

ARCHDIOCESE OF NEW ORLEANS
7887 WALMSLEY AVENUE
NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA 70125

December 3, 2003

Archbishop Alfred C. Hughes' Report on Child and Youth Accountability: 1950 - 2003

The Catholic bishops of the United States, as part of the national "Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People," committed ourselves to take part in two studies: an audit of each diocese for compliance with the Charter, and secondly, a survey of each diocese in order to obtain a comprehensive statistical picture of the scope of the clergy sex abuse scandal. The results of the national audit and national survey are to be released on January 6, 2004 (audit compliance) and February 27, 2004 (national survey).

The national audit and national survey are viewed as important aspects of promoting accountability and the hope for reconciliation. The acknowledgment of a hurtful past is necessary for a healing, hopeful future. Today, the Archdiocese of New Orleans takes another important step in realizing such a future. The Archdiocese of New Orleans is making known the results of both our audit and the survey. The release of archdiocesan reports is motivated by a continuing commitment to truthfulness and forthrightness.

Audit Report

Article 9 of the national "Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People" calls for the Office of Child and Youth Protection to "be assisted and monitored by a Review Board... The Board will approve the annual report of the implementation of this Charter in each of our dioceses/eparchies..." The annual report of implementation, the audit of each diocese as to implementation of the national Charter submitted to the national office for transmittal to the National Review Board, was undertaken by a highly respected and well-known compliance organization, the Gavin Group. This professional compliance organization is composed of retired, highly trained law enforcement officers and investigators.

This past September 2003, the Archdiocese of New Orleans was visited by members of the Gavin Group for our audit of implementation concerning the national Charter. For four days, two members of the Gavin Group, a retired FBI agent and a retired U.S. Marshal, conducted a series of interviews and visits throughout the archdiocese.

The team from the Gavin Group, which conducted our audit, made its report as to the archdiocese's compliance with the national Charter. Archbishop Hughes was informed in writing by Mr. William Gavin, President of the Gavin Group, that the archdiocese is in FULL COMPLIANCE with the national Charter. Key initiatives undertaken by the Archdiocese of New Orleans:

- Sex Abuse Hotline
- Victims' Assistance Coordinator
- Review Board
- Cooperation with Civil Authorities
- Background Checks for Employees and Volunteers working with Children
- Safe Environment Programs
- Full implementation of the National Charter in dealing with Allegations of Sexual Abuse of a Minor by Clergy

The Archdiocese of New Orleans received the following two special commendations from our audit team:

- Even before the adoption of the Charter, the archdiocese conducted an Outreach Ministry to promote healing and

reconciliation through parish listening sessions and prayer services.

- Cooperation between the archdiocese and the various religious communities that serve within the archdiocese for the implementation of the Charter.

John Jay College of Criminal Justice: Archdiocese of New Orleans Report

The John Jay College of Criminal Justice was asked by the National Review Board of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops to conduct a "comprehensive study of the prevalence and incidence of alleged sexual abuse of minors (under the age of 18) by Catholic clerics between 1950 and 2002." The following statistics go beyond the period requested by the John Jay survey. The following statistics concerning the Archdiocese of New Orleans cover the period between 1950 to the most recent information available (November 2003).

- Between 1950 and 2003 there have been 867 diocesan priests and 272 deacons serving the Archdiocese of New Orleans, exclusive of religious order priests.
- During this 54-year period there was a combined total of 1,139 clerics serving (867 diocesan priests and 272 deacons).
- Of the 1,139 clerics serving in the Archdiocese of New Orleans, there were 20 clerics accused of sexual misconduct with a minor. Of these 20 clerics accused, 10 were deemed credible; 7 were deemed not credible; and 3 were deemed inconclusive on the basis of the information available to the Review Board. There have been no allegations of sexual abuse of a minor by a cleric since the late 1980s. Civil authorities have been contacted in accordance with the requirements of the Charter.
- The total number of individuals who have made allegations against clerics is 34.
- Exclusive of the allegations that are still inconclusive, the percentage of clerics during the 54-year period credibly accused of sexual abuse of minors is nine-tenths of 1 percent of clerics who served in the archdiocese from 1950 to 2003.
- Archdiocesan records indicate the following: a total of \$2,057,172.68 has been paid for settlements, therapy and legal fees since 1950. This figure is the total paid by the archdiocese and its insurance carriers. The archdiocese paid \$1,007,172.68 for settlements (\$137,066.00), therapy (\$448,734.84) and legal fees (\$421,371.84); insurance carriers paid \$1,050,000 (settlements). No parish or social services have been affected. Monies paid by the archdiocese came from accumulated reserves that are used for contingency expenses.

The above data forms the DIOCESAN PROFILE requested by the John Jay College of Criminal Justice. Again, these figures go **beyond** the time period requested by the John Jay College of Criminal Justice.

The Human Face of Figures

With the release of the above information, an important commitment has been kept to be forthright, acknowledge wrongs where done, protect young people and restore trust and promote healing.

However, behind the figures are human faces, lives touched by a terrible scandal. One instance of sexual abuse is one too many. There are those who took advantage of their vocation and betrayed the trust of many. There are those who have experienced great pain and struggle to move on with their lives. The Church is concerned for human healing and the eternal salvation of all involved. Both abuser and victim are in need of prayer, reconciliation and healing. The abuser must acknowledge the wrong done, pray for conversion and seek reconciliation. Those abused are in need of healing which comes from God's grace, the truthful acknowledgment of the sinful wrong that was done to them and, ultimately, forgiveness. None of this is easy; none of this is achieved quickly. It is in the long, honest struggle to be the Church of Jesus Christ that the best hope for healing is to be found. It is in finding the courage to look into the dark night of our past that we find that Light who says, "Be not afraid!"