy has a policy and procedure for restoring the good name of a cleric if the accusation is deemed to be unfounded.

**Article Six:**

There are to be clear and well-publicized diocesan/eparchial standards of ministerial behavior and appropriate boundaries for clergy and for any other paid personnel and volunteers of the church in positions of trust who have regular contact with children and young people.

☐ Yes ☐ No Diocese/eparchy has written standards of behavior of clergy and church workers/volunteers who have contact with children.

**Article Seven:**

Dioceses/eparchies are to be open and transparent in communicating with the public about sexual abuse of minors by clergy within the confines of respect for the privacy and the reputation of the individuals involved. This is especially so with regard to informing parish and other church communities directly affected by ministerial misconduct involving minors.

☐ Yes ☐ No Diocese/eparchy has a written open and transparent communication policy about dealing with the public about the sexual abuse of minors.

☐ Yes ☐ No Diocese/eparchy has made sure that the parishes are familiar with the diocesan communication policy as well as know the name and contact information for the diocesan/eparchial Communications Director.

**Articles 8 through 11 are** not included in the audit process as they concern activities beyond the scope of the diocese/eparchy.

## Article Twelve:

Dioceses/eparchies are to maintain “safe environment” programs which the diocesan/eparchial bishop deems to be in accord with Catholic moral principles. They are to be conducted cooperatively with parents, civil authorities, educators, and community organizations to provide education and training for children, youth, parents, ministers, educators, volunteers, and others about ways to make and maintain a safe environment for children and young people. Dioceses/eparchies are to make clear to clergy and all members of the community the standards of conduct for clergy and other persons in positions of trust with regard to children.

- ☐ Yes ☐ No      Diocese/eparchy has a safe environment training program for clerics.
- ☐ Yes ☐ No      Diocese/eparchy has a safe environment training program for employees.
- ☐ Yes ☐ No      Diocese/eparchy has a safe environment training program for volunteers who work with children.
- ☐ Yes ☐ No      Diocese/eparchy has a safe environment training program for children and young people.
- ☐ Yes ☐ No      Diocese/eparchy has a way of verifying the numbers of each group in
- ☐ Yes ☐ No      Diocese/eparchy has a way of verifying the compliance with this article in every parish and school.

## Article Thirteen:

Dioceses/eparchies are to evaluate the background of all incardinated and non-incardinated priests and deacons who are engaged in ecclesiastical ministry in the diocese/eparchy and of all diocesan/eparchial and parish/school or other paid personnel and volunteers whose duties include ongoing, unsupervised contact with minors. Specifically, they are to utilize the resources of law enforcement and other community agencies. In addition, they are to employ adequate screening and evaluative techniques in deciding the fitness of candidates for ordination (cf. United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Program of Priestly Formation, [Fifth Edition], 2006, no. 39).

- ☐ Yes ☐ No Diocese/eparchy evaluates the background of clerics.
- ☐ Yes ☐ No Diocese/eparchy evaluates the background of employees.
- ☐ Yes ☐ No Diocese/eparchy evaluates the background of volunteers who work with children.
- ☐ Yes ☐ No Diocese/eparchy has a way of verifying the numbers of each group in every parish and school.
- ☐ Yes ☐ No Diocese/eparchy has a way of verifying the compliance with this article in every parish and school.

#### **Article Fourteen:**

Transfers of clergy who have committed an act of sexual abuse against a minor for residence, including retirement, shall be as in accord with Norm 12 of the Essential Norms. (Cf. Proposed Guidelines on the Transfer or Assignment of Clergy and Religious, adopted by the USCCB, the Conference of Major Superiors of Men, the Leadership Conference of Women Religious, and the Council of Major Superiors of Women Religious in 1993.)

- ☐ Yes ☐ No Diocese/eparchy does not transfer to another assignment a cleric who has committed an act of sexual abuse against a minor.
- ☐ Yes ☐ No Diocese/eparchy has a monitoring system in place for any cleric who has committed an act of sexual abuse against a minor.

#### **Article Fifteen:**

To ensure continuing collaboration and mutuality of effort in the protection of children and young people on the part of the bishops and religious ordinaries, two representatives of the Conference of Major Superiors of Men are to serve as consultants to the Committee for the Protection of Children and Young People. At the invitation of the Major Superiors, the Committee will designate two of its members to consult with its counterpart at CMSM. Diocesan/eparchial bishops and major superiors of clerical institutes or their delegates are to meet periodically to coordinate their roles concerning the issue of allegations made against a cleric member of a religious institute ministering in a diocese/eparchy.

- ☐ Yes ☐ No Diocese/eparchy regularly communicates with the major superiors of religious orders represented in diocese/eparchy.

## Article Sixteen:

Given the extent of the problem of the sexual abuse of minors in our society, we are willing to cooperate with other churches and ecclesial communities, other religious bodies, institutions of learning, and other interested organizations in conducting research in this area.

☐ Yes ☐ No When given the opportunity, diocese/eparchy has cooperated with other institutions conducting research in regards to sexual abuse of minors in society.

## Article Seventeen:

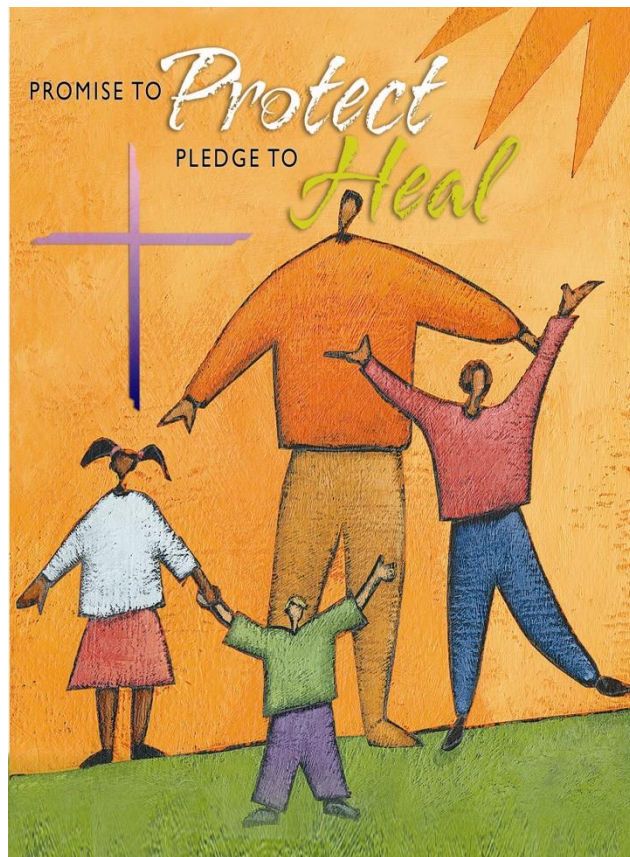
We pledge our complete cooperation with the Apostolic Visitation of our diocesan/eparchial seminaries and religious houses of formation recommended in the Interdicasterial Meeting with the Cardinals of the United States and the Conference Officers in April 2002.

We commit ourselves to work individually in our dioceses/eparchies and together as a Conference, through the appropriate committees, to strengthen our programs both for initial priestly formation and for the ongoing formation of priests. With new urgency, we will promote programs of human formation for chastity and celibacy for both seminarians and priests based upon the criteria found in Pastores Dabo Vobis, the Program of Priestly Formation, and the Basic Plan for the Ongoing Formation of Priests. We will continue to assist priests, deacons, and seminarians in living out their vocation in faithful and integral ways.

We bishops and eparchs commit ourselves to work as one with our brother priests and deacons to foster reconciliation among all people in our dioceses/eparchies, especially with those individuals who were themselves abused and the communities that have suffered because of the sexual abuse of minors that occurred in their midst.

☐ Yes ☐ No Diocese/eparchy sponsors or requires on-going formation of the priests.

☐ Yes ☐ No Diocese/eparchy conducts healing, reconciliation, or outreach to those parishes and victims suffering because of sexual abuse.



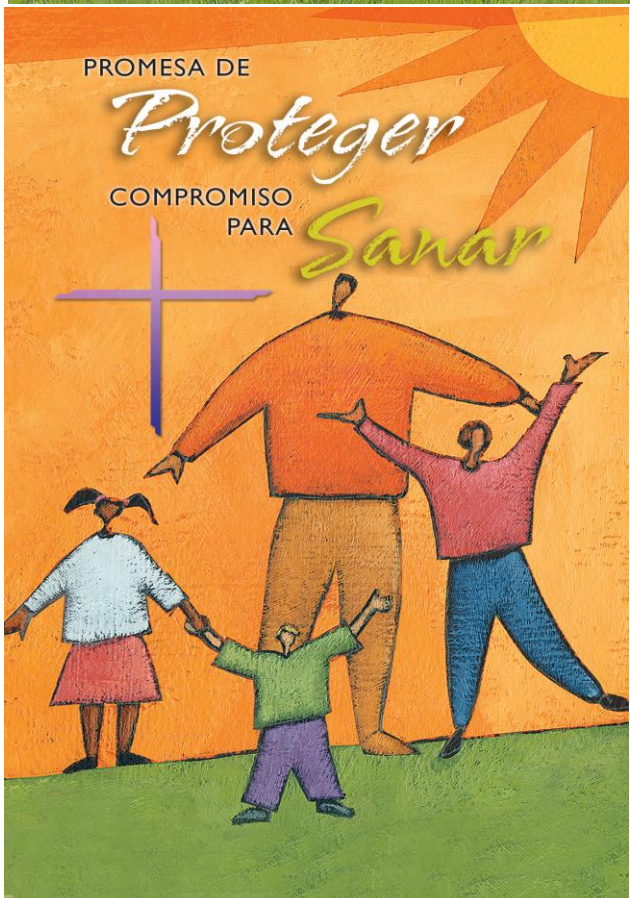
## **A PRAYER FOR HEALING Victims of Abuse**

God of endless love,  
ever caring, ever strong,  
always present, always just:  
You gave your only Son  
to save us by the blood of his cross.

Gentle Jesus, shepherd of peace,  
join to your own suffering  
the pain of all who have been hurt  
in body, mind, and spirit  
by those who betrayed the trust placed in them.

Hear our cries as we agonize  
over the harm done to our brothers and sisters.  
Breathe wisdom into our prayers,  
soothe restless hearts with hope,  
steady shaken spirits with faith:  
Show us the way to justice and wholeness,  
enlightened by truth and enfolded in your mercy.

Holy Spirit, comforter of hearts,  
heal your people's wounds  
and transform our brokenness.  
Grant us courage and wisdom, humility and grace,  
so that we may act with justice  
and find peace in you.  
We ask this through Christ, our Lord. Amen.



## **ORACIÓN PARA SANAR Victimas de Abuso**

Dios de amor infinito,  
siempre bondadoso, siempre fuerte,  
siempre presente, siempre justo:  
Tú diste a tu único Hijo  
para salvarnos por la sangre de su cruz.

Jesús Bueno, pastor de paz,  
une a tu propio sufrimiento  
el dolor de todos quienes han sido heridos  
en cuerpo, mente y espíritu  
por aquellos quienes traicionaron  
la confianza puesta en ellos.

Oye nuestro llanto mientras sufrimos  
por el daño causado a nuestros hermanos y hermanas.  
Infunde sabiduría en nuestras oraciones,  
alivia nuestros corazones intranquilos con la esperanza,  
endereza los espíritus tambaleantes con fe:  
Muéstranos el camino hacia la justicia y la entereza,  
danos la luz de la verdad y cúbreanos con tu misericordia.

Espíritu Santo, consolador de corazones,  
cura las heridas de tu pueblo  
y rescátanos de nuestra dispersión.  
Danos valentía y sabiduría, humildad y gracia  
para que así actuemos con justicia  
y encontremos paz en ti.  
Te lo pedimos por Cristo, Nuestro Señor. Amén.