

ARCHDIOCESE OF

Chicago, Illinois

The Archdiocese of Chicago ("the Archdiocese"), which was established in 1843 as a diocese and as an archdiocese in 1880, encompasses the Illinois counties of Cook and Lake. It consists of 375 parishes, 290 elementary and secondary schools, and three seminaries, 624 deacons, and 854 diocesan priests serve a population of 2.4 million registered Catholics. His Eminence, Cardinal Francis George, who was installed as archbishop on May 7, 1997, leads the Archdiocese. A compliance audit of the Archdiocese was conducted during the period of July 21-25, 2003.

The information presented below represents conditions as they were found to exist during the week of the audit. Information regarding necessary corrective actions taken by the Archdiocese subsequent to the audit will be found in the last paragraph.

FINDINGS

To Promote Healing and Reconciliation

The Archdiocese has established an outreach program. The cardinal or his designees have met or offered to meet with victims/survivors of abuse in the Archdiocese who reported the abuse after June 2002. An office of assistance ministry, directed by Ralph Bonaccorsi, provides immediate pastoral care to victims/survivors and their families. A professional responsibility review board, established in 1992, consists of nine members, including six prominent members of the community and three priests. Procedures for making a complaint of abuse are readily available in printed form. There have been no confidentiality agreements entered into by the Archdiocese since June 2002 unless requested by the victim/survivor. The Archdiocese was commended for its 1992 adoption of policies and procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse. A second Commendation was issued for the Archdiocese's efforts to train its own personnel, as well as personnel from other dioceses, in the duties and responsibilities of assistance ministry.

To Guarantee Effective Response to Allegations of Abuse of a Minor

The Archdiocese has established effective liaison with local civil authorities, ensuring an open dialogue regarding sexual abuse allegations. A Commendation was issued for the diligent work done by the Archdiocese to create these liaisons, but it was also recommended that the Archdiocese pursue written agreements with civil authorities in order to preserve these cooperative arrangements for the future. The Archdiocese has a procedure in place to advise victims/survivors of their right to report allegations of abuse by a member of the clergy to civil authorities. The Archdiocese was commended for its establishment of procedures to monitor the activities of those removed from active ministry. The Archdiocese did not have a published code of conduct for priests and deacons, and a Recommendation was made to accomplish this promptly. While the Archdiocese was found to be following procedures demonstrating a commitment to openness and transparency in communications, no Written policy regarding this commitment had been created and publicized. A Recommendation was made that this be accomplished promptly.

To Ensure Accountability of Procedures

The Archdiocese has participated in the research study regarding the "nature and scope" of the problem of sexual abuse of minors by Catholic clergy.

To Protect the Faithful in the Future

The Archdiocese had planned but not yet implemented a safe environment program. A Recommendation was made suggesting immediate implementation of the proposed plan. As noted above, the Archdiocese had published no standards of conduct for priests and deacons; nor had it set forth such standards for other church personnel in positions of trust who have regular contact with

children and young people. It was recommended that this be achieved promptly. Basic background investigations have been conducted on all recently hired employees, clergy, and seminarians. It was recommended that background investigations be instituted for all diocesan and parish personnel who are in regular contact with children. The Archdiocese has not transferred any priest or deacon who has had a credible allegation of sexual abuse lodged against him to a ministerial assignment in another diocese. Two priests who had been removed from active ministry had taken up residence in other dioceses, and no notification letter had been sent to the bishops of those dioceses. A Recommendation was issued for the Archdiocese to send appropriate letters. The cardinal and designated personnel have coordinated with major superiors of orders with a presence in the diocesan territory regarding their respective roles on issues of allegations of sexual abuse made against clerical members of religious institutes. The Archdiocese has not had the opportunity to cooperate with other churches, religious bodies, and institutions of learning in conducting research in the area of sexual abuse of minors. The Archdiocese has established screening and evaluative techniques in the selection of candidates for ordination.

COMPLIANCE WITH THE PROVISIONS OF THE *CHARTER*

At the conclusion of this audit, the Archdiocese of Chicago was issued six Recommendations, and four Commendations.

RECOMMENDATION 1-That the Archdiocese immediately send letters to bishops of dioceses to which priests removed from ministry have relocated for residence, confidentially providing details of allegations of sexual abuse of a child by the priests.

RECOMMENDATION 2-That the Archdiocese enter into formalized agreements with civil authorities regarding the reporting of allegations of sexual abuse of minors and the specifics of archdiocesan cooperation with civil authorities' investigations.

RECOMMENDATION 3- That the Archdiocese create and publicize standards of conduct, including boundaries, for clergy and other personnel having contact with children.

RECOMMENDATION 4- That the Archdiocese create and publish a policy statement reflecting the commitment of the Archdiocese to openness and transparency in communications.

RECOMMENDATION 5- That the Archdiocese fully implement its chosen safe environment program (i.e., Safe Haven) as soon as practicable.

RECOMMENDATION 6-That the Archdiocese expedite implementation of background investigations for all archdiocesan and parish personnel, including volunteers, who have regular contact with children.

COMMENDATION 1-For excellent procedures for dealing with and monitoring the activities of priests removed from active ministry for reasons of sexual abuse.

COMMENDATION 2-For the development and sponsoring of an annual assistance ministry conference for the benefit of diocesan personnel from across the United States.

COMMENDATION 3-For the 1992 creation, adoption, and publication of an excellent archdiocesan policy regarding sexual abuse of minors.

COMMENDATION 4-For the successful pursuit of measures to ensure an outstanding working relationship with civil authorities in matters of sexual abuse of minors.

As of December 1, 2003, all Recommendations had been addressed. The Archdiocese of Chicago is found to be compliant with the provisions of the *Charter* as measured by the process described in Chapter 2 in Section I.

The compliance audit measured activity that has occurred since the adoption of the Charter in June 2002 with the exception of certain mandated actions found in Articles 5 and 14. Actions taken by the diocese/eparchy prior to June 2002 to address allegations of sexual abuse of minors by priests and deacons are not included in this summary report.