

2023

ANNUAL REPORT

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS



SECRETARIAT
OF CHILD
AND YOUTH
PROTECTION

NATIONAL
REVIEW BOARD

UNITED STATES
CONFERENCE OF
CATHOLIC BISHOPS

MAY 2024

Report on the Implementation of the

CHARTER FOR THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

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AND YOUTH PROTECTION

NATIONAL REVIEW BOARD

UNITED STATES CONFERENCE
OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS
WASHINGTON, D.C.



The *2023 Annual Report on the Implementation of the “Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People”* was prepared by the Secretariat of Child and Youth Protection for the National Review Board (NRB) and the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB). It was authorized by the USCCB President, Archbishop Timothy P. Broglio, J.C.D. It has been directed for publication by the undersigned.

Rev. Michael J. K. Fuller, S.Th.D.
General Secretary, USCCB

First Printing, May 2024

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OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

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The Most Reverend Timothy P. Broglio, J.C.D.
Archbishop for the Military Services, USA
President

Preface

I am pleased to present the audit findings for the *2023 Annual Report on the Implementation of the "Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People."* StoneBridge Business Partners and the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate continue to conduct the on-site diocesan and eparchial audits along with the data collection and the survey of allegations and costs which account for the ongoing endeavors to accompany survivor victims, provide safe environment training, and conduct background checks. Additionally, the safe environment training curriculum and materials are routinely improved and updated. These audits and surveys provide valuable information that spans back to 2003. No other institution can readily provide and publish the body of knowledge and statistics as the Catholic Church does. The abuse crisis in the Catholic Church is a part of a larger societal problem of abuse. 100% of the dioceses and eparchies participated in the data collection for the 2023 report.

This valuable information collected communicates the reality of the pain and trauma experienced by a child. I am deeply sorry for their suffering. These numbers are not just numbers. The statistics are the many stories and accounts of the betrayal of trust and the lifelong journey towards recovery. Survivor victims are assisting diocesan and eparchial offices in updating relevant information and in improving procedural response in dealing with allegations, accompanying survivors, and maintaining safe environments. I am grateful for this assistance. Trauma-informed research along with relationships developed and nurtured with our victim survivors has afforded front-line personnel, victim assistance coordinators and safe environment coordinators continued growth and ongoing development, which ensures competence and consistency. Again, I am most grateful to victim survivors for reporting the abuse they suffered, for holding all of us accountable, and for allowing us to journey alongside you.

In addressing the ongoing evolving needs in providing safe environments and in journeying towards healing and reconciliation, the Church realizes that she must pay attention to trends, such as persons with disabilities, minor-on-minor abuse, and abuse via technology, the internet, and artificial intelligence. The landscape is in flux, and it is imperative that our Church be up to date with information, appropriate trauma-informed responses, and pedagogy. The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops participates in facilitating dialogue with individuals and institutions, both nationally and internationally. Participation in conferences, partnerships with institutions of higher learning, and the continual renewal of commitment to develop relationships with victim survivors is taking place. Such actions are helping the Church with her change of culture, with development of awareness or mindfulness, and in understanding the importance of the preoccupation with failure and deference to experts.

What are we learning as a Church because of the abuse crisis? By acknowledging wrongdoing and communicating remorse and sorrow, the Church is taking ownership of her failure to protect. We are emphasizing the core value of relationships and encounters. We are putting in place steps and measures for safe environments and following up on near misses. The child or vulnerable person is at the center of these conversations.

I invite you to study these pages, which include the independent audit of StoneBridge Business Partners, the Progress Report from the Secretariat for Child and Youth Protection, and the survey of *Allegations and Cost* from the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate of Georgetown University. To each person involved who tirelessly worked on the 2023 Annual Report, my brother bishops and I communicate our sincere and profound gratitude.

I pray that together, we continue working toward the goal of ending the scourge of child sexual abuse, not only in the Church but in society.

May God grant us peace.



National Review Board for the Protection of Children and Young People

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February 21, 2024

Most Reverend Timothy P. Broglio, J.C.D.
President, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

Your Excellency,

With the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the National Review Board (NRB) is tasked with reviewing the results of the annual audit, assessing compliance, and consulting with the Committee on the Protection of Children and Young People (CPCYP) on any recommendations that emerge from the annual audit (Article 10).

The 2023 annual audit, conducted by StoneBridge Business Partners, reflects solid strides made again this audit year. The NRB applauds 100% participation in data collection from dioceses and eparchies, and gratefully acknowledges all those who continue to be committed to implementing the programs and safeguards instrumental to the process. While the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People* does not demand participation in on-site audits, not all 196 dioceses and eparchies have participated in an on-site audit. The NRB concurs that until 100% participation is attained, we cannot say that we have full commitment to the *Charter*.

The number of historical allegations from years past significantly decreased this audit year from 2,704 in 2022 to 1,308 in 2023. The number of new allegations from minors remained similar to the prior year, at 17. Even as we move forward with progress, we must acknowledge that without ongoing diligence and commitment, there is the possibility that failures can happen and we must be ready to act if they do. We cannot risk *Charter* fatigue or complacency. We must remain vigilant. The NRB supports the use of High Reliability Organization principles (HRO) to evaluate these 17 new allegations to find any holes in policies or practices that need to be shored up to prevent future abuse. One new allegation is one too many. As St. John Paul II reminds us, “Do not be afraid.”

The audit importantly continues to reflect the very high percentage of clergy, educators, seminarians, and employees who receive training in the area of child safety and abuse prevention, along with equally high numbers of those participating in background checks. This successful implementation of *Charter* commitments increases protection and prevention.

There is always room for improvement in *Charter* implementation. This requires a cultural shift. An area ripe for improvement is the ongoing non-compliance issues regarding diocesan and eparchial review boards. If the review board has no allegation to address, the expertise of the lay review board members, in the area of child abuse and protection, can be utilized to update and revise policies if needed. The NRB has recorded a webinar entitled “Diocesan and Religious Order Review Boards, What Every Member Should Know” which is available at Webinars/Videos | USCCB addressing sound practices for review boards. The NRB is also collaborating with the Committee on Canonical Affairs and Church Governance to update the *Diocesan Review Board Resource Booklet*, which we hope will be available by year end.

Seventy percent of dioceses and eparchies conduct their own parish audits on the implementation of safe environment programs and policies. The data shows a correlation between parish audits and *Charter* compliance. Without monitoring implementation at the parish level, the risk of abuse increases.


While the NRB recognizes the tremendous progress made in creating safe environments in our parishes and schools, the Church must still balance those accomplishments with the ongoing work that continues to be needed to support survivors of abuse from years past. Theirs is a lifelong journey and the mission of the Church is a lifelong commitment to accompany them on this healing journey. The mission is to minister, even to those who believe they have lost God along the way and left the Church. The first and most important article in the *Charter* is Article 1, committing to the spiritual and emotional well-being of survivors and their families. The audit this year, as it has for the past 20 years, notes 183 new survivors and their families received pastoral care and 1,662 survivors and their families receive ongoing pastoral care. This is evidence of the commitment of the bishops to the Church's mission to heal and accompany those harmed by abuse.

The NRB continues to recommend further research and collaboration with other institutions in the area of child abuse and prevention regarding the causes and contexts for abuse as well as research that would evaluate the efficacy of safe environment training programs and research that could evaluate the capabilities and knowledge in regard to child protection laws for those interacting with children in our ministries. There must be continued growth in transparency, accountability, and the involvement of survivors in the implementation of the *Charter*.

In November 2021, the Conference of Bishops voted to accelerate the review of the *Charter* ahead of the planned 2025 review date. At the invitation of the CPCYP, the NRB is fully engaged with the CPCYP in the revision of the *Charter*. Working groups made up of bishops, NRB members and USCCB staff have suggested substantial changes to the *Charter* that reflect our growing understanding of the issues and societal changes.

In the spirit of prayer, the NRB and the bishops continue to pledge our commitment to safety and healing by implementing the *Charter* and asking for God's grace in leading us forward.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Suzanne Healy". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Suzanne" being more prominent than the last name "Healy".

Suzanne Healy
Chair, National Review Board



Secretariat of Child and Youth Protection

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12 April 2024

Most Reverend Timothy P. Broglio, J.C.D.
Archbishop for the Military Services, USA
President, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

Mrs. Suzanne Healy
Chair, National Review Board

Your Excellency and Mrs. Healy,

I am grateful that the 2023 audit year had 100% participation in the StoneBridge data collection process. This is the first time since the inception of the *Charter's* Audit in 2003. Every diocese and eparchy submitted information which has become instrumental in the identification of safeguarding trends in the Catholic Church in the United States.

Our culture of healing and protection is based on lessons learned over the years, from sharing stories and experiences amongst survivor victims, victim assistance and safe environment coordinators, the lay faithful, and the clergy. Safe environments are created and maintained through training, studying case studies, creating policies and procedures, implementing, and enforcing these policies, and through vigilance. Healing takes place when the Church takes responsibility and acknowledges where she faltered, compassionately listens to survivor victims who want to tell their stories, and offers genuine apologies, assistance, and accompaniment. We create cultures of protection and healing by minimizing risks, reducing occurrences of harm, and responding effectively when harm does occur. This transformation takes time and these changes are taking place because we are building and sustaining relationships. We are committed to the promise to protect and heal.

Our primary relationship is with God. We can do all things through Him. We pray for the strength and courage needed to do what is right, to fight against evil, and to be an instrument of healing and hope. We grow through the relationships developed with our survivor victims, learning how to journey and accompany and how to minister. In many cases, it is the survivor who ministers. We grow stronger if we have the self-awareness of our limitations – knowing what we can and cannot do and when to refer. We are credible when we see that our efforts with survivor victims and those who are vulnerable are being carried out not because we must, but because such endeavors are core values. This is what we do because we are Church.

Our success is documented by the number of allegations and the number of survivor victims being accompanied and ministered. Importantly, I encourage the Church to continue building relationships and gauging success by the number of opportunities to discuss openly and honestly how the abuse crisis has affected the Church, our faith, Mass attendance, and how we believe in the true presence of the living God through the Sacraments, especially the Holy Eucharist.

The abuse crisis is the broken body of Christ, and our Church continues to mend and to heal. Let us not be discouraged nor afraid. Let us pray that God continues to bless us and our journey. May God grant us the courage and compassion to remain vigilant and committed to continuing the work needed to prevent the evil of abuse.

Sincerely in Christ,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Bernie", with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Bernie Nojadera
Executive Director

January 31, 2024

Most Reverend Timothy P. Broglio, J.C.D.
President, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

Mrs. Suzanne Healy
Chairwoman, National Review Board

Your Excellency and Mrs. Healy,

As we conclude upon the three-year audit cycle, we appreciate the continued efforts and valuable input from the Secretariat of Child and Youth Protection (SCYP) and others associated with the safe environment process. We strive to keep the audit program relevant and robust throughout an ever-changing landscape. Over the past year, we physically visited 48 dioceses/eparchies and utilizing remote technologies visited 17 dioceses/eparchies for a total of 65 on-site audit visits. All 196 dioceses and eparchies participated in the data collection process.

In an on-going effort to improve the audit process, we continued to build upon the remote resources available to dioceses/eparchies by delivering additional presentations to the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) to educate Safe Environment Coordinators and other diocesan/eparchial representatives on our audit process and approach. This year's training documents along with prior year efforts are available on the USCCB's website.

Our work is supported by the efforts of diocesan/eparchial personnel who dedicate their working lives to making a difference in maintaining safe environments. We are grateful for their work in implementing and administering the programs and safeguards that are instrumental to this process. None of this would be possible without the support and prioritization from the bishops who are fulfilling the promise made in creating this *Charter* in 2002. We appreciate the support and confidence that the Conference has demonstrated in our organization.

The annual report that follows compiles the information we gathered during our audits and our related findings and comments.

Sincerely,



Courtney S. Brock, CPA, CFE
StoneBridge Business Partners



Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate

GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY • <http://cara.georgetown.edu>

2300 WISCONSIN AVENUE, NW • SUITE 400 A • WASHINGTON, DC 20007

February 2024

Most Reverend Timothy P. Broglio, J.C.D.
President, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

Ms. Suzanne Healy
Chairwoman, National Review Board (NRB)

Dear Archbishop Broglio and Ms. Healy,

In November 2004, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops commissioned the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA) at Georgetown University to design and conduct an annual survey of all dioceses and eparchies whose bishops and eparchs are members of the USCCB. The purpose of this survey is to collect information on new allegations of sexual abuse of minors and the clergy against whom these allegations were made. The survey also gathers information on the amount of money dioceses and eparchies have expended as a result of allegations as well as the amount they have paid for child protection efforts. The national level aggregate results from this survey for each calendar year are reported in the *Annual Report on the Implementation of the "Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People."*

The questionnaire for the 2023 *Annual Survey of Allegations and Costs* was designed by CARA in consultation with the Secretariat of Child and Youth Protection and was only slightly different from the versions used for the 2004 through 2022 *Annual Surveys*. As in previous years, CARA prepared an online version of the survey and provided bishops and eparchs with information about the process for completing it for their diocese or eparchy. In collaboration with the Conference of Major Superiors of Men, major superiors of religious institutes – including brother-only institutes – were also invited to complete a similar survey for their congregations, provinces, or monasteries.

Data collection for 2023 took place between August 2023 and January 2024. CARA received responses from all but two of the 196 dioceses and eparchies of the USCCB and 140 of the 224 member religious institutes of CMSM, for response rates of 99 percent and 63 percent, respectively. CARA then prepared the national level summary tables and graphs of the findings for 2023, which are presented in this *Annual Report*.

We are grateful for the cooperation of the bishops, eparchs, and major superiors and their representatives in completing the survey for 2023.

Sincerely,

Thomas Gaunt, S.J.

Fr. Thomas P. Gaunt, SJ
Executive Director

Phone: 202-687-8080 • Fax: 202-687-8083 • E-mail: CARA@georgetown.edu

PLACING SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH AT THE SERVICE OF THE CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES SINCE 1964

SECTION I

2023



CHAPTER ONE

SECRETARIAT OF CHILD AND YOUTH PROTECTION 2023 PROGRESS REPORT

COMMITMENT AND RESILIENCY

The bishops and eparchs of the United States continue to demonstrate their commitment to promises made in 2002 with the approval of the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*. For over four decades they have led Catholics in the U.S. in the development and implementation of safeguarding protocols and sought ways to effectively respond to allegations of harm that have been reported. Many changes had already been made in individual dioceses and eparchies before national programming took hold. Eventually, the bishops and eparchs made a bold move by approving the *Charter* and creating a complementary document to aid in the implementation of key commitments made. These Church leaders continue to evaluate their efforts and adjust to an ever-changing environment.

Throughout the audit year of 2023, the Committee on the Protection of Children and Young People (CPCYP) collaborated with the National Review Board (NRB) and other subject matter experts to review the *Charter*. This process included solicitation of recommendations from every bishop in the nation. Many of those bishops reached out to their diocesan/eparchial safe environment and victim assistance staff for suggestions. They engaged with victim/survivors and advocacy groups to explore ways in which the *Charter* might better meet the needs of those who come forward with allegations, as well as identify effective ways to support the healing process. The *Charter* Review Working Group and several subworking groups have been meeting monthly to examine

the document line by line. Every recommendation from bishops has been discussed, and tremendous progress has been made. In the coming year, the draft revision is being presented to other committees at the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) for their input and guidance. This includes the Committee on Canonical Affairs and Church Governance (CACG); the Committee on Clergy, Consecrated Life and Vocations (CCLV); the Committee on Laity, Marriage, Family Life and Youth (LMFLY); and others. While this review may appear to be a rather lengthy and arduous task, the in-depth discussions and detail with which the *Charter* is being examined is an indication of the importance placed upon this document and the desire of all involved to produce a well-crafted product that addresses many facets of this complex issue. Safeguarding and healing are essential aspects of this ministry, and the bishops are committed to continue building upon what has been learned as well as advancing quality research.

The culture of commitment in the U.S. Church is evidenced by having reached a significant milestone for the 2023 audit year (July 1, 2022, through June 30, 2023). For the first time since 2003, all 196 dioceses and eparchies participated in the *Charter* audit. The results are found in Chapter 2 of this report. Every locale submitted data summarizing the work being done. One-third of the dioceses/eparchies welcomed the auditors for a thorough review of their records and interviews with personnel charged with the implementation of safeguarding policies. Many bishops and eparchs requested a Management Letter which identified areas of operation that are in compliance with the *Charter* but could be strengthened. This willingness to have a third-party evaluate a system, and to seek unbiased critique with recommendations

for continued growth and development, is the type of commitment needed if we are to eliminate abuse from our churches and our society.

The support and encouragement received by the local Victim Assistance Coordinators, Safe Environment Coordinators and review board members flows from all avenues. Parishioners will often participate in safe environment trainings even if they are not required to do so. Liturgical services dedicated to the healing of victims and the community are well attended and often planned through joint efforts of staff and survivors. Diocesan and eparchial staff have responded to local parish requests for regular gatherings with parish safe environment staff so that they may learn from each other and share best practices. An increasing number of review board members are requesting advanced training so that they have a better grasp of their role within the Church's structure and the expectations of their bishop/eparch.

This culture of safety is increasingly evident as the safeguarding practices are becoming increasingly natural and are being infused into events and activities at every level of the Church. While this integration occurs, the incidences of harm are lessened. Both youth and adults speak more readily when they have concerns. Progress is being made. But as with any safety protocol that requires effort, it is always at risk of complacency. We can learn from the health industry where there is resurgence of disease that was thought to have been eradicated, or the cause of industrial accidents that can be traced back to failure of people to observe safety protocols or failure to maintain systems. Tremendous progress has been made within the Church in the U.S. by being diligent and focused.

With guidance from the Holy Spirit, a path to a safer Church is revealed. But the work is not complete. The Lord has not asked any of us to stand on our laurels. The Church in the U.S. has a solid foundation upon which to stand and boldly address the crisis of child sexual abuse. With His support, the abilities of the Child and Youth Protection offices can be further integrated into the culture. Current resources can be developed to a more advanced level. Where there are better methods, the Church can explore integration of those methods. Where there is knowledge and expertise, the Church can learn. Where programs or knowledge is lacking, the Church can create the programs and conduct the research. As the Church in

the U.S. has accessed programs and knowledge from other countries and organizations, the Church in the U.S. can also develop and provide new advanced knowledge that others have yet to explore.

The information found in the following chapters is abundant. By examining the data with the *Charter* as a backdrop, a greater understanding of progress being made and areas in need of further development will be revealed. There are elements of the *Charter* that are not explored in any depth during the *Charter* audit or the study from the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA). Some of these are key components found in Articles 8 through 11.

ARTICLES 8-11 OF THE CHARTER

Articles 8 through 11 of the *Charter* ensure the accountability of procedures for implementing the *Charter* across the United States, and therefore they are not subject to the audit. General information regarding the implementation of these articles on a national level can be found below.

ARTICLE 8

The *Charter* establishes the Committee on the Protection of Children and Young People (CPCYP). The CPCYP is to advise the USCCB with comprehensive planning and recommendations on all matters related to child and youth protection. The CPCYP meets on four occasions each year. There are two additional meetings with the National Review Board. The following list identifies the bishops, the regions they represented and consultants with particular expertise:

November 2021 - November 2022

November 2022 - November 2023

Bishops

Bishop James V. Johnston, Jr., Chair
Term expired in 2023

Bishop Mark O'Connell (I)
Term expires in 2026

Bishop John J. O'Hara (II)
Term expired in 2022

Bishop Elias R. Lorenzo O.S.B. (III)
Term expired in 2023

Bishop Adam J. Parker (IV)
Term expires in 2026

Bishop Fernand J. Cheri, III OFM (V)
Term expired in 2022

Bishop David J. Bonnar (VI)
Term expires in 2024

Bishop Jeffrey S. Grob (VII)
Term expires in 2024

Bishop Daniel J. Felton (VIII)
Term expires in 2024

Bishop Thomas R. Zinkula (IX)
Term expired in 2023

Bishop David A. Konderla (X)
Term expires in 2025

Bishop John P. Dolan (XI)
Term expired in 2022

Bishop Peter L. Smith (XII)
Term expired in 2023

Bishop Edward J. Weisenburger (XIII)
Term expires in 2024

Bishop James V. Johnston, Jr., Chair
Term expired in 2023

Bishop Barry C. Knestout, Chair-elect
Diocese of Richmond
Term runs 2023-2026

Bishop Mark O'Connell (I)
Term expires in 2026

Bishop John S. Bonnici (II)
Term expires in 2025

Bishop Elias R. Lorenzo O.S.B. (III)
Term expired in 2023

Bishop Adam J. Parker (IV)
Term expires in 2026

Bishop John C. Iffert (V)
Term expires in 2025

Bishop David J. Bonnar (VI)
Term expires in 2024

Bishop Jeffrey S. Grob (VII)
Term expires in 2024

Bishop Daniel J. Felton (VIII)
Term expires in 2024

Bishop Thomas R. Zinkula (IX)
Term expired in 2023

Bishop David A. Konderla (X)
Term expires in 2025

Bishop Joseph V. Brennan (XI)
Term expires in 2025

Bishop Frank R. Schuster (XII)
Term expires in 2026

Bishop Edward J. Weisenburger (XIII)
Term expires in 2024

Bishop Enrique E. Delgado (XIV)
Term expired in 2023

Bishop Enrique E. Delgado (XIV)
Term expired in 2023

Bishop Mar Joy Alappat (XV)
Term expires in 2024

Bishop Mar Joy Alappat (XV)
Term expires in 2024

Consultants

Rev. Paul B.R. Hartmann
Associate General Secretary, USCCB

Rev. Paul B.R. Hartmann
Associate General Secretary, USCCB

Dcn. Steve DeMartino
*Director for Safeguarding Initiatives
Conference of Major Superiors of Men*

Dcn. Steve DeMartino
*Director for Safeguarding Initiatives
Conference of Major Superiors of Men*

Rev. Luke Ballman
*Executive Director
Secretariat of Clergy, Consecrated Life
and Vocations, USCCB*

Rev. Jorge Torres
*Executive Director
Secretariat of Clergy, Consecrated Life
and Vocations, USCCB*

Dr. Heather Banis
*Victims Assistance Ministry Coordinator
Archdiocese of Los Angeles*

Dr. Heather Banis
*Victims Assistance Ministry Coordinator
Archdiocese of Los Angeles*

Mr. Rod Herrera
*Director, Office of the Protection of
Children and Youth
Diocese of Camden*

Mr. Rod Herrera
*Director, Office of the Protection of
Children and Youth
Diocese of Camden*

Mr. Jeffrey Hunter Moon
*Director of Legal Affairs
Office of General Counsel, USCCB*

Mr. William Quinn
*Solicitor
Office of General Counsel, USCCB*

Ms. Chieko Noguchi
*Executive Director, Office of Public
Affairs, USCCB*

Ms. Chieko Noguchi
*Executive Director, Office of Public
Affairs, USCCB*

Ms. Regina Quinn
*Director, Safe Environment Office
Diocese of Columbus*

Ms. Regina Quinn
*Director, Safe Environment Office
Diocese of Columbus*

Ms. Siobhan Verbeek
*Director, Office of Canonical Affairs,
USCCB*

Ms. Siobhan Verbeek
*Director, Office of Canonical Affairs,
USCCB*

ACTIVITIES OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

The CPCYP is one of two USCCB committees with representation from all fifteen episcopal regions. The Committee's Chair, Bishop James V. Johnston, Jr., Bishop of Kansas City-St. Joseph, welcomed the Chair-elect, Bishop Barry C. Knestout, Bishop of Richmond, who will become chair in November 2023. Six new members were also welcomed this year: Bishop John S. Bonnici, Auxiliary Bishop of New York; Bishop John C. Iffert, Bishop of Covington; Bishop Frank R. Schuster, Auxiliary Bishop of Seattle; Bishop David A. Konderla, Bishop of Tulsa; and Bishop Joseph V. Brennan, Bishop of Fresno.

The CPCYP works closely with the NRB in the pursuit of advanced knowledge and the development of resources related to child abuse and child safety. The CPCYP continues to solicit suggestions and engage in discussion as the review of the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People* continues. In collaboration with CACG, the review and revision of the Diocesan Review Board Resource Booklet progressed. The CPCYP continued to explore potential areas for research-based studies on issues related to safeguarding and the examination of studies conducted by other professional organizations.

ARTICLE 9

The *Charter* specifically created the Secretariat of Child and Youth Protection (SCYP) and assigned to it four central tasks:

- To assist each diocese/eparchy in implementing Safe Environment programs designed to ensure necessary safety and security for all children as they participate in church and religious activities.
- To assist in the development of an appropriate compliance audit mechanism to assist bishops and eparchs in adhering to the responsibilities set forth in the *Charter*.

- To prepare a public annual report based on the audit findings. It is to include progress made on *Charter* implementation and compliance of each diocese/eparchy with the provisions of the *Charter*.
- To provide staffing and support for the CPCYP and the NRB.

The SCYP provides administrative staffing for the CPCYP and the NRB. It is a resource for bishops in the implementation of safe environment programs and a resource for training and development of diocesan/eparchial personnel responsible for child and youth protection programs. The SCYP also serves as a resource to dioceses and eparchies on all matters of child and youth protection, including outreach to victims/survivors and child protection efforts. SCYP provides reports to reflect the activities of the office within the USCCB, the external support to dioceses and eparchies on *Charter* related matters, and the work of the CPCYP and NRB as supported and facilitated by the SCYP.

In developing an effective audit mechanism, SCYP works closely with the CPCYP and an independent third-party auditor, StoneBridge Business Partners, to ensure compliance with responsibilities as set forth in the *Charter*. Details of the audit are included in Chapter 2 of this Annual Report. Additionally, the SCYP works closely with CARA at Georgetown University in gathering data regarding allegations and related financial information. Those findings are in Chapter 3 of this report.

The SCYP's support of dioceses and eparchies includes sponsoring web-based communities to assist the missions of Victim Assistance Coordinators, Safe Environment Coordinators, and Diocesan Review Boards; preparing resource materials extracted from the audits; creating materials to assist in both healing and *Charter* compliance; and providing resources for Child Abuse Prevention Month in April. In keeping with the Conference's emphasis on collaboration, during the month of October, SCYP also focuses on the sanctity and dignity of human life as it joins with the Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities in offering prayers and reflections. The SCYP consults with CCLV to aid the development of Church leadership in living out their vocations in a manner that honors their commitment to our Lord and his people. The SCYP also collaborates with external entities such as

the International Safeguarding Conference hosted by the Pontifical Gregorian University, recognition of April as National Child Abuse Prevention Month, and Blue Sunday Day of Prayer.

When invited, the staff will visit dioceses and eparchies to assist and provide necessary training. On a limited basis and as needed, the staff provides victims/survivors support and referral to resources that can aid them in their healing. Staff makes efforts to stay current with national and global events as well as advances in the field of child abuse prevention and healing. Relationships with other child serving organizations and professionals are constantly being developed to build upon advancements in the field and efforts beyond the Church.

SECRETARIAT OF CHILD AND YOUTH PROTECTION STAFF

The following four staff members served in the SCYP during the audit period of July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023.

Deacon Bernie Nojadera, Executive Director, has served as the USCCB Executive Director of the Secretariat of Child and Youth Protection since 2011. Formerly, he served as Director of the Office for the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults with the Diocese of San Jose, California, from 2002-2011. He has a Bachelor of Arts degree from St. Joseph College, Mountain View, California; a Master of Social Work degree specializing in health and mental health services from San Jose State University; and a Master of Arts in Theology from St. Patrick's Seminary and University, Menlo Park, California. He has been a member of the San Jose Police Department's Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force, the County of Santa Clara Interfaith Clergy Task Force on the Prevention of Elder Abuse, and the County of Santa Clara Task Force on Suicide Prevention. He enjoys offering national and international workshops/training on safe environment/victim accompaniment, safeguarding, HRO (High Reliability Organization) principles, and topics on leadership and communication. He is married and has two adult children.

Molly Fara, Associate Director, has been with the SCYP since September of 2020. From 2012-2020 she worked for the Diocese of Joliet where she established the Office of Child and Youth Protection and

served as the director. She has a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Dayton, Ohio with a major in psychology and minor in criminal justice. Molly earned a Master of Arts Degree in Social Work from the University of Illinois at Chicago. She is recognized as a Licensed Clinical Social Worker and has a Professional Educator License with School Social Work Endorsement. Prior work experience includes psychiatric hospital, in-patient/out-patient substance abuse treatment, residential treatment center for emotionally disturbed youth, adult protective services, and employee assistance programs.

Silvina Cerezo began serving as the Coordinator of Communications and Resources in May of 2023. She began working for the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops in 2018, in the Department of Migration and Refugee Services as a Program Associate and later was promoted to the Secretariat of Divine Worship as a Multicultural Specialist. A native of Argentina, where she studied Latin, Spanish literature, and linguistics among other subjects, she lived in Dublin, Ireland for several years where she deepened her knowledge of English. After arriving in the United States, Silvina completed a Bachelor of Arts in Interdisciplinary Studies at The Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C. and continued her education as a non-degree student at the Dominican House of Studies, also in Washington, D.C. She has been married for thirteen years.

Laura Garner, Executive Assistant, joined the staff of the Secretariat on January 3, 2011. Previously, Ms. Garner served as a Staff Assistant in the Office of the General Counsel with the USCCB since 2008. Ms. Garner holds a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from Loyola College and a Master of Arts in Art Therapy from George Washington University. She is married with four adult children and six grandchildren.

ACTIVITIES OF THE SECRETARIAT OF CHILD AND YOUTH PROTECTION

Collaboration

The SCYP works very closely with the CPCYP and the NRB in planning meetings and guiding the advancement of projects and activities. During this audit year, the SCYP was instrumental in facilitating the review

of the *Charter* and other governing documents. The SCYP answered the call to facilitate the North American Working Group in preparation for the International Safeguarding Conference hosted by the Pontifical Gregorian University. Communication with professional and international organizations is ongoing with regard to the promotion of research and development of resources to advance the knowledge base of abuse related issues. This includes the Catholic Project at The Catholic University of America, John Jay College of Criminal Justice at City University of New York, and the Institute for Child Protection Studies at the Australian Catholic University.

Support and Outreach

Victim Assistance Coordinators and Safe Environment Coordinators carry tremendous responsibility lending to the needs of survivors and implementing safety protocols. The SCYP is in contact with Church representatives on a daily basis providing consultation on difficult issues, clarification of Church processes, and often the emotional support that is not easily available to people who work in this field. Secondary trauma is very real, and the SCYP is available to assist in times of need.

The SCYP will also be in contact with victims/survivors providing them with support on a limited basis. The SCYP will continue to offer resources and direction to the general public and will continue to serve as a bridge connecting the public with diocesan/eparchial staff and national organizations.

Professional Development

Advancing the knowledge base at all levels is critical in eradicating child abuse and healing the many wounds that have been inflicted. The SCYP attempts to stay abreast of new research and global events and will share selected information with bishops, CYP staff and colleagues. SCYP continues to develop an e-learning platform, Child Abuse Prevention Empowerment (CAPE), which provides in-depth programs for new CYP staff and review board members. The SCYP conducts in-person and hybrid training on the principles of High Reliability Organizations (HROs). Frequently, dioceses and eparchies request customized training to address specific needs for

leadership staff, clerics, religious education directors, review board members, and others.

In addition, the SCYP is involved in the annual Child and Youth Protection Catholic Leadership Conference. This three-day event is specifically geared to the professional development of CYP staff. The 2023 conference was hosted by the Diocese of San Diego and attended by over two hundred colleagues from around the country. A preconference session was conducted by the SCYP staff providing a comprehensive orientation to over sixty new Victim Assistance Coordinators and Safe Environment Coordinators. Through the generosity of the USCCB's Catholic Home Missions, more than thirty diocesan and eparchial staff were provided financial assistance which allowed them to attend this event.

Organizers of the International Safeguarding Conference requested the SCYP host a North American preconference working group in preparation for the final event in Rome. The three virtual meetings included thirty subject matter experts from the U.S. and Canada. Attendees were able to share ideas and discuss the following topics: Accountability to Survivors, Accountability to Organizations, Accountability to the Public, and Accountability to Children. The North American Working Group had twelve representatives at the final event including three bishops, the National Review Board chair and two members of the SCYP. Information garnered from the discussions was presented in conjunction with that of working groups from five continents. The relationships formed during these events continue long after the events, as the participants seek consultation on effective ways for the universal Church to implement strategies and share resources.

ARTICLE 10

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops established the National Review Board (NRB) during their meeting in June 2002. The NRB is to collaborate and advise the CPCYP on matters pertaining to the protection of youth. The NRB meets four times each year as well as two joint meetings with CPCYP. There are four standing subcommittees: Research and Trends, Audit, Communications, and Nominations. Ad hoc committees are established as the need arises. This all-volunteer Board is comprised of thirteen individuals with expertise in

fields relevant to the work of the CPCYP. Potential candidates are nominated by their respective bishop/eparchy and go through an extensive evaluation process. Finalists are appointed by the USCCB President to serve four-year terms. Members of the National Review Board during the audit period of July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023, were:

Ms. Suzanne Healy, Chair <i>Term expires 2024</i>	Dr. Kurt Martens <i>Term expires 2026</i>
Ms. Vivian Akel <i>Term expires 2028</i>	Ms. Thomas Mengler <i>Term expires 2024</i>
Mr. James Bogner <i>Term expires 2027</i>	Mr. José Angel Moreno <i>Term expires 2026</i>
Ms. Sarah Brennan <i>Term expires 2026</i>	Dr. Julie Hanlon Rubio <i>Term expires 2025</i>
Hon. Elizabeth Hayden <i>Term expired 2023</i>	Dr. John Sheveland <i>Term expires 2027</i>
Mr. Steven Jubera <i>Term expires 2024</i>	Ms. Belinda Taylor <i>Term expired 2023</i>
Mr. John Leavitt <i>Term expires 2026</i>	

ACTIVITIES OF THE NATIONAL REVIEW BOARD

The CPCYP is reliant on the expertise and advice of the NRB. Utilizing a rigorous selection process, nominations are made by bishops/eparchs and final candidates are submitted to the Conference president for appointments to this advisory group. Ms. Sarah Brennan of Albuquerque, Mr. John Leavitt of Tucson, Mr. José Angel Moreno of Laredo, and Dr. Kurt Martens of Washington, D.C., were appointed to four-year terms, while Ms. Suzanne Healy, former Victim Assistance Coordinator of Los Angeles, continues as the Chair.

Recent changes in Canon Law and shifts in the functioning of review boards prompted the need for revisions of the Diocesan Review Board Resource Booklet. The NRB continues to collaborate with the CPCYP and CACG in revising this document. This booklet provides guidance for diocesan and eparchial review boards as they advise the local bishop/

eparchy on issues specific to the individual diocese/eparchy including response to allegations and policy development.

Every member of the NRB participated in sub-working groups along with CPCYP members in the review of the *Charter*. NRB members assisted in refining the suggestions offered by the body of bishops, as they continue to update this influential document.

Ms. Suzanne Healy was one of the opening presenters at the Child and Youth Protection Catholic Leadership Conference and was a panelist for the orientation breakout session. The dedicated members of the NRB are actively engaged in the identification of new research and studies regarding safeguarding and the advancement of knowledge in understanding the causes of abuse and the societal elements that allow abuse to occur. NRB member, Dr. Julie Hanlon Rubio, recently published research regarding clericalism, “Beyond Bad Apples.” She provided a summary of this report and its implications to the NRB and CPCYP.

ARTICLE II

In accord with the *Charter*, the President of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Most Reverend Timothy P. Broglio, J.C.D., Archbishop for the Military Services, USA has shared a copy of this Annual Report with the Holy See.

CONCLUSION

The information provided in this Annual Report highlights the activities of the SCYP, CPCYP and NRB. The *Charter* audit report and the CARA report provide insight into current activities of the U.S. Catholic Church. One hundred percent participation in the audit process provides a thorough overview of the effectiveness of the *Charter* and its implementation. Compliance with safeguarding protocols remains high but has room to improve. Until every diocese and eparchy is able to report one hundred percent compliance with background checks and training for youth and adults, there will be room for improvement. Events of decades past continue to plague the Church as allegations of historical nature become known. The fact that victims/survivors are coming forward is an indication of the extent to which the Church has altered its response and that

however difficult, victims/survivors are finding the courage to speak, and the Church is listening and responding. Unfortunately, the Church's ability to provide direct support to victims/survivors is limited by litigation and the legal constraints associated with it.

There is a cultural shift occurring, not only in the Church but in society. Recognition that abuse occurs in many forms and exists in all aspects of society in every nation is paramount to eradicating this abhorrent behavior. Efforts of the USCCB to actively engage in the development of preventive measures

and to promote accompaniment of victims/survivors is essential to the resolution of the crisis that has been laid bare. By publishing this Annual Report and submitting it to the Holy See, the bishops demonstrate their commitment to transparency and accountability. There are many accomplishments to be recognized, yet the work of the USCCB, CPCYP, NRB, and SCYP must continue so that the vulnerable will be safe and bad actors will be held accountable.

Chapter Two of this Annual Report was authored by StoneBridge Business Partners. Given the independent nature of its charge, the report is reprinted as submitted to the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB). The USCCB does not edit or correct the contents of the auditor's report.

CHAPTER TWO

STONEBRIDGE BUSINESS PARTNERS 2023 AUDIT REPORT

INTRODUCTION

This Audit Report summarizes the results of the 2023 *Charter* audits for inclusion in the Secretariat of Child and Youth Protection's Annual Report, in accordance with Article 9 of the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People* ("Charter").

StoneBridge Business Partners (StoneBridge) was first contracted in 2011 to provide audit services and collect data from the 196 Catholic dioceses and eparchies in the United States on behalf of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), the USCCB Committee on the Protection of Children and Young People, and the National Review Board. With the approval of the Administrative Committee of the USCCB, StoneBridge worked with the Secretariat of Child and Youth Protection (SCYP) to develop a comprehensive audit instrument, revise the charts used to collect data, and train StoneBridge staff and diocesan/eparchial personnel on the content, expectations and requirements of the *Charter* audits.

For the 2023 audit year, StoneBridge physically visited 48 dioceses/eparchies and utilized remote technologies to perform 17 additional remote visits to dioceses/eparchies, for a total of 65 on-site audit visits ("on-site audits") and collected data ("data collection process") from 131 others. Of the 65 dioceses/eparchies that participated in the on-site audits, there were four findings of non-compliance with certain aspects of the *Charter*. Compliance with the *Charter* was determined based on implementation efforts from the date of the last audit visit through 2023.

On-site audits took place the months of February through December 2023.

To be found as participating in the data collection process, the dioceses/eparchies only needed to submit Charts A/B and C/D. Data included in Charts A/B and C/D was compiled between July 1, 2022 and June 30, 2023.

INSTANCES OF NON-COMPLIANCE

For the 2023 audit period, there are four findings of non-compliance.

St. Mary, Queen of Peace Syro-Malankara Catholic Eparchy in the USA and Canada was found non-compliant with Article 2 due to the composition of the Review Board not being primarily lay persons or persons not employed by the Eparchy and with Article 12 due to the lack of a safe environment training program for minors. Subsequent to the audit period, the Eparchy appointed additional members to the Review Board, bringing the Eparchy into compliance with Article 2 of the *Charter*. Additionally, the Eparchy implemented a safe environment training program for minors, bringing the Eparchy into compliance with Article 12 of the *Charter*.

The Chaldean Diocese of St. Thomas the Apostle U.S.A. was found non-compliant with Article 2 due to the Review Board not meeting during the audit period. Subsequent to the audit period, the Diocese convened a meeting of the Review Board, bringing the Diocese into compliance with Article 2 of the *Charter*.

The Archdiocese of Milwaukee was found non-compliant with Article 2 due to the composition of the Review Board not being primarily lay persons or persons not employed by the Archdiocese. Subsequent to the audit period, the Archdiocese appointed a lay person to the Review Board, bringing the Archdiocese into compliance with Article 2 of the *Charter*.

The Ukrainian Eparchy of St. Nicholas in Chicago was found non-compliant with Article 12 due to the lack of a safe environment training program for minors. Subsequent to the audit period, the Eparchy established a safe environment training program for minors, bringing the Eparchy into compliance with Article 12 of the *Charter*.

COMMENTS REGARDING THE AUDIT ENVIRONMENT

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

The *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People* was first published in 2002 and was subsequently revised in 2005, 2011, and 2018. As noted, “It is to be reviewed again after seven years by the Committee on the Protection of Children and Young People with the advice of the National Review Board. The results of this review are to be presented to the full Conference of Bishops for confirmation. Authoritative interpretations of its provisions are reserved to the Conference of Bishops.” In November 2021, the Conference voted to accelerate the review of the *Charter* ahead of the planned 2025 review date.

The implementation of the *Charter* in 2002 is specific to the United States Conference, as are the *Essential Norms for Diocesan/Eparchial Policies Dealing with Allegations of Sexual Abuse of Minors by Priests or Deacons (Essential Norms)* promulgated June 17, 2005 and put into effect on May 15, 2006. The Preamble to the *Essential Norms* states, “These norms are complementary to the universal law of the Church and are to be interpreted in accordance with that law.”

As stated in Article 9, “The Secretariat is to produce an annual public report on the progress made in implementing and maintaining the standards in this *Charter*. The report is to be based on an annual audit process whose method, scope, and cost are to be approved by the Administrative Committee

on the recommendation of the Committee on the Protection of Children and Young People.” As the independent auditors of the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*, StoneBridge Business Partners has observed the implementation of the *Charter* since our appointment in 2011. The current 196 dioceses and eparchies that make up the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops each implement and maintain the standards in the *Charter* per their own policies, procedures and interpretation of the document. The result is 196 different implementations of the *Charter*.

COMMENTS ON SELECTIVE AUDIT TOPICS

ADDITIONAL ACTIONS OF DIOCESES AND EPARCHIES

Dioceses and eparchies have taken certain measures that go beyond the specific requirements of the *Charter*. We believe these activities provide for a stronger safe environment and we encourage the continuation of these activities. During the 2023 on-site visits we noted the following:

- 100% of on-site audit visits requested an optional management letter from the auditors during the period. These letters provide suggestions to the bishops for their consideration while implementing *Charter* procedures within their diocese/eparchy.
- Approximately 70% of dioceses/eparchies indicated that they perform parish audits in some form on a regular or “as needed” basis. It is our observation that Chancery offices who maintain regular face-to-face contact with parishes have better results in implementing training and background check procedures than those who do not. StoneBridge continues to suggest to dioceses/eparchies that they consider the feasibility of implementing a formal process to periodically visit parish and school locations in order to review documentation and assess compliance with safe environment requirements. We believe the key element in this process is the development of a relationship that enhances

communications between the parish and chancery locations.

- Over 85% of dioceses/eparchies indicated that they require some type of reoccurring adult training. Although not required by the *Charter*, StoneBridge continues to suggest to dioceses/eparchies that they consider implementing a policy for renewing safe environment training for all clergy, employees, and volunteers on a periodic basis.
- Over 95% of dioceses/eparchies indicated that they require background check renewals. Although not required by the *Charter*, StoneBridge continues to suggest to dioceses/eparchies that they consider renewing background checks periodically.
- 34 dioceses/eparchies elected to have StoneBridge conduct optional parish/school audits as part of their on-site audit visit.

LIMITATIONS OF THE AUDIT METHODOLOGY

The following topics represent limitations within both the on-site audit process and the data collection process performed by StoneBridge during the 2023 audits:

Failure to Participate in the On-Site Audit Process

Participation in the audit process is not required under the *Charter*. StoneBridge has yet to witness full participation in the on-site audit process from all dioceses and eparchies during the thirteen audit years we have been engaged. Until there is full participation, we are limited in our ability to opine on whether or not the *Charter* has been fully implemented within the U.S. Conference.

Resources of Dioceses/Eparchies and Submission of Data on Charts A/B and C/D

We have noted in past years that each diocese/eparchy has different levels of resources available to implement the *Charter*. Some dioceses and eparchies continue to struggle with outdated information, lack of cooperation at the parish/school level, and inefficient processes for the information gathered. Dioceses/eparchies cannot effectively monitor implementation without being able to verify the number of people being reported from parishes/schools each year.

Upon review of the information presented, we noted instances of incomplete or inaccurate information being provided on Charts A/B and C/D. StoneBridge has observed a history of incomplete or inaccurate data in the submission of the Charts. For the current audit year, 21% of dioceses and eparchies submitted the Charts past the due date. It is important to note that while there is a review of the information submitted, StoneBridge does not audit the data collected from Charts A/B and C/D.

OTHER AUDIT FINDINGS AND COMMENTS

The following are observations StoneBridge auditors made during the on-site audit process in the 2023 audit year. We believe that if each topic is addressed proactively by dioceses and eparchies, improvements can be made to safe environments. The topics are categorized by *Charter* article.

Topics observed in *more than 25%* of dioceses/eparchies audited during 2023:

Article 2

- Review Board Functioning - We observed a variety of topics indicating some dysfunction of Review Boards including lack of meetings, inadequate composition or membership, not following the by-laws of the Board, members not confident in their duties, lack of rotation of members, and a lack of review of diocesan/eparchial policies and procedures.

The Review Board is intended to be a confidential consultative body to assist the bishop.

Dioceses/eparchies are encouraged to use the resources and talents of their review board members to ensure that *Charter* related policies and procedures are relevant.

Articles 2, 4, and 6 – Policies and Procedures/Codes of Conduct

- The Child Protection Policy did not include language regarding child pornography or individuals who habitually lack the use of reason per the 2011 *Charter* revision.
- The Code of Conduct did not include language regarding child pornography or individuals who habitually lack the use of reason per the 2011 *Charter* revision.

Articles 12 and 13

- Article 12 requires dioceses/eparchies to maintain a “safe environment” program which the diocesan/eparchial bishop deems to be in accord with Catholic moral principles. This is typically documented through a promulgated letter, signed by the current bishop. We observed either outdated letters that were not inclusive of programs in use by parishes and schools, letters from a previous bishop, or no documented promulgation.
- We noted dioceses/eparchies that were not effectively monitoring compliance with their own policy requirements for training or background checks for clergy and other persons with contact with minors. Topics noted included a lack of annual compliance letters from parishes/schools, poor database management, and a lack of visitation to parishes/schools either remotely or in person to verify proper implementation of the safe environment programs.

Other topics observed in *less* than 25% of dioceses/eparchies audited during 2023:

Article 1

- An offer by the diocesan/eparchial bishop or his representative to meet with victims and their families was not included in policy or not made on a timely basis.

Article 2

- Reporting procedures were not available in printed form in all principal languages in which the liturgy is offered. This potentially limits the ability of non-English speaking populations to report instances of abuse.
- Reporting procedures were not consistently displayed at parishes and schools.

Articles 5 and 14

- There was no formal policy or plan in place to monitor the whereabouts or activities of clergy permanently removed from active ministry but not dismissed from the clerical state.
- There were no documented policies regarding one of the following items regarding accused clergy: presumption of innocence, retention of civil and canonical counsel, steps to restore good name if allegation is deemed not substantiated, or transfer of clergy.

Article 7

- There was no formal policy concerning communications with the public regarding sexual abuse of minors by clergy.

Articles 12 and 13

- Some clergy, employees, and volunteers were not trained or background checked, but had contact with minors.

AUDIT PROCESS

The following paragraphs provide an overview of the on-site audit and data collection process.

Prior to the start of the audit year, StoneBridge and the SCYP distribute presentation materials to all Safe Environment Coordinators and other diocesan/eparchial representatives to educate them on our audit process, changes and approach. Training materials and recordings developed by StoneBridge are also available to assist Safe Environment Coordinators and other diocesan/eparchial representatives prepare for the on-site audit.

Whether participating in an on-site audit or the data collection process, each diocese and eparchy is asked to complete two documents; Chart A/B and Chart C/D annually. These Charts were developed by StoneBridge and the SCYP, and are used to collect the information necessary from each diocese/eparchy for inclusion in the SCYP Annual Report.

Statistics from Charts A/B and C/D are presented at the end of the StoneBridge 2023 *Audit Report*.

During the data collection process, StoneBridge reviews both Charts A/B and C/D for completeness and clarifies any ambiguities. Afterward, the Charts are forwarded to the SCYP as proof of participation from the diocese/eparchy.

On-site audit participants are required to complete the Audit Instrument, which asks a diocese or eparchy to explain how they are compliant with each aspect of the *Charter*, by Article. During the audit, StoneBridge verifies Audit Instrument responses through interviews with diocesan/eparchial personnel and review of supporting documentation.

Parish audits are an optional, but nonetheless an important part of the audit methodology. During parish audits, StoneBridge auditors, sometimes accompanied by diocesan/eparchial personnel, visit a random selection of diocesan/eparchial parishes and schools to assess the effectiveness of the *Charter* implementation.

At the completion of each on-site audit, a Compliance Letter is prepared by the auditors. This letter communicates to bishops and eparchs whether their dioceses/eparchies are found to be in compliance with the *Charter*. Any specific instances of non-compliance, if applicable, would be identified in this communication and expanded upon accordingly.

The Management Letter, which is at the request of the bishop or eparch, communicates to the bishop or eparch any suggestions that the auditors wish to make based on their findings during the on-site audit. Any comments made in this letter do not affect compliance with the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*; they are simply suggestions for consideration. Exit interviews are conducted with the bishop or eparch for all on-site audits.

A list of all the dioceses and eparchies that completed on-site audits during 2023 can be found at the end of the 2023 *Audit Report*.

At the completion of the data collection process, the bishop or eparch will receive a Participation Letter. This letter communicates that the diocese/eparchy has submitted Chart A/B and Chart C/D. It also indicates the year of the next scheduled on-site audit. Receipt of the Participation Letter does not imply that a diocese or eparchy is compliant with the *Charter*. Compliance with the *Charter* can only be effectively determined by participation in an on-site audit.

CONCLUSION

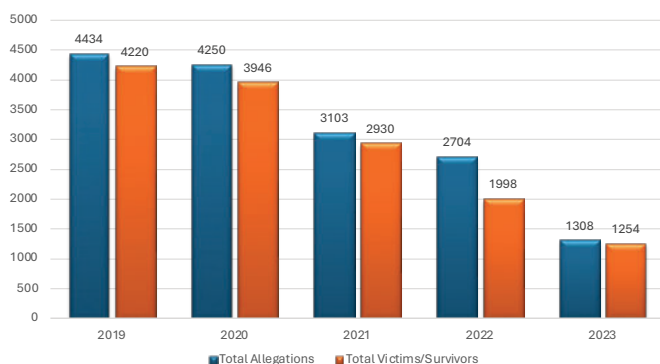
By authorizing the audit process, the bishops and eparchs of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops demonstrate their commitment to the protection of children and the prevention of sexual abuse of the vulnerable among us. Prevention is made possible by the commitment and effort of the personnel involved in the *Charter's* implementation. We recognize the dedication of these individuals, and we are grateful for the opportunity to collaborate with them throughout the year. Finally, we thank the Committee on the Protection of Children and Young People, the National Review Board, and the Secretariat of Child and Youth Protection for their ongoing support of the audit process.

STATISTICS

TOTAL ALLEGATIONS

Between July 1, 2022 and June 30, 2023, 1,308 allegations were reported by 1,254 victims/survivors of child sexual abuse by clergy throughout 196 Catholic dioceses and eparchies that reported information. These allegations represent reports of abuse between an alleged victim and an alleged accused, whether the abuse was a single incident or a series of incidents over a period of time. The abuse was alleged to have occurred from the 1930's to the present. Chart 1-1 below summarizes the total allegations and total victims/survivors by audit year from 2019 through 2023.

**Chart 1-1: Total Allegations
2019 - 2023**



Allegations received as a result of lawsuits, compensation programs, and bankruptcies, make up approximately 56% of allegations during 2023. These programs allow those who have previously reported allegations, as well as those who have not yet come forward, to be considered for some type of monetary compensation.

For purposes of this audit, the investigation of an allegation has five potential outcomes. An allegation is “substantiated” when the diocese/eparchy has completed an investigation and the allegation has been deemed credible/true based upon the evidence gathered through the investigation. An allegation is “unsubstantiated” when the diocese/eparchy has completed an investigation and the allegation has been deemed not credible/false based upon the

evidence gathered through the investigation. An allegation is “unable to be proven” when the diocese/eparchy was unable to complete the investigation due to lack of information, this is generally the outcome of an investigation when the accused cleric is deceased, or his status or location is unknown. Since the information collected was as of June 30, 2023, many allegations were still under investigation and categorized as “investigation ongoing.” In other cases, an investigation had not yet begun for various reasons, or the allegation had been referred to another diocese/eparchy or is still in the compensation/bankruptcy process. These were categorized as “Other.” Chart 1-2 below summarizes the status of the 1,308 allegations as of June 30, 2023.

**Chart 1-2: Status of Allegations as
of June 30, 2023**

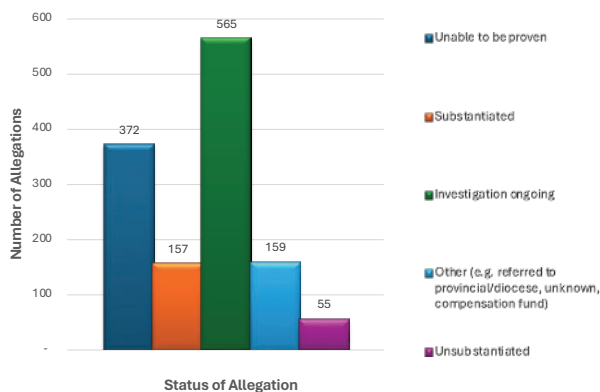
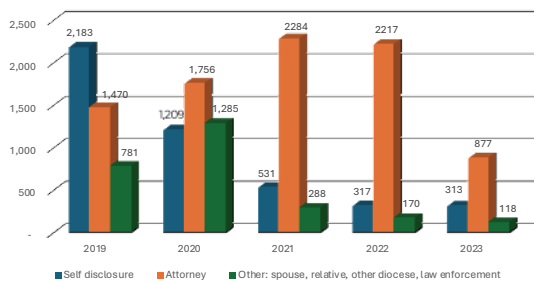


Chart 1-3 below summarizes the ways in which allegations were received from 2019 through 2023. Out of the 1,308 allegations, a total of 877, or 67%, were brought to the attention of the diocesan/eparchial representatives through an attorney, making this the principal reporting method during the 2023 audit period. Allegations made by spouses, relatives, or other representatives such as other dioceses/eparchies, religious orders, clergy members, or law enforcement officials on behalf of the victim/survivor were additional methods of reporting, totaling

118 allegations. The remaining 313 allegations were made by self disclosure.

Chart 1-3: Methods of Reporting Allegations 2019 - 2023



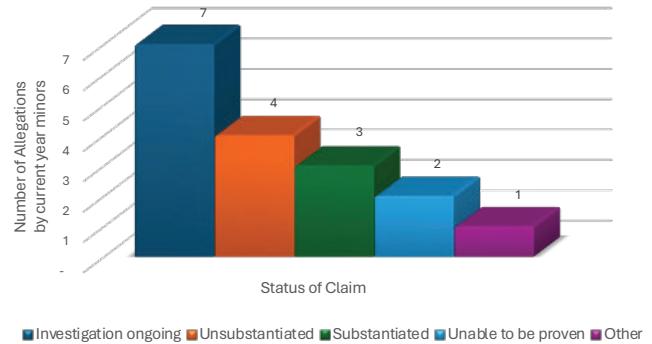
During the current audit period, dioceses/eparchies provided outreach and support services to 183 victims/survivors and their families who reported during this audit period. Continued support was provided to 1,662 victims/survivors and their families who reported abuse in prior audit periods.

As part of the audit procedures, StoneBridge asked dioceses and eparchies to report on Chart A/B the date the abuse was reported, and the date outreach services were offered. StoneBridge compared these dates to determine how prompt outreach services were offered to victims/survivors from the dioceses and eparchies as further discussed in Article 1.

Allegations involving Minors

Out of the 1,308 allegations, 17 involved current year minors—consisting of 4 males, 11 females, and 2 were unknown due to a lack of detailed information. Of these allegations 3 were substantiated, 7 were categorized as investigation ongoing, 4 were unsubstantiated, 2 were categorized as unable to be proven and 1 categorized as other. Chart 4-1 below summarizes the status of each of the 17 claims made by current year minors as of June 30, 2023.

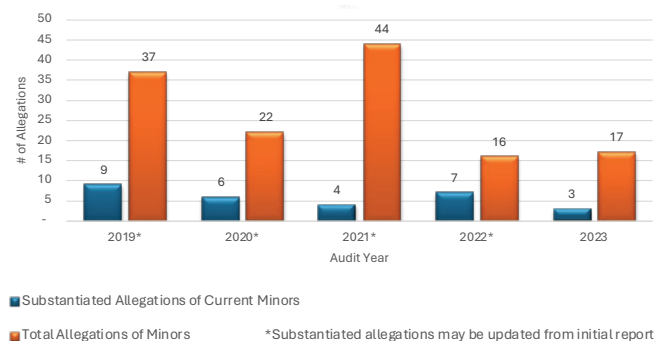
Chart 4-1: Status of claims by current year minors as of June 30, 2023



Revisions to the *Charter* in 2011 included classification of allegations to expand to those who “habitually lack the use of reason” and the acquisition, possession, and distribution of child pornography. There were four allegations involving an adult who “habitually lacks the use of reason” and one allegation involving child pornography.

Part of StoneBridge’s audit procedures is to follow up with the prior years’ allegations that involved minors where the investigation was identified as ongoing. Chart 4-2 below compares the total number of allegations by minors with substantiated claims by minors over the last five years.

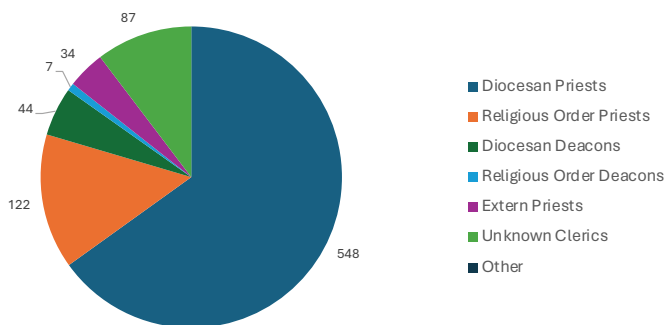
Chart 4-2: Total Allegations of Minors vs. Substantiated Allegations 2019 - 2023



Accused Clerics

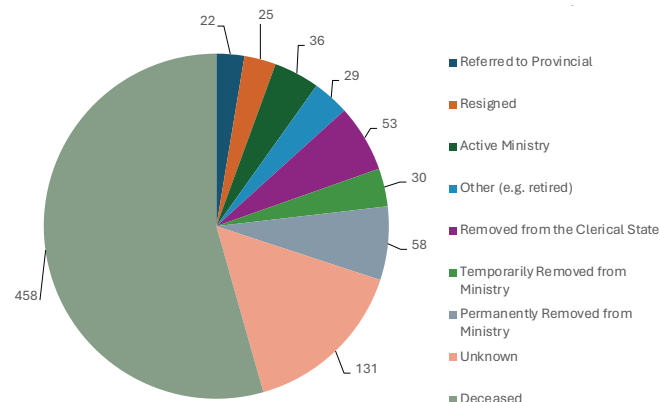
The number of clerics accused of sexual abuse of a minor during the audit period totaled 842. The accused clerics were categorized as priests, deacons, unknown, or other. An “unknown” cleric is used for a situation in which the victim/survivor was unable to provide the identity of the accused. “Other” represents a cleric from another diocese for which details of ordination and/or incardination were not available/provided. Accused priests of the audit period totaled 704. Of this total, 548 were diocesan priests, 122 belonged to a religious order, and 34 were incardinated elsewhere. There were 51 deacons accused during the audit period. Of this total, 44 were diocesan deacons, and 7 were religious order deacons. Allegations brought against “unknown” clerics totaled 87. Of the total identified clerics, 375, or 45%, had been accused in previous audit periods. See Chart 4-3 below for a summary of accused type.

Chart 4-3: Accused Type for June 30, 2023



See Chart 5-1 below for a summary of the status of the 842 accused clerics as of June 30, 2023.

Chart 5-1: Status of Accused Clerics as of June 30, 2023



Training and Background Check Statistics

StoneBridge collected current year safe environment training and background screening information for each diocese/eparchy. The figures provided by dioceses/eparchies for Article 12 were not audited by StoneBridge. The *Charter* does not require clergy, employees, and volunteers to renew safe environment training or background check information. However, some dioceses/eparchies choose to require some form of refresher training and background check renewal. A complete list of safe environment training programs used in dioceses and eparchies can be found on the SCYP website. It is important to note that the figures reported in the categories below, excluding the children category, represent individuals who have been trained and background screened at least once.

TRAINING

Children	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Dioceses/eparchies participating	196	194	191	195	194	194	194	194
Total children	3,185,779	3,073,741	2,960,677	3,661,972	4,008,467	4,209,857	4,411,279	4,538,756
Total children trained	2,812,688	2,929,581	2,466,346	3,100,151	3,685,276	3,914,972	4,117,869	4,267,014
Percent trained	88.3%	95.3%	83.3%	84.7%	91.9%	93.0%	93.3%	94.0%
Percent opted out	1.7%	1.2%	1.3%	1.0%	1.0%	1.3%	1.0%	1.1%

Priests	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Total priests	31,493	31,846	32,264	33,469	33,628	33,814	33,917	35,815
Total priests trained	31,355	31,674	32,101	32,600	33,244	33,542	33,448	35,475
Percent trained	99.6%	99.5%	99.5%	97.4%	98.9%	99.2%	98.6%	99.1%

Deacons	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Total deacons	16,494	16,790	16,592	16,457	16,344	16,414	16,328	16,423
Total deacons trained	16,443	16,769	16,559	16,391	16,204	16,318	16,177	16,294
Percent trained	99.7%	99.9%	99.8%	99.6%	99.1%	99.4%	99.1%	99.2%

Candidates for Ordination	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Total candidates	5,219	5,529	5,547	6,662	6,564	6,787	7,028	6,902
Total candidates trained	5,202	5,474	5,509	6,617	6,482	6,677	6,944	6,847
Percent trained	99.7%	99.0%	99.3%	99.3%	98.8%	98.4%	98.8%	99.2%

Educators	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Total educators	154,284	152,078	155,209	164,279	173,236	175,151	172,832	162,988
Total educators trained	152,571	150,818	154,093	163,112	170,611	173,611	170,678	159,764
Percent trained	98.9%	99.2%	99.3%	99.3%	98.5%	99.1%	98.8%	98.0%

Other Employees	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Total other employees	256,170	254,623	251,293	256,538	273,156	267,052	270,750	269,250
Total other employees trained	252,816	250,155	247,198	250,480	264,847	261,215	263,606	258,978
Percent trained	98.7%	98.2%	98.4%	97.6%	97.0%	97.8%	97.4%	96.2%

Volunteers	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Total volunteers	1,721,445	1,731,351	1,608,976	2,107,964	2,218,853	2,205,252	2,088,272	1,984,063
Total volunteers trained	1,697,030	1,694,604	1,581,808	2,069,213	2,136,439	2,163,099	2,041,019	1,912,152
Percent trained	98.6%	97.9%	98.3%	98.2%	96.3%	98.1%	97.7%	96.4%

BACKGROUND CHECKS

Priests	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Dioceses/eparchies participating	196	194	191	195	194	194	194	194
Total priests	31,493	31,846	32,264	33,469	33,628	33,814	33,917	35,815
Total priests background checked	31,413	31,754	31,824	32,923	33,195	33,592	33,540	35,346
Percent checked	99.7%	99.7%	98.6%	98.4%	98.7%	99.3%	98.9%	98.7%

Deacons	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Total deacons	16,494	16,790	16,592	16,457	16,344	16,414	16,328	16,423
Total deacons background checked	16,465	16,770	16,486	16,417	16,320	16,389	16,222	16,050
Percent checked	99.8%	99.9%	99.4%	99.8%	99.9%	99.8%	99.4%	97.7%

Candidates for Ordination	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Total candidates	5,219	5,529	5,547	6,662	6,564	6,787	7,028	6,902
Total candidates background checked	5,207	5,498	5,505	6,634	6,506	6,711	6,971	6,841
Percent checked	99.8%	99.4%	99.2%	99.6%	99.1%	98.9%	99.2%	99.1%

Educators	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Total educators	154,284	152,078	155,209	164,279	173,236	175,151	172,832	162,988
Total educators background checked	153,074	151,188	152,223	163,442	170,163	173,706	170,719	157,468
Percent checked	99.2%	99.4%	98.1%	99.5%	98.2%	99.2%	98.8%	96.6%

Other Employees	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Total other employees	256,170	254,623	251,293	256,538	273,156	267,052	270,750	269,250
Total other employees background checked	252,712	251,308	240,253	254,766	268,417	263,915	265,599	260,409
Percent checked	98.7%	98.7%	95.6%	99.3%	98.3%	98.8%	98.1%	96.7%

Volunteers	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
Total volunteers	1,721,445	1,731,351	1,608,976	2,107,964	2,218,853	2,205,252	2,088,777	1,984,063
Total volunteers background checked	1,686,848	1,687,643	1,518,365	2,083,752	2,156,234	2,163,670	2,022,360	1,927,053
Percent checked	98.0%	97.5%	94.4%	98.9%	97.2%	98.1%	96.8%	97.1%

ON-SITE AUDITS PERFORMED BY STONEBRIDGE DURING 2023

- Diocese of Albany, NY
- Diocese of Allentown, PA
- Diocese of Arlington, VA
- Diocese of Austin, TX
- Diocese of Baton Rouge, LA
- Diocese of Bismarck, ND
- Archdiocese of Boston, MA
- Diocese of Brownsville, TX
- Diocese of Buffalo, NY
- Diocese of Burlington, VT
- Byzantine Catholic Archeparchy of Pittsburgh, PA
- Byzantine Catholic Eparchy of Parma of the Ruthenians, OH
- Chaldean Diocese of St. Thomas the Apostle USA, MI
- Diocese of Charleston, SC
- Diocese of Charlotte, NC
- Diocese of Cheyenne, WY
- Archdiocese of Chicago, IL
- Archdiocese of Cincinnati, OH
- Diocese of Dallas, TX
- Diocese of Davenport, IA
- Archdiocese of Denver, CO
- Archdiocese of Detroit, MI
- Diocese of Duluth, MN
- Diocese of El Paso, TX
- Diocese of Fort Worth, TX
- Diocese of Gaylord, MI
- Diocese of Green Bay, WI
- Diocese of Harrisburg, PA
- Archdiocese of Hartford, CT
- Diocese of Helena, MT
- Holy Protection of Mary Byzantine Catholic Eparchy of Phoenix, AZ
- Diocese of Jefferson City, MO
- Diocese of Joliet, IL
- Archdiocese of Milwaukee, WI
- Diocese of Monterey, CA
- Diocese of Nashville, TN
- Archdiocese of Newark, NJ
- Diocese of Norwich, CT
- Archdiocese of Omaha, NE
- Diocese of Orange, CA
- Personal Ordinariate of the Chair of St. Peter, TX
- Diocese of Phoenix, AZ
- Diocese of Pittsburgh, PA
- Diocese of Portland, ME
- Diocese of Reno, NV
- Diocese of Rockville Centre, NY
- Diocese of Salt Lake City, UT
- Diocese of San Angelo, TX
- Diocese of Scranton, PA
- Diocese of Shreveport, LA
- Diocese of Sioux City, IA
- Diocese of Sioux Falls, SD
- Diocese of Spokane, WA
- Diocese of Springfield, IL
- Diocese of Springfield, MA
- St. Mary Queen of Peace Syro-Malankara Catholic Eparchy in the USA and Canada, NY
- Diocese of St. Petersburg, FL
- St. Thomas Syro-Malabar Catholic Diocese of Chicago, IL
- Diocese of Stockton, CA
- Diocese of Syracuse, NY
- Diocese of Trenton, NJ
- Ukrainian Eparchy of St. Nicholas in Chicago, IL
- Diocese of Venice, FL
- Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston, WV
- Diocese of Youngstown, OH

ON-SITE AUDITS INVOLVING STONEBRIDGE PARISH/SCHOOL VISITS DURING 2023

- Diocese of Albany, NY
- Diocese of Allentown, PA
- Diocese of Arlington, VA
- Diocese of Austin, TX
- Archdiocese of Boston, MA
- Diocese of Buffalo, NY
- Diocese of Burlington, VT
- Chaldean Diocese of St. Thomas the Apostle USA, MI
- Diocese of Cheyenne, WY
- Archdiocese of Chicago, IL
- Archdiocese of Cincinnati, OH
- Archdiocese of Detroit, MI
- Diocese of Duluth, MN
- Diocese of Fort Worth, TX
- Diocese of Green Bay, WI
- Diocese of Harrisburg, PA
- Archdiocese of Hartford, CT
- Diocese of Jefferson City, MO
- Archdiocese of Milwaukee, WI
- Archdiocese of Newark, NJ
- Diocese of Orange, CA
- Diocese of Pittsburgh, PA
- Diocese of Portland, ME
- Diocese of Reno, NV
- Diocese of Rockville Centre, NY
- Diocese of Salt Lake City
- Diocese of Scranton, PA
- Diocese of Spokane, WA
- Diocese of Springfield, IL
- Diocese of Stockton, CA
- Diocese of Syracuse, NY
- Diocese of Venice, FL
- Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston, WV
- Diocese of Youngstown, OH

SECTION II

2023



Chapter Three of this Annual Report was authored by Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate at Georgetown University. Given the independent nature of its charge, the report is reprinted as submitted to the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB). The USCCB does not edit or correct the contents of the auditor's report.

CHAPTER THREE

2023 SURVEY OF ALLEGATIONS AND COSTS

A SUMMARY REPORT FOR THE SECRETARIAT OF CHILD AND YOUTH PROTECTION UNITED STATES CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS

JANUARY 2024, JONATHON L. WIGGINS, PH.D., MARK M. GRAY, PH.D.

INTRODUCTION

At their Fall Plenary Assembly in November 2004, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) commissioned the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA) at Georgetown University to design and conduct an annual survey of all the dioceses and eparchies whose bishops or eparchs are members of the USCCB. The purpose of this survey is to collect information on new allegations of sexual abuse of minors and the clergy against whom these allegations were made. The survey also gathers information on the amount of money dioceses and eparchies have expended as a result of allegations as well as the amount they have paid for child protection efforts. The national level aggregate results from this survey for each calendar year are prepared for the USCCB and reported in its *Annual Report on the Implementation of the "Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People."* A complete set of the aggregate results for ten years (2004 to 2013) is available on the USCCB website.

Beginning in 2014, the Secretariat of Child and Youth Protection changed the reporting period for this survey to coincide with the July 1 - June 30 reporting period that is used by dioceses and eparchies for their annual audits. Since that time, the

annual survey of allegations and costs captures all allegations reported to dioceses and eparchies between July 1 and June 30. This year's survey, the 2023 Survey of Allegations and Costs, covers the period between July 1, 2022 and June 30, 2023. Where appropriate, this report presents data in tables for audit year 2023 compared to audit year 2022 (July 1, 2021 and June 30, 2022), 2021 (July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021), 2020 (July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020), 2019 (July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019), 2018 (July 1, 2017 to June 30, 2018), 2017 (July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2017), 2016 (July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2016), 2015 (July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2015), and 2014 (July 1, 2013 to June 30, 2014).¹

The questionnaire for the *2023 Annual Survey of Allegations and Costs* for dioceses and eparchies was designed by CARA in consultation with the Secretariat of Child and Youth Protection. While the versions of the questionnaire used from 2004 to 2019 were nearly identical, this is the fourth survey year with revised questions concerning the details of the allegations (but the questions about the alleged perpetrators and the costs remain the same). In 2014 to 2019, details about the allegations and the alleged perpetrators were only gathered about the credible

¹ Before 2014, this survey was collected on a calendar year basis. For discussion of previous trends in the data, refer to the 2013 Annual Survey of Allegations and Costs as reported in the *2013 Annual Report on the Implementation of the "Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People,"* published by the USCCB Secretariat of Child and Youth Protection.

allegations that were both reported and classified as credible in that fiscal year. This and the past three year's surveys, on the other hand, collect those details about those allegations and alleged perpetrators that were deemed credible during a relevant fiscal year (July 1 to June 30) regardless of when they were first reported to the arch/diocese, eparchy, or religious community. Where equivalent, comparisons are made to the previous year's data. Where the data is not equivalent, no comparisons are made.

In consultation with the USCCB and the Conference of Major Superiors of Men (CMSM), this year's survey has a change in the categories used to group allegations. In previous year's surveys, the five categories were: credible, unsubstantiated, obviously false, unable to be proven, and investigation ongoing. This year's surveys were altered so the categories better complemented those used in the audits that dioceses and eparchies participate in each year: credible, unsubstantiated, unable to be proven, and investigation ongoing. The definitions of each of these categories were altered slightly as well, as can be seen in Appendices I and II of this report (questions A1 to A4 and 2 to 5).

As in previous years, CARA prepared an online version of the survey and hosted it on the CARA website. Bishops and eparchs received information about the process for completing the survey in their mid-August correspondence from the USCCB and were asked to provide the name of the contact person who would complete the survey. The CMSM also invited major superiors of religious communities of men to complete a similar survey for their congregations, provinces, and monasteries. Religious communities of brothers also participated in the survey of men's communities, as they have since 2015. This year's questionnaire was the sixth to have alterations in sections of the survey for religious communities to measure the diagnoses of the alleged offenders. In addition, two new questions were added about accreditation by Praesidium and religious communities that have members who are themselves survivors of minor sexual abuse.

CARA completed data collection for the fiscal year 2023 annual survey in January 2024. All but two of the 196 dioceses and eparchies of the USCCB completed the survey, for a response rate of 99 percent.²

A total of 140 of the 224 religious communities that belong to CMSM for which CARA had contact information responded to the survey, for a response rate of 63 percent. The overall response rate for dioceses, eparchies, and religious communities was 80 percent, lower than the overall response rate of 82 percent for this survey last year. Once CARA had received all data, it then prepared the national level summary tables and graphs of the findings for the period from July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023.

DIOCESES AND EPARCHIES

The Data Collection Process

CARA and the Secretariat contacted every diocese or eparchy that had not sent in a contact name by late September 2023 to obtain the name of a contact person to complete the survey. Dioceses and eparchies began submitting their data for the 2023 survey in October 2023. CARA and the Secretariat sent multiple reminders by email and telephone to these contact persons, to encourage a high response rate.

By January 2024, all but two of the 196 dioceses and eparchies of the USCCB had responded to the survey, for a response rate of 99 percent.³ The participation rate among dioceses and eparchies has been nearly unanimous each year of this survey. Beginning in 2004 and 2005 with response rates of 93 and 94 percent, respectively, the response reached 99 percent each year from 2006 to 2014, was 100 percent for 2015 and 2016, and was 99 percent for 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, and 2023.

A copy of the survey instrument for dioceses and eparchies is included in this report in Appendix I.

Credible Allegations Received by Dioceses and Eparchies

As is shown in Table 1, the responding dioceses and eparchies reported that between July 1, 2022 and June 30, 2023, they judged 229 allegations of sexual abuse of a minor by a diocesan or eparchial priest

² The Dioceses of Rockville Centre (New York) and the Eparchy of Parma-Byzantine (Ohio) did not provide a response. In addition, one diocese or eparchy, as it is filing for bankruptcy, was not allowed to share much of its data with CARA as part of an agreement with the court overseeing the bankruptcy.

³ The Dioceses of Rockville Centre (New York) and the Eparchy of Parma-Byzantine (Ohio) did not provide a response.

or deacon to be credible.⁴ These allegations were made by 229 individuals against 144 priests or deacons. Of the 229 allegations deemed credible during this reporting period (July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023), 22 allegations involved children under the age of 18 since 2000. Nearly all of the other allegations were made by adults who are alleging abuse when they were minors.

Table I. New Allegations Deemed Credible in FY 2023: Dioceses and Eparchies

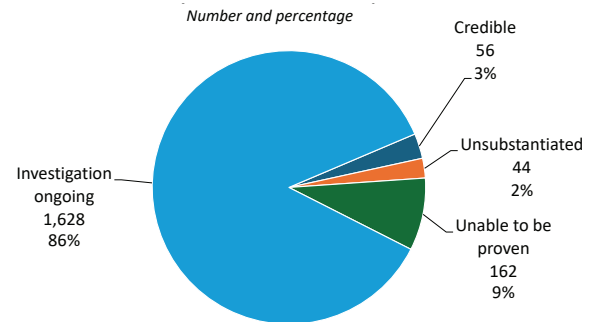
	Victims	Allegations	Offenders
FY 2023	229	229	144
FY 2022	237	245	211
FY 2021	967	968	569
FY 2020	1,529	1,539	1,115

Sources: Annual Survey of Allegations and Costs, 2020-2023

Determination of Credibility for Allegations First Received in Previous Fiscal Years

Each diocese and eparchy follows a process to determine the credibility of any allegation of clergy sexual abuse, as set forth in canon law and the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*. Figure 1 shows those allegations received before July 1, 2022 (1,890 in total). Nearly nine-tenths of the previously received allegations were categorized as investigation ongoing (86 percent), one-tenth was unable to be proven (9 percent), and less than one in 20 was found to be credible (3 percent) or unsubstantiated (2 percent).

Figure 1. Resolution in Fiscal Year 2023 of Allegations First Received before July 1, 2022: Dioceses and Eparchies



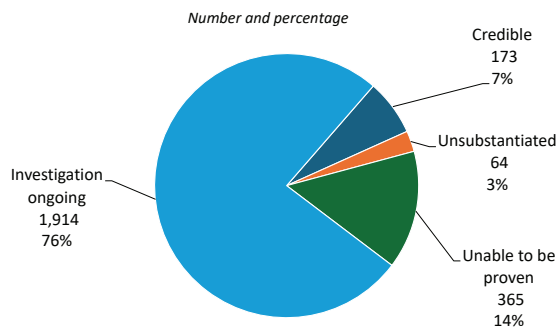
Source: 2023 Survey of Allegations and Costs

Determination of Credibility for Allegations First Received in This Fiscal Year

Figure 2 presents the outcome for 2,516 allegations first received between July 1, 2022 and June 30, 2023. Dioceses and eparchies were asked to categorize these new allegations into one of these categories: credible, unsubstantiated, unable to be proven, and investigation ongoing. As can be seen below, three-quarters of new allegations received in fiscal year 2023 require more investigation before they can be classified (76 percent), one in seven was deemed unable to be proven (14 percent), and roughly one in 20 was designated credible (7 percent) or as unsubstantiated (3 percent).

⁴ As was mentioned in the Introduction, the 2020 survey was the first to collect details about all allegations that were deemed credible during that past fiscal year (July 1 to June 30) regardless of when they were first reported to the arch/diocese, eparchy, or religious community. Thus, comparisons in this subsection are only shown for the four surveys using the same criteria for credible allegations. Previous year's numbers can be viewed in the 2019 report available on the USCCB website at https://cdn.ymaws.com/usccb.site-ym.com/resource/group1560fd7-fee7-4aff-afd2-4cf076a24943/resource_toolbox/audit/2019_annual_report_final.pdf

Figure 2. Determination of Credibility for New Allegations First Received in Fiscal Year 2023: Dioceses and Eparchies

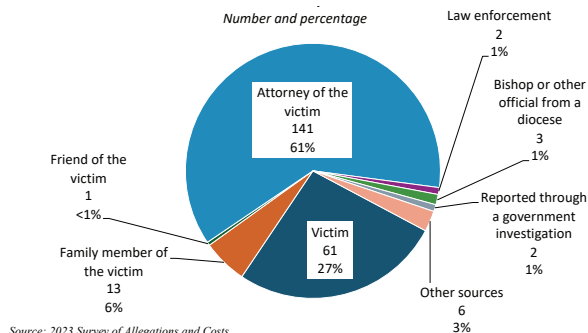


Source: 2023 Survey of Allegations and Costs

The remainder of this subsection of the report for dioceses and eparchies details the 229 allegations that have been classified as credible during this fiscal year, both those first received in a previous fiscal year (the 56 credible allegations shown in Figure 1) and those first received during this fiscal year (the 173 credible allegations shown in Figure 2).⁵

Figure 3 illustrates the way in which these 229 allegations of abuse that were deemed credible between July 1, 2022 and June 30, 2023 were first reported to the dioceses or eparchies. Six-tenths of new allegations were first reported by an attorney of the victim (61 percent), about a quarter by a victim (27 percent), and about one in 20 combined by a family member of the victim (6 percent) or a friend of the victim (less than 1 percent). One percent each was first reported by law enforcement, by a bishop or other official from a diocese, or through a government investigation. Three percent were reported by an “other” source, such as clergy, a diocesan employee, an employee at a diocesan entity, and a school employee.

Figure 3. Sources for How Allegations of Abuse Were First Reported: Dioceses and Eparchies

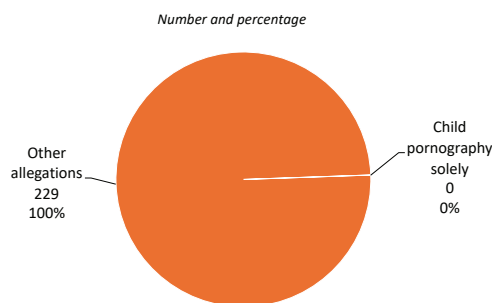


Source: 2023 Survey of Allegations and Costs

Compared to report year 2022, more allegations this fiscal year were reported by an attorney (61 percent in fiscal year 2023 compared to 46 percent in fiscal year 2022) and fewer were reported by a victim (27 percent in 2023 compared to 40 percent in 2022).

Figure 4 presents the percentage of all allegations of abuse that were cases solely involving child pornography. None of the 229 total allegations deemed credible from July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023 solely involved child pornography.

Figure 4. Percentage of Allegations Solely Involving Child Pornography: Dioceses and Eparchies



Source: 2023 Survey of Allegations and Costs

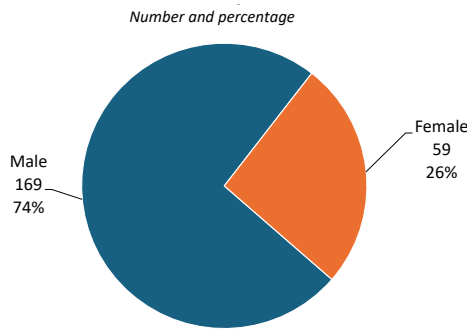
In the previous year (July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022), eight allegations (3 percent) solely involved child pornography.

⁵ The credible allegations are not evenly distributed among dioceses and eparchies. Seventy-one percent of dioceses or eparchies did not judge any allegations as credible in fiscal year 2023. In contrast, two dioceses or eparchies account for 39 percent of all credible allegations.

Victims, Offenses, and Offenders

As illustrated in Figure 5, among the 228 victims⁶ where their gender was known, three-quarters were male (74 percent), with 26 percent female.⁷

Figure 5. Gender of Abuse Victim: Dioceses and Eparchies

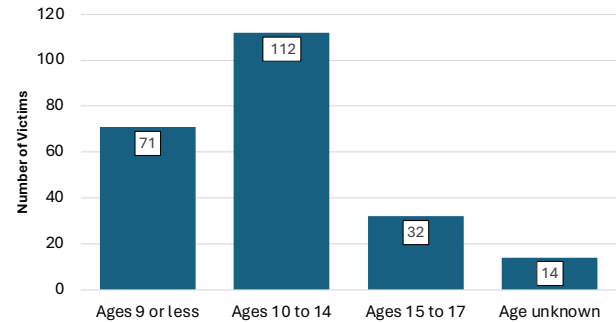


Source: 2023 Survey of Allegations and Costs

Compared to fiscal year 2022, more of the victims are female (16 percent of abuse victims were female in 2022 compared to 26 percent in 2023).

Fourteen of the 229 credible allegations did not include information about the alleged victims' ages (6 percent). Among those 215 where the ages are known, more than half of allegations involved victims who were between the ages of 10 and 14 (52 percent) when the alleged abuse began. A third were under age 10 (33 percent) and one in seven was between the ages of 15 and 17 (15 percent). Figure 6 presents the distribution of victims by age at the time the alleged abuse began.

Figure 6. Age of Victim When Abuse Began: Dioceses and Eparchies



Source: 2023 Survey of Costs and Allegations

This year's percentages differ somewhat from those in year 2022 (July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022). For that time period, 57 percent of allegations involved victims ages 9 or younger, 24 percent involved victims between the ages of 10 and 14, and 19 percent involved victims between the ages of 15 and 17.

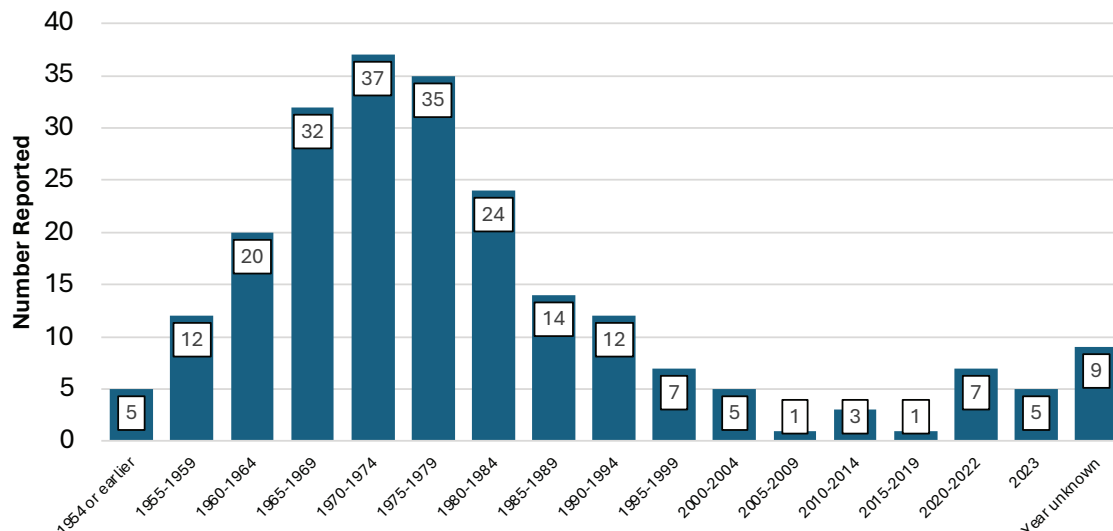
Figure 7 shows the years in which the abuse reported was alleged to have occurred or begun. For nine of the allegations (4 percent) deemed credible between July 1, 2022 and June 30, 2023, no time frame for the alleged abuse could be determined. Among those 220 where a time frame could be determined, 48 percent of all new allegations were said to have occurred or begun before 1975, 42 percent between 1975 and 1999, and 10 percent since 2000. The most common time period for allegations reported was 1970-1974 (37 allegations), followed by 1975-1979 (35 allegations).⁸ Looked at another way, about seven-tenths (71 percent) of all allegations able to be classified by year were said to have occurred or begun in the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s.

⁶ From here forward in this subsection, only the victims of allegations that did not solely involve child pornography are described and detailed.

⁷ One diocese or eparchy reported that the gender of the victim in one of its allegations was unknown.

⁸ Note that this distribution is similar to the one on p. 43 of this report (Figure 30), which shows the cumulative distribution since 2004.

Figure 7. Year the Alleged Offense Occurred or Began: Dioceses and Eparchies

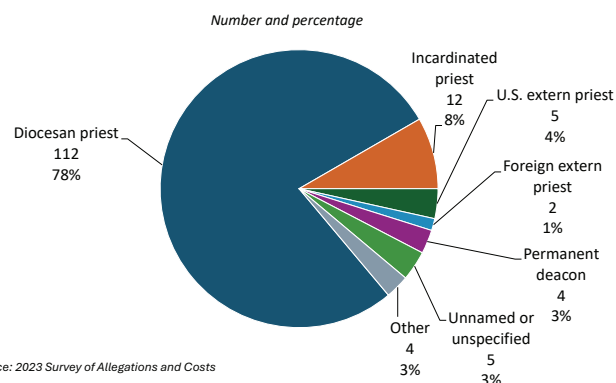


Source: 2023 Survey of Costs and Allegations

Proportionately, the numbers reported in Figure 7 for year 2023 are similar to those reported for year 2022 (July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022). For that time period, 49 percent of alleged offenses occurred or began before 1975, 42 percent between 1975 and 1999, and 9 percent after 2000.

The survey for 2023 also asks for details about the priests and deacons who were alleged perpetrators. Four-fifths of the 144 diocesan or eparchial priests or deacons had been ordained for the diocese or eparchy in which the abuse was alleged to have occurred (78 percent were diocesan priests and 3 percent were permanent deacons). A combined 13 percent of those identified were priests who had been incardinated into that diocese or eparchy at the time of the alleged abuse (8 percent), extern priests from another U.S. diocese or eparchy (4 percent), or extern priests from another country (1 percent). Three percent of alleged perpetrators were unnamed or unspecified and another 3 percent were classified as “other.” They included priests that were on a long-term leave-of-absence at the time of the abuse, were extern priests who retired in their diocese, or were transitional deacons who were never ordained a priest for the diocese. Figure 8 displays the ecclesial status of offenders at the time of the alleged offense.

Figure 8. Ecclesial Status of Alleged Perpetrator: Dioceses and Eparchies



Source: 2023 Survey of Allegations and Costs

The percentages in Figure 8 for year 2023 differ only slightly from those reported for year 2022 (July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022), where 84 percent of alleged perpetrators were priests (82 percent) or permanent deacons (2 percent) who had been ordained for the diocese or eparchy in which the abuse was alleged to have occurred. All other categories reported for that time period represented 1 to 3 percent of alleged perpetrators, similar to the percentages shown above.

Three-quarters (114 priests and deacons or 78 percent) of the priests and deacons identified as alleged offenders between July 1, 2022 and June 30, 2023 had already been identified in allegations in previous years. As can be seen in Figure 9 below, this is a higher percentage than that reported in previous fiscal years.

Figure 9. Percentage of Alleged Perpetrators with Prior Allegations: Dioceses and Eparchies

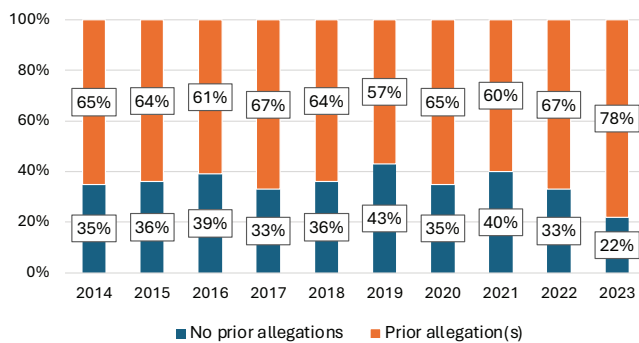
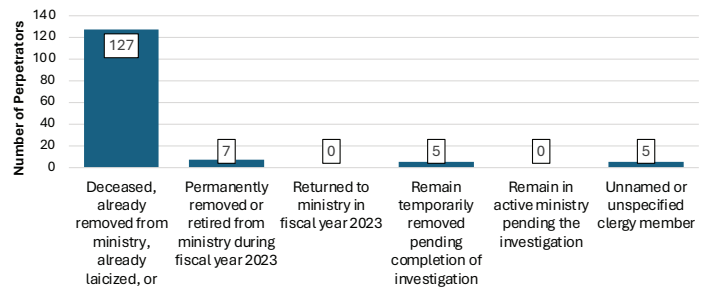


Figure 10 shows the current status of the alleged offenders. Five of the 144 alleged perpetrators are not able to be classified (2 percent). Among those 139 that were classified, nine in ten alleged offenders identified between July 1, 2022 and June 30, 2023 are deceased, already removed from ministry, already laicized, or missing (91 percent). Another seven priests or deacons identified during year 2023 were permanently removed from ministry during that time (5 percent). Five alleged offenders were temporarily removed from ministry pending investigation of the allegations (4 percent). None were returned to ministry or remain in active ministry pending the investigation.

Figure 10. Current Status of Alleged Perpetrators: Dioceses and Eparchies



The proportions for year 2023 are similar to those for 2022, where 84 percent of alleged perpetrators were deceased, already removed, or missing. All other categories contained between 1 to 12 percent of the alleged perpetrators.

Costs to Dioceses and Eparchies

Dioceses and eparchies that responded to the survey and reported costs related to allegations, paid out \$260,509,528 between July 1, 2022 and June 30, 2023. Like in previous years' surveys, this includes payments for allegations reported in previous years. Table 2 presents payments by dioceses and eparchies according to several categories of allegation-related expenses for the fiscal years 2014 to 2023.⁹

⁹ Attorneys' fees include all costs for attorneys paid by dioceses and eparchies between July 1, 2022 and June 30, 2023 as the result of allegations of sexual abuse of a minor.

Table 2. Costs Related to Allegations: Dioceses and Eparchies

	Settlements	Other Payments to Victims	Support for Offenders	Attorneys' Fees	Other Costs	GRAND TOTAL
FY 2014	\$56,987,635	\$7,176,376	\$12,281,089	\$26,163,298	\$3,890,782	\$106,499,180
FY 2015	\$87,067,257	\$8,754,747	\$11,500,539	\$30,148,535	\$3,812,716	\$141,283,794
FY 2016	\$53,928,745	\$24,148,603	\$11,355,969	\$35,460,551	\$2,020,470	\$126,914,338
FY 2017	\$162,039,485	\$10,105,226	\$10,157,172	\$27,912,123	\$2,761,290	\$212,975,296
FY 2018	\$180,475,951	\$6,914,194	\$20,035,914	\$25,990,265	\$5,755,823	\$239,172,147
FY 2019	\$200,963,319	\$15,890,882	\$12,054,682	\$43,294,968	\$9,407,966	\$281,611,817
FY 2020	\$219,792,758	\$12,096,388	\$11,960,504	\$56,958,656	\$11,172,360	\$311,980,666
FY 2021	\$118,516,493	\$13,103,280	\$9,972,414	\$45,597,100	\$6,930,931	\$194,120,218
FY 2022	\$95,930,064	\$6,801,054	\$9,484,728	\$40,578,200	\$4,258,097	\$157,052,143
FY 2023	\$191,134,659	\$7,213,945	\$7,440,150	\$50,045,103	\$4,675,671	\$260,509,528
Change (+/-) 2022-2023	\$95,204,595	\$412,891	-\$2,044,578	\$9,466,903	\$417,574	\$103,457,385
Percentage Change	99%	6%	-22%	23%	10%-	66%

Sources: Annual Survey of Allegations and Costs, 2014-2023

Nearly three-quarters of the payments made by dioceses and eparchies between July 1, 2022 and June 30, 2023 were for settlements to victims (73 percent) and one-fifth of the total cost is for attorney's fees (19 percent). This is 99 percent higher than the amount paid out in fiscal year 2022 (between July 1, 2021 and June 30, 2022).

Other payments to victims – those not already included in the settlement – account for 3 percent of all allegation-related costs, and support for offenders (including therapy, living expenses, legal expenses, etc.) amounts to another 3 percent.¹⁰ Compared to fiscal year 2022, the amount of payments for attorneys' fees for fiscal year 2023 are 23 percent higher, the amount for other payments to victims is 6 percent higher, and the amount for support for offenders is 22 percent less.

Among the \$4,675,671 (or 2 percent) of "other" allegation-related costs reported by dioceses and eparchies are payments for items or services such as costs for audits, bankruptcy-related annual fees, expenses for hotline phones, a state attorney general investigation, investigation-related costs, IRCP

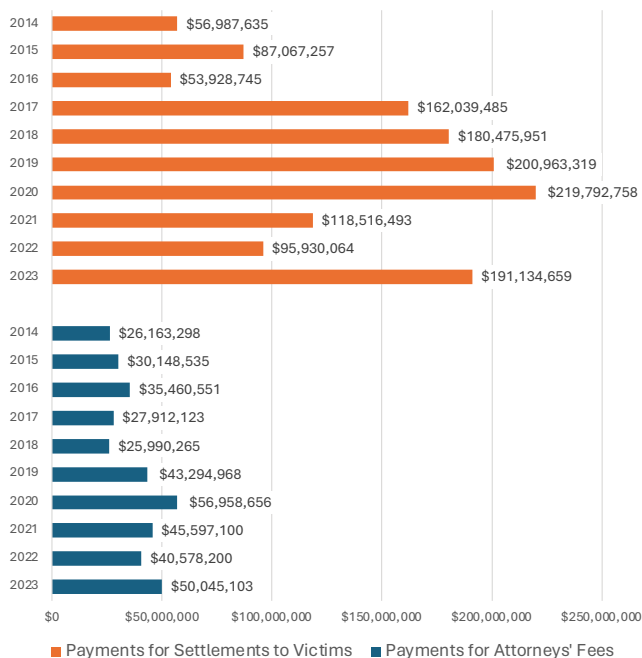
interest payments, mediation fees, review board costs, and the USCCB Charter.

As can be seen in Table 2 above, the total costs for year 2023 (\$260,509,528) is 66 percent higher than that reported for year 2022 (\$157,052,143). That increase is mostly due to the increase in the amount paid in settlements for the year 2023.

¹⁰ These costs are not evenly distributed among dioceses and eparchies. The two dioceses with the greatest total costs related to allegations account for more than half (56 percent) of all reported costs. On the other hand, 50 of the 196 dioceses and eparchies report paying no allegation-related costs, with another 14 paying out less than \$10,000; all told, these 64 dioceses and eparchies account for 0.025 percent of all costs.

Figure 11 displays the costs paid by dioceses and eparchies for settlements and for attorneys' fees for audit years 2014 through 2023. The amount of payments for settlements to victims for fiscal year 2023 is 99 percent higher than that for fiscal year 2022.¹¹ The payments for attorneys' fees paid also is greater than that for last year, with an increase of 23 percent.

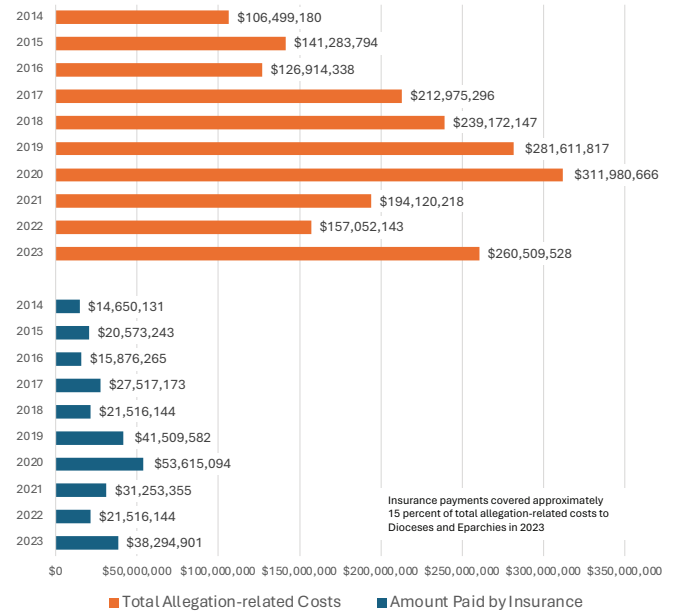
Figure 11. Payments for Settlements to Victims and for Attorneys' Fees: Dioceses and Eparchies



In Figure 12, the total allegation-related costs paid by dioceses and eparchies are shown as well as the approximate proportion of those costs that were covered by insurance. Insurance payments covered approximately \$38,294,901 (15 percent) of the total allegation-related costs paid by dioceses and eparchies between July 1, 2022 and June 30, 2023. Insurance had covered 14 percent of the total allegation-related costs during year 2022 (July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022).

¹¹ Much of that increase comes from two arch/dioceses, whose payments for settlements to victims account for 72 percent of the total.

Figure 12. Total Allegation-related Costs and the Costs paid by Insurance: Dioceses and Eparchies



Of the 65 dioceses and eparchies that had made a financial settlement to victims in fiscal year 2023 (July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023), 53 responded to a series of questions concerning what monetary sources or changes were used to pay for those settlements. The sources or changes they indicated include insurance pay-outs (39 percent or 21 dioceses), bankruptcy filing (11 percent or six dioceses), sale of property (11 percent or six dioceses), restructuring of debt (4 percent or two dioceses), staff reductions (2 percent or one diocese), and the elimination of some programs or services (2 percent or one diocese).¹²

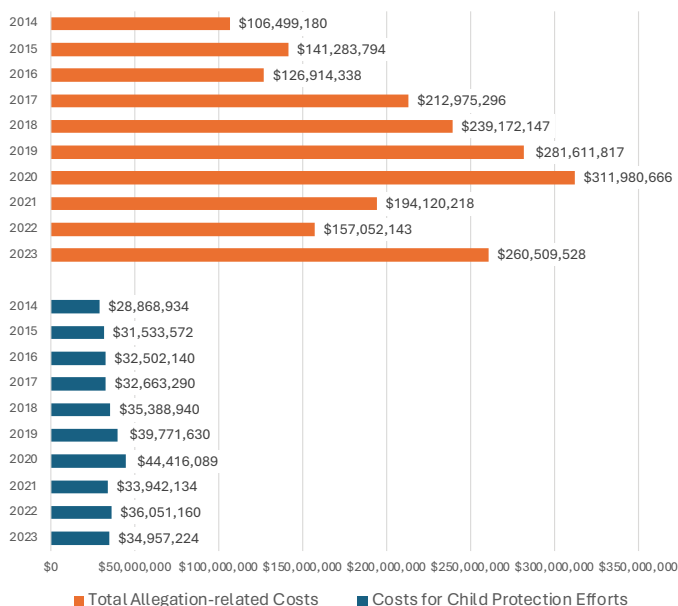
Of the 53 dioceses, 36 wrote in an "other" source, including: their savings or reserves (21 percent or 11 dioceses), funds from their self-insurance reserves (15 percent or eight dioceses), their assets (8 percent or four dioceses), their general operating budget (6 percent or three dioceses), loans or lines of credit (4 percent or two dioceses), liquidating their investments (4 percent or two dioceses), their investments (2 percent or one diocese), a property/liability fund (2 percent or one diocese), and contributions (2 percent or one diocese).

In addition to allegation-related expenditures, at least \$34,957,224 was spent by dioceses and eparchies for child protection efforts such as safe environment

¹² These percentages total to more than 100 percent because respondents were invited to check all of the sources that applied to them.

coordinators, training programs and background checks. This represents a 3 percent decrease from the amount reported for child protection efforts (\$36,051,160) for year 2022 (July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022). Figure 13 compares child protection expenditures paid by dioceses and eparchies (which, comparatively, remain relatively constant) to the total allegation-related costs in audit years 2014 through 2023 (which vary a great deal).

Figure 13. Total Allegation-related Costs and Costs for Child Protection Efforts: Dioceses and Eparchies



Adding together the total allegation-related costs and the amount spent on child protection efforts reported in year 2023 for dioceses and eparchies, the total comes to \$295,466,752. This is a 53 percent increase from the \$193,103,303 reported during audit year 2022.

RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES OF MEN

The Conference of Major Superiors of Men (CMSM) also encouraged the major superiors of religious communities of men to complete a survey for their congregations, provinces, and monasteries. Since 2014, brother-only communities were also invited to participate in the survey. Much of the survey was nearly identical to the survey for dioceses and eparchies and was also available online at the same site as the survey for dioceses and eparchies. The CMSM sent an email about the survey to all member major superiors in September 2023, requesting their participation. CARA and the CMSM also sent several reminders by email to major superiors to encourage them to respond. By January 2024, CARA received responses from 140 of the 224 relevant member communities that belong to the CMSM, for a response rate of 63 percent. This is higher than the response rate from the 2021 survey (60 percent), but lower than that from the 2022 survey (67 percent). It is generally lower than the response rates from previous years: 68 percent in 2020 and 2006, 79 percent in 2019, 85 percent in 2018, 74 percent in 2017, 78 percent in 2016, 77 percent in 2015, 73 percent in 2014, 2012, 2011, 2009, 2008, and 2007, 72 percent in 2013 and 2010, 67 percent in 2005, and 71 percent in 2004.

A copy of the survey instrument for religious communities is included in Appendix II.

Credible Allegations Received by Religious Communities

The responding religious communities reported that between July 1, 2022 and June 30, 2023 they judged 113 allegations of sexual abuse of a minor committed by a priest, brother, or deacon of the community as credible. These allegations were made by 111 persons against 69 individuals who were priest, brother, or deacon members of the community at the time the offense was alleged to have occurred.¹³

¹³ As was mentioned in the Introduction, the 2020 survey was the first to collect details about all allegations that were deemed credible during the past fiscal year (July 1 to June 30) regardless of when they were first reported to the arch/diocese, eparchy, or religious community. Thus, comparisons in this subsection are only shown for the four surveys using the same criteria for credible allegations. Previous year's numbers can be viewed in the 2019 report available on the USCCB website at https://cdn.ymaws.com/usccb.site-ym.com/resource/group/1560f0d7-fee7-4aff-afd2-4cf076a24943/resource_toolbox/audit/2019_annual_report_final.pdf

Table 3 presents these numbers. Of the 113 new credible allegations reported by religious communities between July 1, 2022 and June 30, 2023, 11 involved a child under the age of 18 since 2000. Nearly all of the other allegations were made by adults who are alleging abuse when they were minors.

Table 3. New Allegations Deemed Credible in FY 2023: Religious Communities

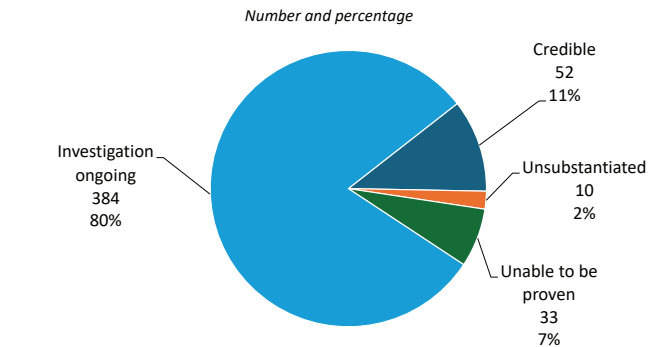
	Victims	Allegations	Offenders
FY 2023	111	113	69
FY 2022	148	149	133
FY 2021	252	252	242
FY 2020	383	383	230

Sources: *Annual Survey of Allegations and Costs, 2020-2023*

Determination of Credibility for Allegations First Received in Previous Fiscal Years

Every religious community follows a process to determine the credibility of any allegation of clergy sexual abuse, as set forth in canon law and as advised in the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*. Figure 14 shows those allegations received before July 1, 2022 that were resolved by June 30, 2023 (479 in total). One-tenth of the previously-received allegations was found to be credible (11 percent). Among the others, four-fifths need further investigation (80 percent), about one in 20 was found to be unable to be proven (7 percent), and less than one in 20 was found to be unsubstantiated (2 percent).

Figure 14. Resolution in Fiscal Year 2023 of Allegations First Received before July 1, 2022: Religious Communities

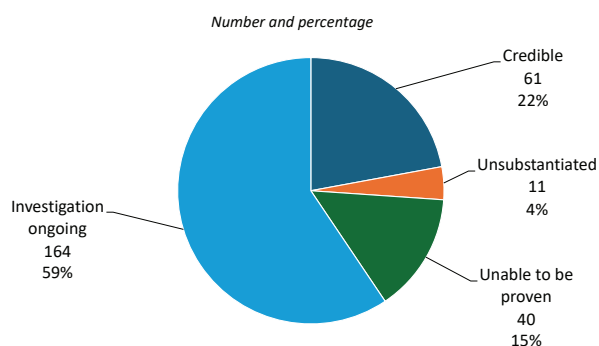


Source: 2023 Survey of Allegations and Costs

Determination of Credibility for Allegations First Received in This Fiscal Year

Figure 15 presents the outcome for 276 allegations first received between July 1, 2022 and June 30, 2023. Religious communities were asked to categorize these new allegations into one of these categories: credible, unsubstantiated, unable to be proven, and investigation ongoing. As can be seen in Figure 15, more than one-fifth of new allegations received in fiscal year 2023 was found to be credible (22 percent). Among the others, three-fifths need further investigation (59 percent), one in seven was found to be unable to be proven (15 percent), and one in 20 was found to be unsubstantiated (4 percent).

Figure 15. Determination of Credibility for New Allegations First Received in Fiscal Year 2023: Religious Communities

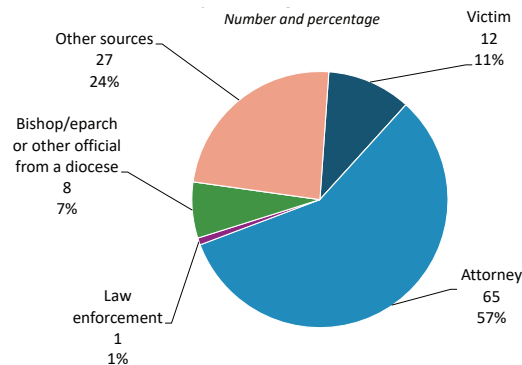


Source: 2023 Survey of Allegations and Costs

The remainder of this subsection of the report for religious communities details the 113 allegations that have been classified as credible during this fiscal year, both those first received in a previous fiscal year (the 52 credible allegations shown in Figure 14) and those first received during this fiscal year (the 61 credible allegations shown in Figure 15).¹⁴

Figure 16 displays the way in which the 113 allegations of abuse that were deemed as credible between July 1, 2022 and June 30, 2023 were first reported to the religious communities.¹⁵ About three-fifths of the allegations were reported to the community by an attorney (57 percent), one-tenth by the victim (11 percent), and about one in 20 by a bishop/eparch or official from a diocese (7 percent). Finally, 1 percent was reported by law enforcement. The 24 percent who wrote in an “other” source described the sources as: an attorney of the religious community, a lawsuit that was filed, a manager of an assisted living facility, a victim advocate, and a witness.

Figure 16. Sources for How Allegations of Abuse Were First Reported: Religious Communities

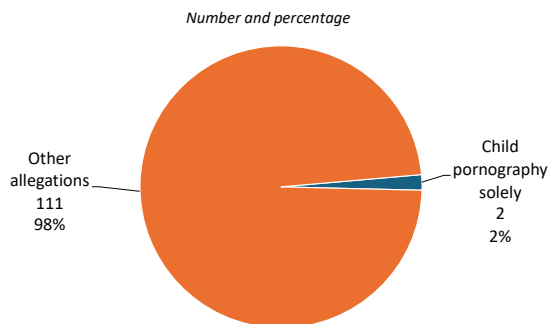


Source: 2023 Survey of Allegations and Costs

Compared to fiscal year 2022 (July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022), more allegations were reported by an attorney (57 percent in survey year 2023 compared to 47 percent in 2022) and from other sources (24 percent in 2023 compared to 13 percent in 2022). In contrast, slightly fewer were reported by a victim (11 percent in 2023 compared to 20 percent in 2022).

Two of 113 new allegations were cases solely involving child pornography (2 percent), as is shown in Figure 17.

Figure 17. Percentage of Allegations Solely Involving Child Pornography: Religious Communities



Source: 2023 Survey of Allegations and Costs

In report year 2022 (July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022), one of the allegations solely involved child pornography.

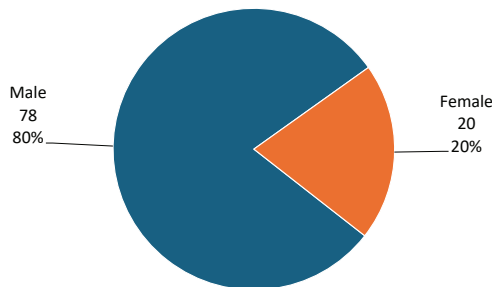
¹⁴ The allegations are not evenly distributed among religious communities. The five religious communities with the greatest number of allegations account for 52 percent of all allegations among religious communities; in addition, 109 religious communities identified zero credible allegations during this fiscal year.

¹⁵ As no religious communities of men in fiscal year 2023 reported that they had an allegation that was first reported to them by a family member of the victim, by a friend of the victim, or through a government investigation, these categories are not presented in Figure 16.

Victims, Offenses, and Offenders

For 13 of the 111 allegations that are not solely child pornography possession, the gender of the alleged victim is unknown (12 percent). Among the 98 allegations where the gender of the victim was reported, four-fifths were male (80 percent) and one-fifth was a female (20 percent). These proportions are displayed in Figure 18.

Figure 18. Gender of Abuse Victim: Religious Communities

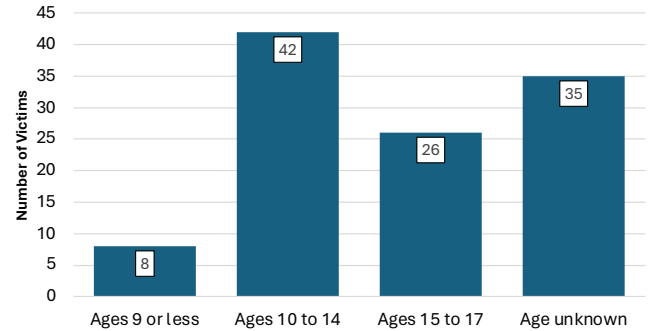


Source: 2023 Survey of Allegations and Costs

The percentage male among victims (80 percent) is similar to that reported for year 2022 (35 percent).

For 35 of the victims, the age when the alleged abuse occurred is unknown. Among those 76 allegations where the age was known, more than half were ages 10 to 14 (55 percent) when the alleged abuse began, a third were ages 15 to 17 (34 percent), and about one in ten was under age ten (11 percent). Figure 19 presents the distribution of victims by age at the time the alleged abuse began.

Figure 19. Age of Victim When Abuse Began: Religious Communities



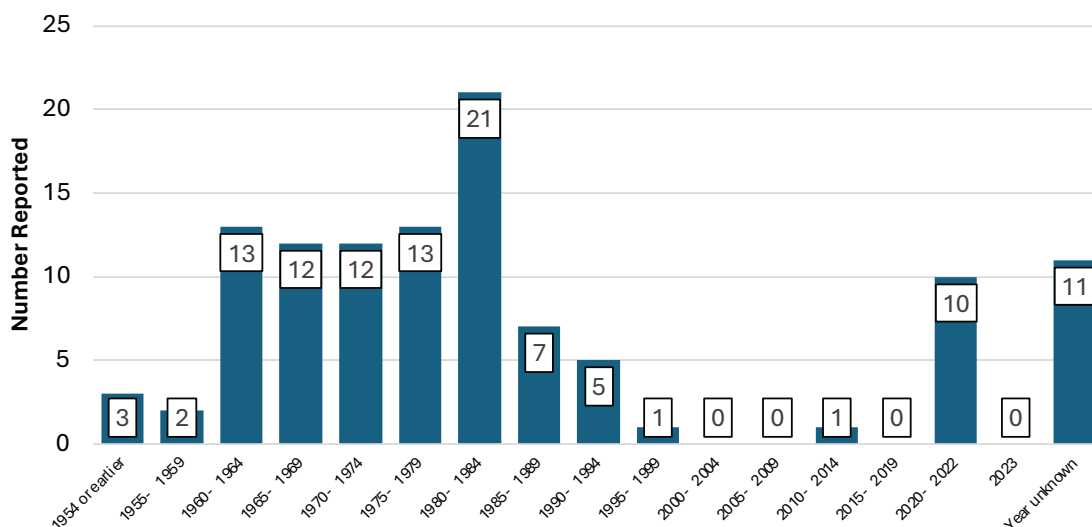
Source: 2023 Survey of Allegations and Costs

The proportions for the previous reporting year (2022) differ somewhat from those presented in Figure 19. Between July 1, 2021 and June 30, 2022, 53 percent of the victims were between 15 and 17 (compared to 34 percent in fiscal year 2023), 29 percent were between the ages of 10 and 14 (compared to the 55 percent reported in 2023), and 18 percent were under age 10 (compared to 11 percent in 2023).

Eleven of the allegations did not include a time frame for when they occurred or began (10 percent). Among those 100 allegations where a time frame was known, more than four-tenths of the allegations deemed credible between July 1, 2022 and June 30, 2023 are alleged to have occurred or begun before 1975 (42 percent), 47 percent occurred or began between 1975 and 1999, and 11 percent (11 allegations) occurred or began since 2000. Religious communities reported that 1980-1984 (21 allegations) was the most common time period for the alleged occurrences. Figure 20 illustrates the years when the allegations classified as credible in year 2023 were said to have occurred or begun.¹⁶

¹⁶ Note that this distribution differs some from the one on p. 43 of this report (Figure 30), which shows the cumulative distribution since 2004.

Figure 20. Year the Alleged Offense Occurred or Began: Religious Communities

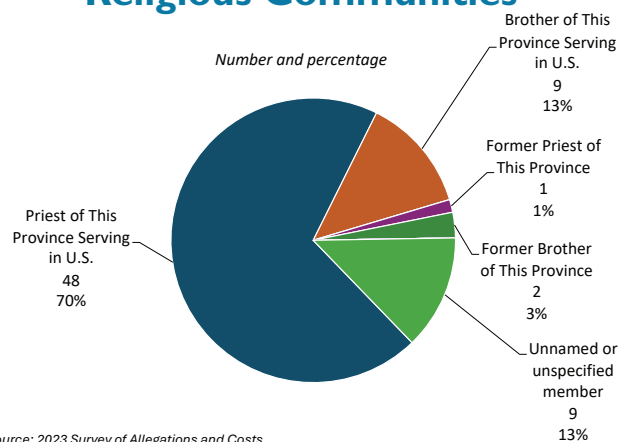


Source: 2023 Survey of Allegations and Costs

In the previous reporting year (July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022), 43 percent of allegations occurred or began before 1975, 56 percent between 1975 and 1999, and 2 percent in 2000 or later.

The survey for 2023 also asked for details about the religious priests, brothers and deacons who were alleged perpetrators. Of the 69 religious priests, brothers, and deacons against whom credible allegations were determined between July 1, 2022 and June 30, 2023, nine (or 13 percent) were unable to be classified as of June 30, 2022, likely due to current civil investigations or litigation. Figure 21 displays the ecclesial status of all 69 identified alleged offenders at the time of the alleged abuse.¹⁷ Seven-tenths were priests of a U.S. province of the religious community serving in the United States at the time the abuse was alleged to have occurred (70 percent), and about one-tenth was a religious brother of a U.S. province of the religious community (13 percent). Two religious communities identified an alleged perpetrator as a former brother of their province (3 percent) and one as a former priest of their province (1 percent).

Figure 21. Ecclesial Status of Alleged Perpetrator: Religious Communities



Source: 2023 Survey of Allegations and Costs

Compared to the previous reporting year (July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022), the percentages reported in 2023 in Figure 21 differ significantly. In 2022, 34 percent of the alleged perpetrators were priests of the province, 22 percent were brothers of the province, 15 percent were former brothers of the province, and 23 percent were unnamed or unspecified members. The other categories all ranged from 1 percent to 2 percent.

¹⁷ No religious communities identified alleged perpetrators in these categories: priests, deacons or brothers of their canonical jurisdiction assigned outside the U.S.; priests, deacons, or brothers of another U.S. canonical jurisdiction but serving in their canonical jurisdiction; priests, deacons, or brothers of a non-U.S. based canonical jurisdiction but serving in their canonical jurisdiction; and a deacon member of their religious community. As such, these categories are *not* presented in Figure 21.

More than half of the priests, deacons, and brothers identified as alleged offenders by religious communities between July 1, 2022 and June 30, 2023 had already been identified in allegations in previous years (34 priests, deacons, and brothers or 49 percent).¹⁸ As can be seen in Figure 22 below, this is a higher percentage than that reported in the two most recent fiscal years.

Figure 22. Percentage of Alleged Perpetrators with Prior Allegations: Religious Communities

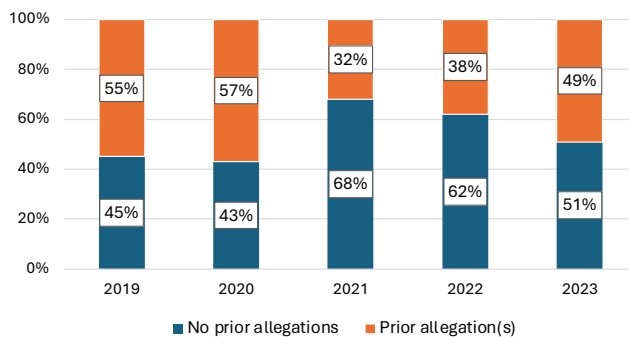
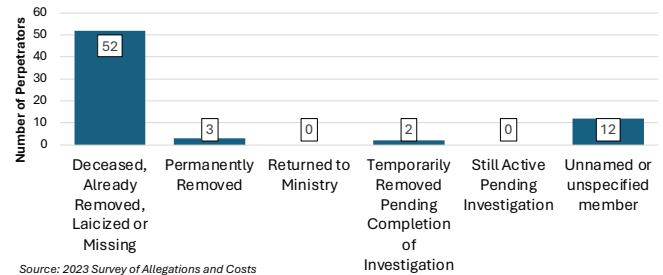


Figure 23 shows the current status of all of the alleged offenders, with the status of 12 of the 69 alleged offenders unknown (14 percent). Among the 57 with a known status, nine in ten alleged offenders identified between July 1, 2022 and June 30, 2023 are deceased, already removed from ministry, already laicized, or missing (91 percent). Another three priests, brothers or deacons identified during fiscal year 2022 were permanently removed from ministry during that time (5 percent) and two were temporarily removed from ministry pending investigation of the allegations (4 percent). None were returned to ministry.

Figure 23. Current Status of Alleged Perpetrators: Religious Communities



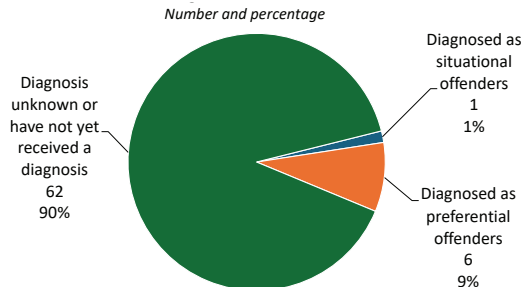
Last year's survey had slightly different percentages, with 81 percent deceased, already removed from ministry, laicized or missing; 10 percent permanently removed from ministry during that fiscal year; and 9 percent temporarily removed from ministry pending an investigation.

This year, for the sixth time, questions were added to the survey for religious communities concerning the psychological diagnoses of the alleged perpetrators reported in the current year, with definitions provided to responding religious communities. Those diagnosed as situational offenders were defined as those who molest "the child for various reasons – most often because of availability – whether male or female – but do NOT have a preference for pre-pubescent children." Perpetrators diagnosed as preferential offenders "are most often 'pedophiles,' who prefer and seek out jobs or ministries with pre-pubescent children." Finally, those whose diagnosis is not known are those whose records are too "unclear to distinguish any type."

The proportion of alleged perpetrators from the 2023 reporting year that fit each definition is presented in Figure 24 below. Nine in ten do not have diagnoses (90 percent) and one in ten has been identified as a preferential offender (9 percent). One percent has been identified as a situational offender.

¹⁸ This question was added to the survey during fiscal year 2019.

Figure 24. Diagnosis of Alleged Perpetrators Reported in 2023: Religious Communities



Source: 2023 Survey of Allegations and Costs

In the survey for the past fiscal year (July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022), 78 percent had an unknown diagnosis, 13 percent were diagnosed as situational offenders, and 9 percent were diagnosed as preferential offenders.

Among those reported in Figure 24, responding religious communities were also asked how many from each category were known to have reoffended. The one offender diagnosed as a situational offender was identified as having reoffended. Among the six offenders diagnosed as preferential offenders, none were identified as having re-offended. Finally, among the 62 whose diagnosis is unknown, 14 were identified as having re-offended (23 percent).

Cost to Religious Communities

The responding religious communities reported paying \$23,534,297 between July 1, 2022 and June 30, 2023 for costs related to allegations. Like in previous years' surveys, this includes costs paid during this period for allegations reported in previous years. Table 4 presents the payments by religious communities across several categories of allegation-related expenses.¹⁹

Table 4. Costs Related to Allegations: Religious Communities

	Settlements	Other Payments to Victims	Support for Offenders	Attorneys' Fees	Other Costs	GRAND TOTAL
FY 2014	\$5,950,438	\$570,721	\$3,121,958	\$2,611,220	\$326,130	\$12,580,467
FY 2015	\$5,451,612	\$337,696	\$2,507,513	\$3,592,233	\$446,696	\$12,335,750
FY 2016	\$6,451,112	\$533,626	\$2,887,150	\$4,427,186	\$106,389	\$14,405,463
FY 2017	\$6,749,006	\$466,591	\$2,869,490	\$5,097,723	\$798,569	\$15,981,379
FY 2018	\$13,870,340	\$403,710	\$3,330,931	\$4,527,393	\$1,315,016	\$23,447,390
FY 2019	\$30,131,119	\$930,972	\$3,594,140	\$5,899,252	\$851,705	\$41,407,188
FY 2020	\$14,835,324	\$1,103,112	\$4,726,637	\$9,031,682	\$588,381	\$30,285,136
FY 2021	\$15,059,613	\$382,035	\$4,203,407	\$8,783,079	\$1,024,167	\$29,452,301
FY 2022	\$30,742,002	\$553,237	\$4,416,504	\$8,827,778	\$382,031	\$44,921,552
FY 2023	\$12,074,953	\$266,843	\$3,528,113	\$7,244,054	\$420,334	\$23,534,297
Change (+/-)						
2022-2023	-\$18,667,049	-\$286,394	-\$888,391	-\$1,583,724	\$38,303	-\$21,387,255
Percentage Change	-61%	-52%	-20%	-18%	10%	-48%

Sources: Annual Survey of Allegations and Costs, 2014-2023

¹⁹ These costs are not evenly distributed among religious communities. The five religious communities with the greatest total costs related to allegations account for 46 percent of all costs related to allegations. In contrast, 64 religious communities report having no allegation-related costs for fiscal year 2023 and an additional 15 had costs less than \$10,000; all told, these 79 religious communities account for 0.2 percent of all costs.

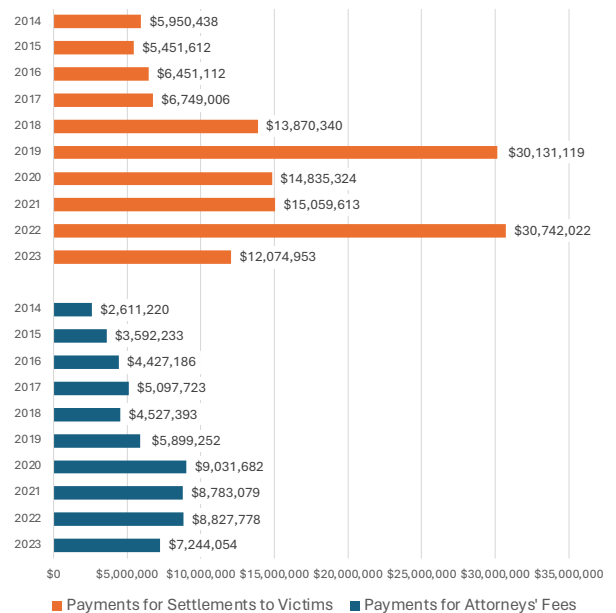
Half of the payments made by religious communities between July 1, 2022 and June 30, 2023 were for settlements to victims (51 percent of all costs related to allegations reported by religious communities). Other payments to victims, outside of settlements, were \$266,843 (1 percent). Attorneys' fees were almost an additional \$7.2 million (31 percent). Support for offenders (including therapy, living expenses, legal expenses, etc.) amounted to \$3,528,113 (15 percent).

An additional \$420,334 (2 percent) was for other costs. Payments designated as "other costs" reported by religious communities included bail bonds, consultants, investigations, accreditations, publicists, and safeguarding efforts.

Compared to the previous fiscal year (July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022), total costs related to allegations were down 48 percent for fiscal year 2023, mostly due to decreases in the amounts of settlements.

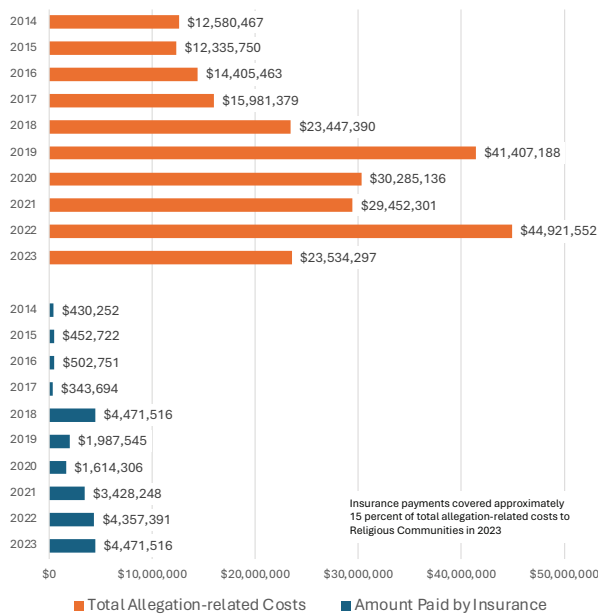
Figure 25 illustrates the settlement-related costs and attorney's fees paid by religious communities during reporting years 2014 through 2023. Compared to report year 2022, settlement-related costs in 2023 decreased by about \$18.7 million, a decrease of 61 percent. Attorneys' fees in year 2023 decreased by about \$1.6 million compared to year 2022, an 18 percent decrease.

Figure 25. Payments for Settlements to Victims and for Attorneys' Fees: Religious Communities



Religious communities that responded to the question reported that 19 percent of the total costs related to allegations between July 1, 2022 and June 30, 2023 were covered by religious communities' insurance. Figure 26 displays the total allegation-related costs paid by religious communities for reporting years 2014 to 2023 as well as the costs that were covered by insurance (\$4,471,516). The percentage covered by insurance in year 2023 (19 percent) was greater than the percentage in year 2022 (10 percent).

Figure 26. Total Allegation-related Costs and the Costs Paid by Insurance: Religious Communities

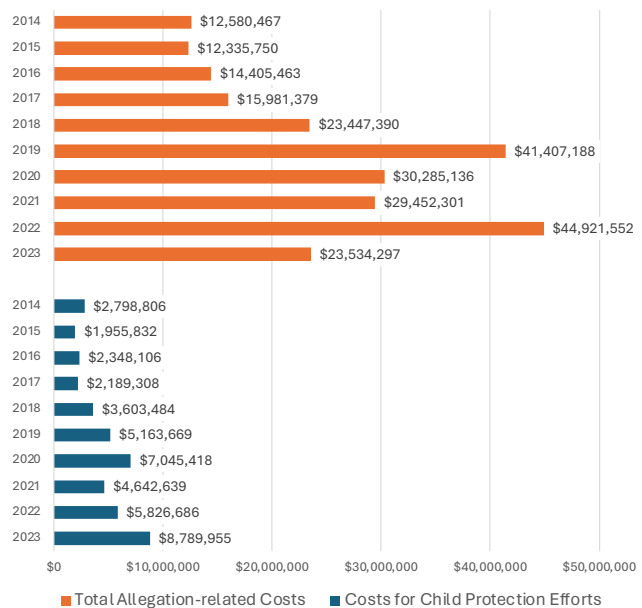


Some 19 religious communities that had made a financial settlement to victims in the past audit year (July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023) responded to a series of questions concerning what monetary sources or changes were used to pay for those settlements. The sources they indicated include insurance pay-outs (37 percent or seven religious communities), sale of property (11 percent or two religious communities), staff reductions (11 percent or two religious communities), and elimination of programs or services (5 percent or one religious community).

Some 89 percent of the 19 responding religious communities (17 religious communities) wrote in an "other" source, including: their savings, their investments, they budgeted for it, their general operating budget, their reserves, unrestricted provincial funds, and sale of their investments.

In addition to allegation-related expenses, religious communities spent about \$9 million (\$8,789,955) for child protection efforts between July 1, 2022 and June 30, 2023, such as for training programs and background checks. This is a 51 percent increase compared to the \$5,826,686 reported spent on child protection efforts in year 2022. Figure 27 compares the settlement-related costs and child protection expenditures paid by religious communities in audit years 2014 through 2023.

Figure 27. Total Allegation-related Costs and Costs for Child Protection Efforts: Religious Communities

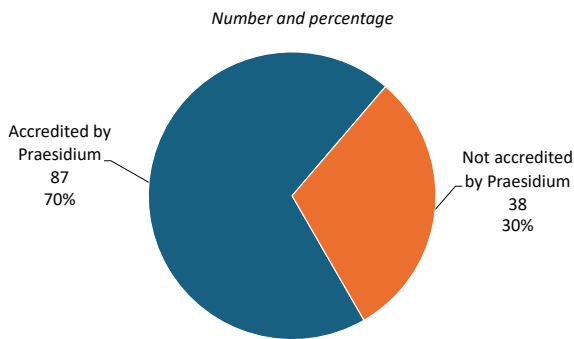


Altogether, religious communities reported \$32,324,252 in total costs related to child protection efforts as well as all costs related to allegations that were paid between July 1, 2022 and June 30, 2023, a 48 percent decrease from the \$50,748,238 combined total reported by religious communities last year.

Accreditation and Members Who Are Survivors of Minor Sexual Abuse

At the request of CMSM, three new questions were added to the 2022 survey. The first, presented in Figure 28 below, shows that seven-tenths of all responding religious communities (70 percent) are accredited by Praesidium.²⁰ This is slightly higher than the 68 percent of religious communities saying they were accredited by Praesidium in fiscal year 2022.

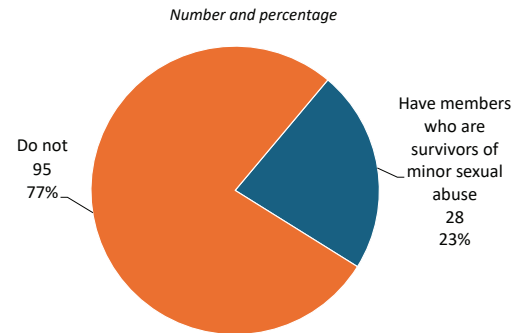
Figure 28. Jurisdictions Presently Accredited by Praesidium: Religious Communities



Source: 2023 Survey of Allegations and Costs

A second added question to the 2022 survey, whose findings are presented in Figure 29, concerns whether the religious community has any members of their jurisdiction that have disclosed to leadership or to their local community that they are survivors of minor sexual abuse. Among the 123 responding communities, 23 percent report having such members.²¹ This is similar to the 24 percent of religious communities in fiscal year 2022 who say they have such members.

Figure 29. Religious Communities with Members Who Are Survivors of Minor Sexual Abuse



Source: 2023 Survey of Allegations and Costs

These religious communities altogether report having 38 members that fit that description (not shown in the figure above).²²

²⁰ Eleven percent did not provide a response to this question.

²¹ Twelve percent did not provide a response to this question.

²² Four of the 28 who responded affirmatively did not write in a number to respond to this question.

TOTAL COMBINED
RESPONSES OF DIOCESES,
EPARCHIES, AND RELIGIOUS
COMMUNITIES

Tables 5, 6, and 7 present the combined total responses of dioceses, eparchies, and religious communities. These tables depict the total number of allegations, victims, offenders, and costs as reported by these groups for the period between July 1, 2022 and June 30, 2023. Dioceses, eparchies, and religious communities combined judged as credible 342 allegations of sexual abuse of a minor by a diocesan, eparchial, or religious priest, religious brother, or deacon. These allegations were made by 340 individuals against 213 priests, religious brothers, or deacons.²³ ²⁴ Sixty-nine percent (148 priests, religious brothers or deacons) of these alleged offenders had credible allegations made against them in previous years’ surveys. Of the 342 reported new allegations, 33 (or 10 percent) are allegations that are reported to have occurred since calendar year 2000.

Table 5. New Allegations Deemed Credible in FY 2023: Combined Totals

	Victims	Allegations	Offenders
FY 2023	340	342	213
FY 2022	385	394	344
FY 2021	1,219	1,220	811
FY 2020	1,912	1,922	1,345

Sources: Annual Survey of Allegations and Costs, 2020-2023

23 As was mentioned in the Introduction, this year’s survey is the fourth to collect details about all allegations that were deemed credible during this past fiscal year (July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023) regardless of when they were first reported to the arch/diocese, eparchy, or religious community.

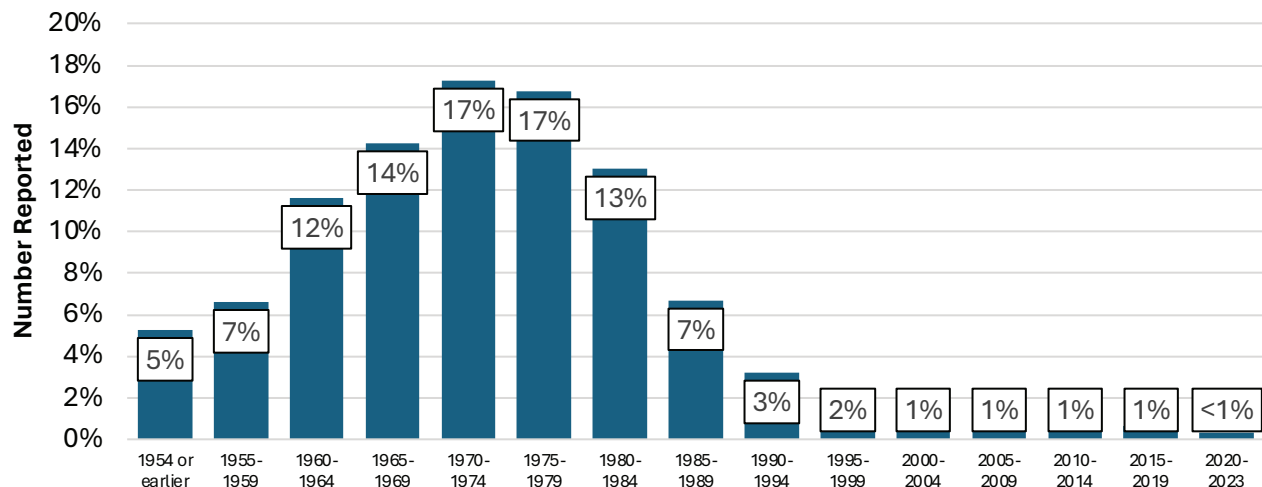
24 The allegations are not evenly distributed among dioceses, eparchies and religious communities. Two dioceses or eparchies and five religious communities, taken together, account for 44 percent of all allegations. In contrast, 247 dioceses, eparchies, and religious communities did not judge any allegations as credible in fiscal year 2023.

Cumulative View of Year the Alleged Offenses Occurred or Began - 2004 to 2023

Using data that CARA has been collecting from dioceses, eparchies and religious communities since 2004, Figure 30 presents the period that each alleged offense occurred or began for all data collected from 2004 to 2023.²⁵ Of necessity, the figure only displays

those allegations for which the year the alleged offenses occurred or began was known. As can be seen, 55 percent of cumulative credible allegations occurred or began before 1975, 41 percent occurred or began between 1975 and 1999, and 4 percent began or occurred since 2000.

Figure 30. Year Alleged Offenses Occurred or Began Cumulatively for 2004-2023: Dioceses, Eparchies and Religious Communities



Sources: Annual Survey of Allegations and Costs, 2004 to 2023

Among all new credible allegations reported by dioceses/eparchies and religious communities to CARA from 2004 to 2023:

- 12 percent occurred or began in 1959 or earlier
- 26 percent occurred or began in the 1960s
- 34 percent occurred or began in the 1970s
- 20 percent occurred or began in the 1980s
- 5 percent occurred or began in the 1990s
- 2 percent occurred or began in the 2000s
- 1 percent occurred or began in the 2010s
- Less than 1 percent occurred or began between 2020 and 2022

²⁵ As the data collection periods for dioceses, eparchies, and religious communities changed from a calendar year period for the 2004 to 2013 surveys to a fiscal year calendar of July 1 to June 30 for the 2014 to 2023 surveys, there is some double counting during the years 2013 and 2014. Any over count would have a negligible effect on this analysis.

Combined Costs Related to Allegations for 2023

Dioceses, eparchies, and religious communities reported paying out \$284,043,825 for costs related to allegations between July 1, 2022 and June 30, 2023, a 41 percent increase over last year's total of \$201,973,695. As in previous years' surveys, this includes payments for allegations reported in previous years. Table 6 presents the payments across several categories of allegation-related expenses.

More than seven-tenths of the costs (72 percent) were for settlements to victims. Attorneys' fees accounted for an additional 20 percent. Support for offenders (including therapy, living expenses, legal expenses, etc.) amounted to 4 percent of these payments. An additional 3 percent were for other payments to victims that were not included in any settlement. A final 2 percent of payments were for "other" allegation-related costs.²⁶

Table 6. Costs Related to Allegations: Combined Totals

	Settlements	Other Payments to Victims	Support for Offenders	Attorneys' Fees	Other Costs	GRAND TOTAL
FY 2014	\$62,938,073	\$7,747,097	\$15,403,047	\$28,774,518	\$4,216,912	\$119,079,647
FY 2015	\$92,518,869	\$9,092,443	\$14,008,052	\$33,740,768	\$4,259,412	\$153,619,544
FY 2016	\$60,379,857	\$24,682,229	\$14,243,119	\$39,887,737	\$2,126,859	\$141,319,801
FY 2017	\$168,788,491	\$10,571,817	\$13,026,662	\$33,009,846	\$3,559,859	\$228,956,675
FY 2018	\$194,346,291	\$7,317,904	\$23,366,845	\$30,517,658	\$7,070,839	\$262,619,537
FY 2019	\$231,094,438	\$16,821,854	\$15,648,822	\$49,194,220	\$10,259,671	\$323,019,005
FY 2020	\$234,628,082	\$13,199,500	\$16,687,141	\$65,990,338	\$11,760,741	\$342,265,802
FY 2021	\$133,576,106	\$13,485,315	\$14,175,821	\$54,380,179	\$7,955,098	\$223,572,519
FY 2022	\$126,672,066	\$7,354,291	\$13,901,232	\$49,405,978	\$4,640,128	\$201,973,695
FY 2023	\$203,209,612	\$7,480,788	\$10,968,263	\$57,289,157	\$5,096,005	\$284,043,825
Change (+/-)						
2022-2023	\$76,537,546	\$126,497	\$2,932,969	\$7,833,179	\$455,877	\$82,070,130
Percentage Change	60%	2%	-21%	16%	10%	41%

Sources: Annual Survey of Allegations and Costs, 2014-2023

²⁶ These allegation-related costs are not evenly distributed among dioceses, eparchies, and religious communities. The two dioceses and five religious communities with the greatest total costs related to allegations account for 55 percent of all costs related to allegations. In contrast, 114 dioceses, eparchies, and religious communities report having no allegation-related costs for fiscal year 2023.

Combined Costs Related to Child Protection Efforts and Allegations

Dioceses, eparchies, and religious communities paid \$43,747,179 for child protection efforts between July 1, 2022 and June 30, 2023. This is a 4 percent increase from the amount spent on such child protection efforts in the previous reporting year (\$41,877,846). Dioceses, eparchies, and religious communities expended a total of \$284,043,825 for costs related to allegations between July 1, 2022 and June 30, 2023. Table 7 presents the combined allegation-related costs and child protection expenditures paid by dioceses, eparchies, and religious communities.

Altogether, dioceses, eparchies, and religious communities reported \$327,791,004 in total costs related to child protection efforts as well as costs related to allegations that were paid between July 1, 2022 and June 30, 2023. This represents a 34 percent increase from the \$243,851,541 total reported for year 2022 (July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022).

Table 7. Costs Related to Child Protection Efforts and to Allegations: Combined Totals

	Total Amounts for All Child Protection Efforts, Including SEC/VAC Salaries and Expenses, Training Programs, Background Checks, etc.	Total Costs Related to Allegations	TOTAL
FY 2014	\$31,667,740	\$119,079,647	\$150,747,387
FY 2015	\$33,489,404	\$153,539,897	\$187,029,301
FY 2016	\$34,850,246	\$141,319,801	\$176,170,047
FY 2017	\$34,852,598	\$228,956,675	\$263,809,273
FY 2018	\$39,290,069	\$262,619,537	\$301,909,606
FY 2019	\$44,935,299	\$323,019,005	\$367,954,304
FY 2020	\$51,461,507	\$342,265,802	\$393,727,309
FY 2021	\$38,584,773	\$223,572,519	\$262,157,292
FY 2022	\$41,877,846	\$201,973,695	\$243,851,541
FY 2023	\$43,747,179	\$284,043,825	\$327,791,004
Change (+/-) 2022-2023	\$1,869,333	\$82,070,130	\$83,939,463
Percentage Change	4%	41%	34%

Source: Annual Survey of Allegations and Costs, 2014-2023



CARA – Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate
Annual Survey of Allegations and Costs – Dioceses & Eparchies

APPENDIX I

QUESTIONNAIRE AND RESPONSE FREQUENCIES FOR DIOCESES AND EPARCHIES

This questionnaire is designed to survey dioceses and eparchies about accusations of abuse of minors by clergy and the costs in dealing with these allegations. The results will be used to demonstrate progress in implementing the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People and to reduce the incidence of sexual abuse within the Church.

All data collected here are entirely confidential. Only CARA personnel view the data submissions. Your individual data submission is not shared with anyone, including the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB). Only combined, aggregated results for Dioceses and Eparchies nationally will be reported publicly.

Soon after submitting the report of findings to the USCCB for review, CARA removes from its data sets all identifying information about the Diocese or Eparchy submitting the data and stores it – encrypted using 256-bit AES encryption – on a secure platform at Georgetown University.

THE CURRENT AUDIT YEAR COVERS JULY 1, 2022 TO JUNE 30, 2023.

NOTE: An allegation is defined as one victim alleging an act or acts of abuse by one alleged perpetrator. Only allegations of abuse of a minor by diocesan or eparchial priests and deacons should be reported in this survey. Clergy who are members of a religious community should not be included in this survey.

STATUS OF ALLEGATIONS NOT RESOLVED IN THE PREVIOUS AUDIT YEAR

As of the end of this audit year (June 30, 2023), please designate the status of all allegations *first* received prior to July 1, 2022 that were reported on last year's survey as unresolved – that is those categorized as “investigation ongoing” on the 2022 survey (items A5 and 6):

SUM

- 56 A1. **Credible** – such as an allegation categorized as “substantiated” in your StoneBridge audit, i.e., the investigation is complete and the allegation has been deemed credible/true based on the evidence gathered through the investigation; determined to bear the “semblance of truth” (i.e., has been sufficiently substantiated by a preliminary investigation to be forwarded to the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith for action according to Canons 1717 and 1719); in the case of an allegation against a deceased perpetrator, the allegation is credible if it meets the criteria for forwarding to the Congregation. *These allegations may or may not have been paid out in a settlement.*
- 44 A2. **Unsubstantiated** – such as an allegation categorized as “unsubstantiated” in your StoneBridge audit, i.e., the investigation is complete and the allegation has been deemed not credible/false based on the evidence gathered through the investigation. *These allegations may or may not have been paid out in a settlement.*
- 162 A3. **Unable to be proven** – such as an allegation categorized as “unable to be proven” in your StoneBridge audit, i.e., your diocese/eparchy was unable to complete the investigation due to lack of information. *These allegations may or may not have been paid out in a settlement.*
- 1,628 A4. **Investigation ongoing** – such as an allegation categorized as “investigation ongoing” in your StoneBridge audit, i.e., your diocese/eparchy has started an investigation, but has not yet completed it and has not yet determined credibility; also included here are those allegations – during some investigations conducted by civil authorities – where dioceses and eparchies temporarily are not permitted to conduct their own investigation. *These allegations may or may not have been paid out in a settlement.*

(Note: The sum of items A1 to A4 should be equal to the total number of allegations carried over from last year as they were categorized as “investigation ongoing” – items A5 and 6 on last year's survey.)

STATUS OF ALLEGATIONS FIRST RECEIVED DURING THIS AUDIT YEAR
(JULY 1, 2022-JUNE 30, 2023)

SUM
2,516

1. The total number of all new allegations your diocese or eparchy received between **July 1, 2022 and June 30, 2023** – those allegations that are credible, unsubstantiated, unable to be proven, or still being actively investigated. This should not include clergy that are members of religious communities as they will be reported by their religious institutes. Also, allegations that lack the essential information required for an investigation (such as those in a class action suit that do not specify an alleged perpetrator and/or do not contain any information about alleged abuse) should not be included in item 1.

Of the total number reported in item 1, please designate the status of all allegations *first* received during this audit year (between July 1, 2022 and June 30, 2023):

SUM

- | | |
|-------|--|
| 173 | 2. Credible – such as an allegation categorized as “substantiated” in your StoneBridge audit, i.e., the investigation is complete and the allegation has been deemed credible/true based on the evidence gathered through the investigation; determined to bear the “semblance of truth” (i.e., has been sufficiently substantiated by a preliminary investigation to be forwarded to the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith for action according to Canons 1717 and 1719); in the case of an allegation against a deceased perpetrator, the allegation is credible if it meets the criteria for forwarding to the Congregation. <i>These allegations may or may not have been paid out in a settlement.</i> |
| 64 | 3. Unsubstantiated – such as an allegation categorized as “unsubstantiated” in your StoneBridge audit, i.e., the investigation is complete and the allegation has been deemed not credible/false based on the evidence gathered through the investigation. <i>These allegations may or may not have been paid out in a settlement.</i> |
| 365 | 4. Unable to be proven – such as an allegation categorized as “unable to be proven” in your StoneBridge audit, i.e., your diocese/eparchy was unable to complete the investigation due to lack of information. <i>These allegations may or may not have been paid out in a settlement.</i> |
| 1,914 | 5. Investigation ongoing – such as an allegation categorized as “investigation ongoing” in your StoneBridge audit, i.e., your diocese/eparchy has started an investigation, but has not yet completed it and has not yet determined credibility; also included here are those allegations – during some investigations conducted by civil authorities – where dioceses and eparchies temporarily are not permitted to conduct their own investigation. <i>These allegations may or may not have been paid out in a settlement.</i> |

(Note: The sum of items 2 to 5 should be equal to item 1. If no new allegations were received during this audit year, please enter a “0” in item 1, leave items 2 to 5 blank, and proceed to item 6.)

ALL ALLEGATIONS DEEMED CREDIBLE DURING THIS AUDIT YEAR (JULY 1, 2022-JUNE 30, 2023)

SUM

229 6. Total number of allegations (first received during a prior audit year *or* this audit year) designated as credible during the period of July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023. *(Note: Item 6 = Item A1 + Item 2.) (If your response to item 6 is zero, please respond "0" to items 6a and 6b, leave items 7 to 38 blank, and go to item 54.)*

SUM

0 6a. Of the allegations in item 6, the number that solely involved child pornography.
229 6b. Total number of allegations your diocese or eparchy is reporting that solely did NOT involve child pornography. *(Note: Item 6 minus item 6a.)*

Of the number reported in item 6, the number that were first reported to the diocese or eparchy by a(n):

SUM

61 7. Victim.	2 11. Law enforcement.
13 8. Family member of the victim.	3 12. Bishop or official from another diocese.
1 9. Friend of the victim.	2 13. Reported through a government investigation.
141 10. Attorney of the victim.	
6 14. Other source: _____	

(Choose only one category for each allegation. The sum of items 7-14 should equal item 6.)

Of the number reported in item 6b, the number of alleged victims that are:

SUM

169 15. Male.
59 16. Female.
1 17. Gender unknown.

(Choose only one category for each allegation. The sum of items 15-17 should equal item 6b.)

Of the number reported in item 6b, the number of alleged victims in each age category when the alleged abuse began:

SUM

71 18. 0-9.	32 20. 15-17.
112 19. 10-14.	14 21. Age unknown.

(Choose only one category for each allegation. The sum of items 18-21 should equal item 6b.)

Of the number reported in item 6b, the number alleged to have begun in:

SUM

5 22. 1954 or earlier.	7 31. 1995-1999.
12 23. 1955-1959.	5 32. 2000-2004.
20 24. 1960-1964.	1 33. 2005-2009.
32 25. 1965-1969.	3 34. 2010-2014.
37 26. 1970-1974.	1 35. 2015-2019.
35 27. 1975-1979.	7 36. 2020-2022.
24 28. 1980-1984.	5 37. 2023.
14 29. 1985-1989.	9 38. Time period unknown.
12 30. 1990-1994.	

(Choose only one category for each allegation. The sum of items 22-38 should equal item 6b.)

ALLEGED PERPETRATORS

NOTE: Include any alleged perpetrators who are or were ordained members of the clergy (priests or deacons) legitimately serving in or assigned to your diocese or eparchy at the time the credible allegation was alleged to have occurred. Include only those clergy who are tied to the allegations reported in item 6 above. Do not include clergy who are members of religious communities as they will be reported by their religious institutes.

SUM

- 144 39. Total number of priests or deacons against whom credible allegations of sexual abuse of a minor have been reported or recorded between July 1, 2022 and June 30, 2023. *(Note: Include all clergy tied to the allegations reported in item 6.)*
(If your response to item 39 is zero, please leave items 40 to 53 blank and go to item 54.)
- 114 40. Of the total number in item 39, the number that have had one or more previous credible allegations reported against them in previous surveys.

Of the total number in item 39, how many were in each category below at the time of the alleged abuse?
Choose only one category for each alleged perpetrator.

SUM

- 112 41. Diocesan priests ordained for this diocese or eparchy.
 13 42. Diocesan priests incardinated later in this diocese or eparchy.
 5 43. Extern diocesan priests from another U.S. diocese serving in this diocese or eparchy.
 2 44. Extern diocesan priests from a diocese outside the United States serving in this diocese or eparchy.
 4 45. Permanent deacons.
 5 46. Unnamed or unspecified clergy member.
 4 47. Other: _____

(The sum of items 41-47 should equal item 39.)

Of the total number in item 39, the number that:
Choose only one category for each alleged perpetrator.

SUM

- 127 48. Are deceased, already removed from ministry, already laicized, or missing.
 7 49. Have been permanently removed or retired from ministry between July 1, 2022 and June 30, 2023 based on allegations of abuse.
 0 50. Have been returned to ministry between July 1, 2022 and June 30, 2023 based on the resolution of allegations of abuse.
 5 51. Remain temporarily removed from ministry pending investigation of allegations (as of June 30, 2023).
 0 52. Remain in active ministry pending investigation of allegations (as of June 30, 2023).
 5 53. Unnamed or unspecified clergy member.

(The sum of items 48-53 should equal item 39.)

COSTS INCURRED DURING THE CURRENT AUDIT YEAR (JULY 1, 2022-JUNE 30, 2023)

SUM

34,957,224 54. Excluding all payments or costs related to any specific allegations, amounts paid for **all child protection efforts** – including Safe Environment Coordinators/Victim Assistance Coordinators salaries and expenses, training programs, background checks – during this audit year (between July 1, 2022 and June 30, 2023).

Indicate the approximate total amount of funds expended by your diocese or eparchy between July 1, 2022 and June 30, 2023 for **payments as the result of allegations of sexual abuse of a minor** (notwithstanding the year in which the allegation was received):

SUM

\$191,134,659 55. All settlements paid to victims.

\$7,213,945 56. Other payments to victims (e.g., for therapy or other expenses, if separate from settlements).

\$7,440,150 57. Payments for support for alleged offenders (including living expenses, legal expenses, therapy, etc.).

\$50,045,103 58. Payments for attorneys' fees.

\$4,675,671 59. Other allegation-related costs:

14.7% 60. Approximate percentage of the total amount in items 55-59 that was covered by your diocese's or eparchy's insurance.

If your diocese or eparchy made a financial settlement to victims during the past audit year (July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023), which of the following monetary sources/changes did your diocese or eparchy use for those settlements:

(Please check all that apply. If no financial settlements were made, please skip these questions.)

SUM

6 61. Sale of property.

2 62. Restructuring of debt.

21 63. Insurance pay-outs.

6 64. Bankruptcy filing.

1 65. Elimination of programs or services.

1 66. Staff reductions.

36 67. Other _____.

In the event it is necessary for clarification about the data reported here, please supply the following information:

Name of person completing this form: _____

Title of person completing this form: _____

Arch/Diocese or Eparchy: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Thank you for completing this survey.

You can send, scan and email, or fax this survey to Jon Wiggins at:

Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA); 2300 Wisconsin Ave NW, Suite 400A, Washington, DC 20007

Phone: 202-687-1290 Fax: 202-687-8083 E-mail: jlw8@georgetown.edu; ©CARA 2023, All rights reserved.



CARA – Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate
Annual Survey of Allegations and Costs – Religious Communities

APPENDIX II

QUESTIONNAIRE AND RESPONSE FREQUENCIES FOR RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES

This questionnaire is designed to survey Major Superiors of Men who lead and govern Religious Communities – Institutes of Consecrated Life, Societies of Apostolic Life, and Independent Monasteries – about accusations of abuse of minors by their members and the costs in dealing with these allegations. The results will be used to demonstrate progress in implementing the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People and to reduce the incidence of sexual abuse within the Church.

All data collected here are entirely confidential. Only CARA personnel view the data submissions. Your individual data submission is not shared with anyone, including the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), any individual bishop, or the Conference of Major Superiors of Men. Only combined, aggregated results for Religious Communities nationally will be reported publicly.

Soon after submitting the report of findings to the USCCB and CMSM for review, CARA removes from its data sets all identifying information about the Religious Community submitting the data and stores it – encrypted using 256-bit AES encryption – on a secure platform at Georgetown University.

THE CURRENT AUDIT YEAR COVERS JULY 1, 2022 TO JUNE 30, 2023.

NOTE: An allegation is defined as one victim alleging an act or acts of abuse by one alleged perpetrator. Only allegations of abuse of a minor by a Religious Community member (priests, deacons, and brothers) should be reported in this survey.

STATUS OF ALLEGATIONS NOT RESOLVED IN THE PREVIOUS AUDIT YEAR

As of the end of this audit year (June 30, 2023), please designate the status of all allegations *first* received prior to July 1, 2022 that were reported on last year's survey as unresolved – that is those categorized as “investigation ongoing” on the 2022 survey (items A5 and 6 on that survey):

SUM

- 52 A1. **Credible** – determined to bear the “semblance of truth” (i.e., has been sufficiently substantiated by a preliminary investigation to be forwarded to the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith for action according to Canons 1717 and 1719); in the case of an allegation against a deceased perpetrator, the allegation is credible if it meets the criteria for forwarding to the Congregation. *These allegations may or may not have been paid out in a settlement.*
- 10 A2. **Unsubstantiated** – determined by a preliminary investigation that insufficient evidence exists to demonstrate that the allegation has occurred as claimed. *These allegations may or may not have been paid out in a settlement.*
- 33 A3. **Unable to be proven** – determined by a preliminary investigation that insufficient evidence exists to conclude that the alleged abuse did (or did not) occur. *These allegations may or may not have been paid out in a settlement.*
- 384 A4. **Investigation ongoing** – the preliminary investigation is still underway or awaiting final determination of credibility; also included here are those allegations – during some investigations conducted by civil authorities – where Religious Communities temporarily are not permitted to conduct their own investigation. *These allegations may or may not have been paid out in a settlement.*

(Note: The sum of items A1 to A4 should be equal to the total number of allegations carried over from last year as they were categorized as “investigation ongoing” – items A5 and 2d on last year's survey. If you do not have access to last year's survey or do not have any unresolved allegations carried over from last year, please leave this section blank and go to item 1.)

STATUS OF ALLEGATIONS FIRST RECEIVED DURING THIS AUDIT YEAR (JULY 1, 2022-JUNE 30, 2023)

SUM

- 276 1. The total number of all new allegations your Religious Community received between **July 1, 2022 and June 30, 2023** – those allegations that are credible, unsubstantiated, unable to be proven, or still being actively investigated. Also, allegations that lack the essential information required for an investigation (such as those in a class action suit that do not specify an alleged perpetrator and/or do not contain any information about alleged abuse) should not be included in item 1.

Of the total number reported in item 1, please designate the status of all allegations *first* received during this audit year (between July 1, 2022 and June 30, 2023):

SUM

- 61 2. **Credible** – determined to bear the “semblance of truth” (i.e., has been sufficiently substantiated by a preliminary investigation to be forwarded to the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith for action according to Canons 1717 and 1719); in the case of an allegation against a deceased perpetrator, the allegation is credible if it meets the criteria for forwarding to the Congregation. *These allegations may or may not have been paid out in a settlement.*
- 11 3. **Unsubstantiated** – determined by a preliminary investigation that insufficient evidence exists to demonstrate that the allegation has occurred as claimed. *These allegations may or may not have been paid out in a settlement.*
- 40 4. **Unable to be proven** – determined by a preliminary investigation that insufficient evidence exists to conclude that the alleged abuse did (or did not) occur. *These allegations may or may not have been paid out in a settlement.*
- 164 5. **Investigation ongoing** – the preliminary investigation is still underway or awaiting final determination of credibility; also included here are those allegations – during some investigations conducted by civil authorities – where Religious Communities temporarily are not permitted to conduct their own investigation. *These allegations may or may not have been paid out in a settlement.*

(Note: The sum of items 2 to 5 should be equal to item 1. If no new allegations were received during this audit year, please enter a “0” in item 1, leave items 2 to 5 blank, and proceed to item 6.)

**ALL ALLEGATIONS DEEMED CREDIBLE DURING THIS AUDIT YEAR
(JULY 1, 2022-JUNE 30, 2023)**

SUM

113 6. Total number of allegations (first received during a prior audit year or this audit year) designated as credible during the period of July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023. *(Note: Item 6 = Item A1 + Item 2.) (If your response to item 6 is zero, please respond "0" to items 6a and 6b, leave items 7 to 38 blank, and go to item 54.)*

2 6a. Of the allegations in item 6, the number that solely involved child pornography (child pornography is any visual depiction of sexually explicit conduct involving a minor – those less than 18 years old).

111 6b. Total number of allegations your Religious Community is reporting that solely did NOT involve child pornography. *(Item 6 minus item 6a.)*

Of the number reported in item 6, the number that were first reported to your Religious Community by a(n):

SUM

SUM

12 7. Victim.	1 11. Law enforcement.
0 8. Family member of the victim.	8 12. Bishop or official from a diocese.
0 9. Friend of the victim.	0 13. Reported through a government investigation.
65 10. Attorney of the victim.	
27 14. Other sources: _____.	

(Choose only one category for each allegation. The sum of items 7-14 should equal item 6.)

Of the number reported in item 6b, the number of alleged victims that are:

SUM

78 15. Male.
20 16. Female.
13 17. Gender unknown.
(Choose only one category for each allegation. The sum of items 15-17 should equal item 6b.)

Of the number reported in item 6b, the number of alleged victims in each age category when the alleged abuse began:

SUM

SUM

8 18. 0-9.	26 20. 15-17.
42 19. 10-14.	35 21. Age unknown.

(Choose only one category for each allegation. The sum of items 18-21 should equal item 6b.)

Of the number reported in item 6b, the number alleged to have begun in:

SUM

SUM

3 22. 1954 or earlier.	1 31. 1995-1999.
2 23. 1955-1959.	0 32. 2000-2004.
13 24. 1960-1964.	0 33. 2005-2009.
12 25. 1965-1969.	1 34. 2010-2014.
12 26. 1970-1974.	0 35. 2015-2019.
13 27. 1975-1979.	10 36. 2020-2022.
21 28. 1980-1984.	0 37. 2023.
7 29. 1985-1989.	11 38. Time period unknown.
5 30. 1990-1994.	

(Choose only one category for each allegation. The sum of items 22-38 should equal item 6b.)

ALLEGED PERPETRATORS

NOTE: Include any alleged perpetrators who are or were members who legitimately served within your Religious Community or in or assigned to a diocese or eparchy at the time the credible allegation was alleged to have occurred. Include only those members who are tied to the allegations reported in item 6 above.

SUM

69 39. Total number of members against whom credible allegations of sexual abuse of a minor have been reported or recorded between July 1, 2022 and June 30, 2023. *(Note: Include all members tied to the allegations reported in item 6.)*

(If your response to item 39 is zero, please leave items 40 to 59 blank and go to item 60.)

34 40. Of the total number in item 39, the number that have had one or more previous credible allegations reported against them in previous surveys.

Of the total number in item 39, how many were in each category below at the time of the alleged abuse?

(Choose only one category for each alleged perpetrator. The sum of items 41-47 should equal item 39.)

Priests or

Deacons

SUM

Brothers

SUM

- | | | | | |
|----|------|---|------|---|
| 48 | 41a. | 9 | 41b. | Member of your canonical jurisdiction assigned within the United States. |
| 0 | 42a. | 0 | 42b. | Member of your canonical jurisdiction assigned outside the United States. |
| 1 | 43a. | 2 | 43b. | Formerly of your canonical jurisdiction but no longer a member of your Religious Community. |
| 0 | 44a. | 0 | 44b. | Member of another U.S. canonical jurisdiction but serving in your canonical jurisdiction. |
| 0 | 45a. | 0 | 45b. | Member of a non-U.S. based canonical jurisdiction but serving in your canonical jurisdiction. |
| 0 | 46. | | | Deacon member of your Religious Community. |
| 9 | 47. | | | Unnamed or unspecified member. |

Of the total number in item 39, the number that:

(Choose only one category for each alleged perpetrator. The sum of items 48-53 should equal item 39.)

SUM

- 52 48. Are deceased, already removed from ministry, already laicized, or missing.
- 3 49. Have been permanently removed or retired from ministry between July 1, 2022 and June 30, 2023 based on allegations of abuse.
- 0 50. Have been returned to ministry between July 1, 2022 and June 30, 2023 based on the resolution of allegations of abuse.
- 2 51. Remain temporarily removed from ministry pending investigation of allegations (as of June 30, 2023).
- 0 52. Remain in active ministry pending investigation of allegations (as of June 30, 2023).
- 12 53. Unnamed or unspecified member.

(The sum of items 48-53 should equal item 39.)

Of the number reported in item 39, the number that:

SUM

- 1 54. Are diagnosed situational offenders (Situational offenders end up molesting the child for various reasons – most often because of availability – whether male or female – but do NOT have a preference for pre-pubescent children. They may feel attracted to the child or stimulated by being “close” to them. Situational offenders often have low self-worth, poor peer relationships, cannot deal with stress well and take advantage of the child as the result of the extra pressure at a particular time in their life. Their offending behavior is sporadic or occurs only once, and may be triggered by a loss, e.g., death of a family member, friend, etc. Typically, there are fewer victims than for the Preferential Type.)
- 6 55. Are diagnosed preferential offenders (Preferential offenders are most often “pedophiles,” who prefer and seek out jobs or ministries with pre-pubescent children, are aroused by child porn, often may have multiple to many victims, tend to abuse males only, think more of their needs than any fear of being caught, and engage in more deviant behavior patterns.)
- 62 56. Not known or have not yet received a diagnosis (Data from perpetrator records is unclear to distinguish any type. One cannot clearly distinguish between situational factors and preferential factors to determine the type based on available observation or knowledge.)
- (The sum of items 54-56 should equal item 39.)*

SUM

- 1 57. *Of the total number of diagnosed situational offenders in item 54, the number who have reoffended.*
- 0 58. *Of the total number of diagnosed preferential offenders in item 55, the number who have reoffended.*
- 14 59. *Of the total number of undiagnosed offenders in item 56, the number who have reoffended.*

Yes No NR

- 87 38 15 60. Is your jurisdiction presently accredited by Praesidium?
- 28 95 17 61. Have any members of your jurisdiction disclosed (to leadership and/or to their local community) that they are survivors of minor sexual abuse?
- 61a. *If yes, approximately how many members have disclosed: __members* **SUM=38**
NR=4

COSTS INCURRED DURING THE CURRENT AUDIT YEAR (JULY 1, 2022-JUNE 30, 2023)

SUM

- \$8,789,955 62. Excluding all payments or costs related to any specific allegations, amounts paid for **all child protection efforts**, including Safe Environment Coordinators/Victim Assistance Coordinators salaries and expenses, training programs, background checks, during this audit year, between July 1, 2022 and June 30, 2023. (Costs that should be included in these efforts include Supervision and Monitoring (time is money- they are billable in any other setting--how much staff time, monitor's time, supervisor's time, major superior's time, provincial or council's time and efforts (typically \$25-50 dollars an hour or more) any salaries/contracts/consultations of internal or

external personnel, professional updating and costs associated with these efforts/events.

1. Travel, room and board, time away from central governance office(s), associated with Trainings, Annual Supervision Workshop, National Assembly where updates are given on all national efforts.
2. Education programs: costs of programs, set up costs, travel costs, time of all members at sessions.
3. Victim Expenses: settlements, therapy costs, time and efforts of the safe environment coordinator/ employee and victim assistance coordinator and their salaries.
4. Costs associated with the welfare and care of the accused: yearly room and board, health care costs, insurance costs, and budget/spending money.)

Indicate the approximate total amount of funds expended by your Religious Community between July 1, 2022 and June 30, 2023 for **payments as the result of allegations of sexual abuse of a minor** (notwithstanding the year in which the allegation was received):

SUM

\$12,074,953 63. All settlements paid to victims.
 \$266,843 64. Other payments to victims (e.g., for therapy or other expenses, if separate from settlements).
 \$3,528,113 65. Payments for support for alleged offenders (including living expenses, legal expenses, therapy, etc.).
 \$7,244,054 66. Payments for attorneys' fees.
 \$420,334 67. Other allegation-related costs:

AVG

19% 68. Approximate percentage of the total amount in items 63-67 that was covered by your Religious Community's insurance.

If your Religious Community made a financial settlement to victims during the past audit year (July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023), which of the following monetary sources/changes did your Religious Community use for those settlements:

(Please check all that apply. If no financial settlements were made, please skip these questions.)

SUM

2 69. Sale of property.
 0 70. Restructuring of debt.
 7 71. Insurance pay-outs.
 0 72. Bankruptcy filing.
 1 73. Elimination of programs or services.
 2 74. Staff reductions.
 17 75. Other _____.

In the event it is necessary for clarification about the data reported here, please supply the following information for CARA's use: *(This identifying information will be removed before the data set is stored in an encrypted form on a secure platform at Georgetown University – the university with whom CARA is affiliated.)*

Name of person completing this form: _____

Title of person completing this form: _____

Religious Community: _____

Canonical Jurisdiction: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Thank you for completing this survey.

You can send or fax this survey to Jon Wiggins at:

Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA);

2300 Wisconsin Ave NW, Suite 400A, Washington, DC 20007

Phone: 202-687-1290 Fax: 202-687-8083 E-mail: jlw8@georgetown.edu

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SECTION III

2023

The revised *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People* was developed by the Ad Hoc Committee for Sexual Abuse of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB). It was approved by the full body of U.S. Catholic bishops at its June 2005 Plenary Assembly, and this third revision was approved at the June 2018 Plenary Assembly. The revised *Essential Norms for Diocesan/Eparchial Policies Dealing with Allegations of Sexual Abuse of Minors by Priests or Deacons* was developed by the Ad Hoc Committee on Sexual Abuse of the USCCB and by the Vatican-U.S. Bishops' Mixed Commission on Sex Abuse Norms. They were approved by the full body of bishops at its June 2005 General Meeting, received the subsequent *recognitio* of the Holy See on January 1, 2006, and were promulgated May 5, 2006. The revised *Statement of Episcopal Commitment* was developed by the Ad Hoc Committee on Bishops' Life and Ministry of the USCCB. It was approved by the full body of U.S. Catholic bishops at its November 2005 Plenary Assembly and then again in 2011 and 2018. This revised edition, containing all three documents, is authorized for publication by the undersigned.

Msgr. J. Brian Bransfield
General Secretary, USCCB

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2018 CHARTER FOR THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

PREAMBLE

Since 2002, the Church in the United States has experienced a crisis without precedent in our times. The sexual abuse¹ of children and young people by some deacons, priests, and bishops, and the ways in which these crimes and sins were addressed, have caused enormous pain, anger, and confusion for victims, their families, and the entire Church. As bishops, we have acknowledged our mistakes and our roles in that suffering, and we apologize and take responsibility again for too often failing victims and the Catholic people in the past. From the depths of our hearts, we bishops express great sorrow and profound regret for what the Catholic people have endured.

We share Pope Francis' "conviction that everything possible must be done to rid the Church of the scourge of the sexual abuse of minors and to open pathways of reconciliation and healing for those who were abused" (Letter of His Holiness Pope Francis to the Presidents of the Episcopal Conferences and Superiors of Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life Concerning the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors, February 2, 2015).

Again, with this 2018 revision of the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*, we re-affirm our deep commitment to sustain and strengthen a safe environment within the Church for children and youth. We have listened to the profound pain and suffering of those victimized by sexual abuse and will continue to respond to their cries. We have agonized over the sinfulness, the criminality, and the breach of trust perpetrated by some members of the clergy. We have determined as best we can the extent of the problem of this abuse of minors by clergy in our country, as well as its causes and context. We will use what we have learned to strengthen the protection given to the children and young people in our care.

We continue to have a special care for and a commitment to reaching out to the victims of sexual

abuse and their families. The damage caused by sexual abuse of minors is devastating and long-lasting. We apologize to each victim for the grave harm that has been inflicted on him or her, and we offer our help now and for the future. The loss of trust that is often the consequence of such abuse becomes even more tragic when it leads to a loss of the faith that we have a sacred duty to foster. We make our own the words of St. John Paul II: that the sexual abuse of young people is "by every standard wrong and rightly considered a crime by society; it is also an appalling sin in the eyes of God" (Address to the Cardinals of the United States and Conference Officers, April 23, 2002). We will continue to help victims recover from these crimes and strive to prevent these tragedies from occurring.

Along with the victims and their families, the entire Catholic community in this country has suffered because of this scandal and its consequences. The intense public scrutiny of the minority of the ordained who have betrayed their calling has caused the vast majority of faithful priests and deacons to experience enormous vulnerability to being misunderstood in their ministry and often casts over them an undeserved air of suspicion. We share with all priests and deacons a firm commitment to renewing the integrity of the vocation to Holy Orders so that it will continue to be perceived as a life of service to others after the example of Christ our Lord.

We, who have been given the responsibility of shepherding God's people, will, with his help and in full collaboration with all the faithful, continue to work to restore the bonds of trust that unite us. We have seen that words alone cannot accomplish this goal. We will continue to take action in our Plenary Assembly and at home in our dioceses and eparchies.

We feel a particular responsibility for “the ministry of reconciliation” (2 Cor 5:18) which God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, has given us. The love of Christ impels us to ask forgiveness for our own faults but also to appeal to all—to those who have been victimized, to those who have offended, and to all who have felt the wound of this scandal—to be reconciled to God and one another.

Perhaps in a way never before experienced, we feel the power of sin touch our entire Church family in this country; but as St. Paul boldly says, God made Christ “to be sin who did not know sin, so that we might become the righteousness of God in him” (2 Cor 5:21). May we who have known sin experience as well, through a spirit of reconciliation, God’s own righteousness. We know that after such profound hurt, healing and reconciliation are beyond human capacity alone. It is God’s grace and mercy that will lead us forward, trusting Christ’s promise: “for with God all things are possible” (Mt 19:26).

In working toward fulfilling this responsibility, we rely, first of all, on Almighty God to sustain us in faith and in the discernment of the right course to take.

We receive fraternal guidance and support from the Holy See that sustains us in this time of trial. In solidarity with Pope Francis, we express heartfelt love and sorrow for the victims of abuse.

We rely on the Catholic faithful of the United States. Nationally and in each diocese/eparchy, the wisdom and expertise of clergy, religious, and laity contribute immensely to confronting the effects of the crisis and taking steps to resolve it. We are filled with gratitude for their great faith, for their generosity, and for the spiritual and moral support that we receive from them.

We acknowledge and re-affirm the faithful service of the vast majority of our priests and deacons and the love that people have for them. They deservedly have our esteem and that of the Catholic people for their good work. It is regrettable that their committed ministerial witness has been overshadowed by this crisis.

In a special way, we acknowledge and thank victims of clergy sexual abuse and their families who have trusted us enough to share their stories and to help us understand more fully the consequences of this reprehensible violation of sacred trust. With Pope Francis, we praise the courage of those who speak out about their abuse; their actions are “a service of love, since for us it sheds light on a terrible darkness in the life of the Church.” We pray that “the

remnants of the darkness which touch them may be healed” (Address to Victims of Sexual Abuse, July 7, 2014).

Let there now be no doubt or confusion on anyone’s part: For us, your bishops, our obligation to protect children and young people and to prevent sexual abuse flows from the mission and example given to us by Jesus Christ himself, in whose name we serve.

As we work to restore trust, we are reminded how Jesus showed constant care for the vulnerable. He inaugurated his ministry with these words of the Prophet Isaiah:

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has anointed me
to bring glad tidings to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim liberty to captives
and recovery of sight to the blind,
to let the oppressed go free,
and to proclaim a year acceptable to the Lord.
(Lk 4:18-19)

In Matthew 25, the Lord, in his commission to his apostles and disciples, told them that whenever they show mercy and compassion to the least ones, they show it to him.

Jesus extended this care in a tender and urgent way to children, rebuking his disciples for keeping them away from him: “Let the children come to me” (Mt 19:14). And he uttered a grave warning that for anyone who would lead the little ones astray, it would be better for such a person “to have a great millstone hung around his neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea” (Mt 18:6).

We hear these words of the Lord as prophetic for this moment. With a firm determination to restore the bonds of trust, we bishops recommit ourselves to a continual pastoral outreach to repair the breach with those who have suffered sexual abuse and with all the people of the Church.

In this spirit, over the last sixteen years, the principles and procedures of the *Charter* have been integrated into church life.

- The Secretariat of Child and Youth Protection provides the focus for a consistent, ongoing, and comprehensive approach to creating a safe environment for young people throughout the Church in the United States.

- The Secretariat also provides the means for us to be accountable for achieving the goals of the *Charter*, as demonstrated by its annual reports on the implementation of the *Charter* based on independent compliance audits.
- The National Review Board is carrying on its responsibility to assist in the assessment of diocesan/eparchial compliance with the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*.
- The descriptive study of the nature and scope of sexual abuse of minors by Catholic clergy in the United States, commissioned by the National Review Board, was completed in February 2004. The resulting study, examining the historical period 1950-2002, by the John Jay College of Criminal Justice provides us with a powerful tool not only to examine our past but also to secure our future against such misconduct.
- The U.S. bishops charged the National Review Board to oversee the completion of the *Causes and Context* study. The Study, which calls for ongoing education, situational prevention, and oversight and accountability, was completed in 2011.
- Victims' assistance coordinators are in place throughout our nation to assist dioceses and eparchies in responding to the pastoral needs of the abused.
- Diocesan/eparchial bishops in every diocese/eparchy are advised and greatly assisted by diocesan and eparchial review boards as the bishops make the decisions needed to fulfill the *Charter*.
- Safe environment programs are in place to assist parents and children—and those who work with children—in preventing harm to young people. These programs continually seek to incorporate the most useful developments in the field of child protection.

Through these steps and many others, we remain committed to the safety of our children and young people.

While the number of reported cases of sexual abuse has decreased over the last sixteen years, the harmful effects of this abuse continue to be experienced both by victims and dioceses/eparchies.

Thus it is with a vivid sense of the effort which is still needed to confront the effects of this crisis fully and with the wisdom gained by the experience of the last sixteen years that we have reviewed and revised the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*. We now re-affirm that we will assist in the healing of those who have been injured, will do all in our power to protect children and young people, and will work with our clergy, religious, and laity to restore trust and harmony in our faith communities, as we pray for the Kingdom of God to come, here on earth, as it is in heaven.

To make effective our goals of a safe environment within the Church for children and young people and of preventing sexual abuse of minors by clergy in the future, we, the members of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, have outlined in this *Charter* a series of practical and pastoral steps, and we commit ourselves to taking them in our dioceses and eparchies.

TO PROMOTE HEALING AND RECONCILIATION WITH VICTIMS/SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL ABUSE OF MINORS

ARTICLE 1. 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 St. John Paul II, in his Address to the Cardinals of the United States and Conference Officers (April 23, 2002). Pope Benedict XVI, too, in his address to the U.S. bishops in 2008 said of the clergy sexual abuse crisis, “It is your God-given responsibility as pastors to bind up the wounds caused by every breach of trust, to foster healing, to promote reconciliation and to reach out with loving concern to those so seriously wronged.”

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. We especially commit ourselves to work 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.

ARTICLE 2. 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 and other media in the principal 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.

ARTICLE 3. 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.

TO GUARANTEE AN EFFECTIVE RESPONSE TO ALLEGATIONS OF SEXUAL ABUSE OF MINORS

ARTICLE 4. Dioceses/eparchies are to report an allegation of sexual abuse of a person who is a minor to the public authorities with due regard for the seal of the Sacrament of Penance. Diocesan/eparchial personnel 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.

ARTICLE 5. We affirm the words of St. 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.” Pope Francis has consistently reiterated this with victims of clergy sexual abuse.

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—when 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 as described below (see notes) 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 deemed not substantiated, 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.

ARTICLE 6. 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 with regard to their contact with minors.

ARTICLE 7. 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 sexual abuse of a minor.

TO ENSURE THE ACCOUNTABILITY OF OUR PROCEDURES

ARTICLE 8. The Committee on the Protection of Children and Young People is a standing committee of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. Its membership is to include representation from all the episcopal regions of the country, with new appointments staggered to maintain continuity in the effort to protect children and youth.

The Committee is to advise the USCCB on all matters related to child and youth protection and is to oversee the development of the plans, programs, and budget of the Secretariat of Child and Youth Protection. It is to provide the USCCB with comprehensive planning and recommendations concerning child and youth protection by coordinating the efforts of the Secretariat and the National Review Board.

ARTICLE 9. The Secretariat of Child and Youth Protection, established by the Conference of Catholic Bishops, is to staff the Committee on the Protection of Children and Young People and be a resource for dioceses/eparchies for the implementation of “safe environment” programs and for suggested training and development of diocesan personnel responsible for child and youth protection programs, taking into account the financial and other resources, as well as the population, area, and demographics of the diocese/eparchy.

The Secretariat is to produce an annual public report on the progress made in implementing and maintaining the standards in this *Charter*. The report is to be based on an annual audit process whose method, scope, and cost are to be approved by the Administrative Committee on the recommendation of the Committee on the Protection of Children and Young People. This public report is to include the names of those dioceses/eparchies which the audit shows are not in compliance with the provisions and expectations of the *Charter*. The audit method refers to the process and techniques used to determine compliance with the *Charter*. The audit scope relates to the focus, parameters, and time period for the matters to be examined during an individual audit.

As a member of the Conference staff, the Executive Director of the Secretariat is appointed by and reports to the General Secretary. The Executive Director is to provide the Committee on the Protection of Children and Young People and the National Review Board with regular reports of the Secretariat's activities.

ARTICLE 10. The whole Church, at both the diocesan/eparchial and national levels, must be engaged in maintaining safe environments in the Church for children and young people.

The Committee on the Protection of Children and Young People is to be assisted by the National Review Board, a consultative body established in 2002 by the USCCB. The Board will review the annual report of the Secretariat of Child and Youth Protection on the implementation of this *Charter* in each diocese/eparchy and any recommendations that emerge from it, and offer its own assessment regarding its approval and publication to the Conference President.

The Board will also advise the Conference President on future members. The Board members are appointed by the Conference President in consultation with the Administrative Committee and are accountable to him and to the USCCB Executive Committee. Before a candidate is contacted, the Conference President is to seek and obtain, in writing, the endorsement of the candidate's diocesan bishop. The Board is to operate in accord with the statutes and bylaws of the USCCB and within procedural guidelines developed by the Board in consultation with the Committee on the Protection of Children and Young People and approved by the USCCB Administrative Committee. These guidelines set forth such matters as the Board's purpose and responsibility, officers, terms of office, and frequency of reports to the Conference President on its activities.

The Board will offer its advice as it collaborates with the Committee on the Protection of Children and Young People on matters of child and youth protection, specifically on policies and best practices. For example, the Board will continue to monitor the recommendations derived from the *Causes and Context* study. The Board and Committee on the Protection of Children and Young People will meet jointly every year.

The Board will review the work of the Secretariat of Child and Youth Protection and make

recommendations to the Executive Director. It will assist the Executive Director in the development of resources for dioceses.

ARTICLE 11. The President of the Conference is to inform the Holy See of this revised *Charter* to indicate the manner in which we, the Catholic bishops, together with the entire Church in the United States, intend to continue our commitment to the protection of children and young people. The President is also to share with the Holy See the annual reports on the implementation of the *Charter*.

TO PROTECT THE FAITHFUL IN THE FUTURE

ARTICLE 12. 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 minors, parents, ministers, employees, volunteers, and others about ways to sustain and foster a safe environment for minors. Dioceses/eparchies are to make clear to clergy and all members of the community the standards of conduct for clergy and other persons with regard to their contact with minors.

ARTICLE 13. The diocesan/eparchial bishop is to evaluate the background of all incardinated priests and deacons. When a priest or deacon, not incardinated in the diocese/eparchy, is to engage in ministry in the diocese/eparchy, regardless of the length of time, the evaluation of his background may be satisfied through a written attestation of suitability for ministry supplied by his proper ordinary/major superior to the diocese/eparchy. Dioceses/eparchies are to evaluate the background of all their respective diocesan/eparchial and parish/school or other paid personnel and volunteers whose duties include contact with minors. Specifically, they are to utilize the resources of law enforcement and other community agencies. Each diocese/eparchy is to determine the application/renewal of background checks according to local practice. In addition, they are to employ adequate screening and evaluative techniques in

deciding the fitness of candidates for ordination (see USCCB, *Program of Priestly Formation* [Fifth Edition], 2006, no. 39 and the *National Directory for the Formation, Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States*, n.178 j).²

ARTICLE 14. Transfers of all priests and deacons who have committed an act of sexual abuse against a minor for residence, including retirement, shall be in accord with Norm 12 of the Essential Norms (see *Proposed Guidelines on the Transfer or Assignment of Clergy and Religious*, adopted by the USCCB, the Conference of Major Superiors of Men [CMSM], the Leadership Conference of Women Religious [LCWR], and the Council of Major Superiors of Women Religious [CMSWR] in 1993).

ARTICLE 15. 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 on 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.

ARTICLE 16. 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.

ARTICLE 17. 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 and diaconal formation and their ongoing formation. With renewed 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*, no. 50, the *Program of Priestly Formation*, and the *Basic Plan for the Ongoing Formation of Priests*, as well as similar, appropriate programs for deacons based upon the criteria found in the *National Directory for the Formation, Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States*. We will continue to assist priests, deacons, and seminarians in living out their vocation in faithful and integral ways.

CONCLUSION

As we wrote in 2002, “It is within this context of the essential soundness of the priesthood and of the deep faith of our brothers and sisters in the Church that we know that we can meet and resolve this crisis for now and the future.”

We reaffirm that the vast majority of priests and deacons serve their people faithfully and that they have their esteem and affection. They also have our respect and support and our commitment to their good names and well-being.

An essential means of dealing with the crisis is prayer for healing and reconciliation, and acts of reparation for the grave offense to God and the deep wound inflicted upon his holy people. Closely connected to prayer and acts of reparation is the call to holiness of life and the care of the diocesan/eparchial bishop to ensure that he and his priests and deacons avail themselves of the proven ways of avoiding sin and growing in holiness of life.

IT IS WITH RELIANCE ON THE GRACE OF GOD AND IN A SPIRIT OF PRAYER AND PENANCE THAT WE RENEW THE PLEDGES WHICH WE MADE IN THE 2002 CHARTER:

We pledge most solemnly to one another and to you, God's people, that we will work to our utmost for the protection of children and youth.

We pledge that we will devote to this goal the resources and personnel necessary to accomplish it.

We pledge that we will do our best to ordain to the diaconate and priesthood and put into positions of trust only those who share this commitment to protecting children and youth.

We pledge that we will work toward healing and reconciliation for those sexually abused by clerics.



Much has been done to honor these pledges. We devoutly pray that God who has begun this good work in us will bring it to fulfillment.

This *Charter* is published for the dioceses/eparchies of the United States. It is to be reviewed again after seven years by the Committee on the Protection of Children and Young People with the advice of the National Review Board. The results of this review are to be presented to the full Conference of Bishops for confirmation. Authoritative interpretations of its provisions are reserved to the Conference of Bishops.

NOTES

- 1 For purposes of this *Charter*, the offense of sexual abuse of a minor will be understood in accord with the provisions of *Sacramentorum sanctitatis tutela* (SST), article 6, which reads:
 - §1. The more grave delicts against morals which are reserved to the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith are:
 - 1° the delict against the sixth commandment of the Decalogue committed by a cleric with a minor below the age of eighteen years; in this case, a person who habitually lacks the use of reason is to be considered equivalent to a minor.
 - 2° the acquisition, possession, or distribution by a cleric of pornographic images of minors under the age of fourteen, for purposes of sexual gratification, by whatever means or using whatever technology;
 - §2. A cleric who commits the delicts mentioned above in §1 is to be punished according to the gravity of his crime, not excluding dismissal or deposition.

In view of the Circular Letter from the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, dated May 3, 2011, which calls for “mak[ing] allowance for the legislation of the country where the Conference is located,” Section III(g), we will apply the federal legal age for defining child pornography, which includes pornographic images of minors under the age of eighteen, for assessing a cleric’s suitability for ministry and for complying with civil reporting statutes.

If there is any doubt whether a specific act qualifies as an external, objectively grave violation, the writings of recognized moral theologians should be consulted, and the opinions of recognized experts should be appropriately obtained (*Canonical Delicts Involving Sexual Misconduct and Dismissal from the Clerical State*, 1995, p. 6). Ultimately, it is the responsibility of the diocesan bishop/eparch, with the advice of a qualified review board, to determine the gravity of the alleged act.
- 2 In 2009, after consultation with members of the USCCB Committee on the Protection of Children and Young People and the Conference of Major Superiors of Men and approval from the USCCB Committee on Canonical Affairs and Church Governance, additional Model Letters of Suitability, now available on the USCCB website, were agreed upon and published for use by bishops and major superiors in situations which involve both temporary and extended ministry for clerics.

ESSENTIAL NORMS FOR DIOCESAN/ EPARCHIAL POLICIES DEALING WITH ALLEGATIONS OF SEXUAL ABUSE OF MINORS BY PRIESTS OR DEACONS

Most Reverend William S. Skylstad, D.D.,
Bishop of Spokane

May 5, 2006

DECREE OF PROMULGATION

On November 13, 2002, the members of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops approved as particular law the *Essential Norms for Diocesan/Eparchial Policies Dealing with Allegations of Sexual Abuse of Minors by Priests or Deacons*. Following the grant of the required *recognitio* by the Congregation for Bishops on December 8, 2002, the *Essential Norms* were promulgated by the President of the same Conference on December 12, 2002.

Thereafter, on June 17, 2005, the members of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops approved a revised text of the *Essential Norms*. By a decree dated January 1, 2006, and signed by His Eminence, Giovanni Battista Cardinal Re, Prefect of the Congregation for Bishops, and His Excellency, the Most Reverend Francesco Monterisi, Secretary of the same Congregation, the *recognitio* originally granted to the *Essential Norms* of 2002 was extended to the revised version *donec aliter provideatur*.

As President of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, I therefore decree the promulgation of the *Essential Norms* of June 17, 2005. These *Norms* shall obtain force on May 15, 2006, and so shall from that day bind as particular law all Dioceses and Eparchies of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.

Most Reverend William S. Skylstad
Bishop of Spokane
President, USCCB
Reverend Monsignor David J. Malloy
General Secretary

PREAMBLE

On June 14, 2002, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops approved a Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People. The charter addresses the Church's commitment to deal appropriately and effectively with cases of sexual abuse of minors by priests, deacons, and other church personnel (i.e., employees and volunteers). The bishops of the United States have promised to reach out to those who have been sexually abused as minors by anyone serving the Church in ministry, employment, or a volunteer position, whether the sexual abuse was recent or occurred many years ago. They stated that they would be as open as possible with the people in parishes and communities about instances of sexual abuse of minors, with respect always for the privacy and the reputation of the individuals involved. They have committed themselves to the pastoral and spiritual care and emotional well-being of those who have been sexually abused and of their families.

In addition, the bishops will work with parents, civil authorities, educators, and various organizations in the community to make and maintain the safest environment for minors. In the same way, the bishops have pledged to evaluate the background of seminary applicants as well as all church personnel who have responsibility for the care and supervision of children and young people.

Therefore, to ensure that each diocese/eparchy in the United States of America will have procedures in place to respond promptly to all allegations of sexual abuse of minors, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops decrees these norms for diocesan/eparchial policies dealing with allegations of sexual abuse of minors by diocesan and religious priests or deacons.¹ These norms are complementary to the universal law of the Church and are to be interpreted in accordance with that law. The Church has traditionally considered the sexual abuse of minors a grave delict and punishes the offender with penalties,

not excluding dismissal from the clerical state if the case so warrants.

For purposes of these Norms, sexual abuse shall include any offense by a cleric against the Sixth Commandment of the Decalogue with a minor as understood in CIC, canon 1395 §2, and CCEO, canon 1453 §1 (*Sacramentorum sanctitatis tutela*, article 6 §1).²

NORMS

1. These Essential Norms have been granted *recognitio* by the Holy See. Having been legitimately promulgated in accordance with the practice of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops on May 5, 2006, they constitute particular law for all the dioceses/eparchies of the United States of America.³

2. Each diocese/eparchy will have a written policy on the sexual abuse of minors by priests and deacons, as well as by other church personnel. This policy is to comply fully with, and is to specify in more detail, the steps to be taken in implementing the requirements of canon law, particularly CIC, canons 1717-1719, and CCEO, canons 1468-1470. A copy of this policy will be filed with the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops within three months of the effective date of these norms. Copies of any eventual revisions of the written diocesan/eparchial policy are also to be filed with the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops within three months of such modifications.

3. Each diocese/eparchy will designate a competent person to coordinate assistance for the immediate pastoral care of persons who claim to have been sexually abused when they were minors by priests or deacons.

4. To assist diocesan/eparchial bishops, each diocese/eparchy will also have a review board which will function as a confidential consultative body to the bishop/eparch in discharging his responsibilities. The functions of this board may include

- a advising the diocesan bishop/eparch in his assessment of allegations of sexual abuse of minors and in his determination of suitability for ministry;
- b reviewing diocesan/eparchial policies for dealing with sexual abuse of minors; and

- c offering advice on all aspects of these cases, whether retrospectively or prospectively.

5. The review board, established by the diocesan/eparchial bishop, will be composed of at least five persons of outstanding integrity and good judgment in full communion with the Church. The majority of the review board members will be lay persons who are not in the employ of the diocese/eparchy; but at least one member should be a priest who is an experienced and respected pastor of the diocese/eparchy in question, and at least one member should have particular expertise in the treatment of the sexual abuse of minors. The members will be appointed for a term of five years, which can be renewed. It is desirable that the Promoter of Justice participate in the meetings of the review board.

6. When an allegation of sexual abuse of a minor by a priest or deacon is received, a preliminary investigation in accordance with canon law will be initiated and conducted promptly and objectively (CIC, c. 1717; CCEO, c. 1468). During the investigation the accused enjoys the presumption of innocence, and all appropriate steps shall be taken to protect his reputation. The accused will be encouraged to retain the assistance of civil and canonical counsel and will be promptly notified of the results of the investigation. When there is sufficient evidence that sexual abuse of a minor has occurred, the Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith shall be notified. The bishop/eparch shall then apply the precautionary measures mentioned in CIC, canon 1722, or CCEO, canon 1473—i.e., withdraw the accused from exercising the sacred ministry or any ecclesiastical office or function, impose or prohibit residence in a given place or territory, and prohibit public participation in the Most Holy Eucharist pending the outcome of the process.⁴

7. The alleged offender may be requested to seek, and may be urged voluntarily to comply with, an appropriate medical and psychological evaluation at a facility mutually acceptable to the diocese/eparchy and to the accused.

8. 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 (SST, Art. 6; CIC, c. 1395 §2; CCEO, c. 1453 §1).⁵

a. In every case involving canonical penalties, the processes provided for in canon law must be observed, and the various provisions of canon law must be considered (cf. *Canonical Delicts Involving Sexual Misconduct and Dismissal from the Clerical State*, 1995; Letter from the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, May 18, 2001). Unless the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, having been notified, calls the case to itself because of special circumstances, it will direct the diocesan bishop/eparch to proceed (Article 13, “Procedural Norms” for *Motu proprio Sacramentorum sanctitatis tutela*, AAS, 93, 2001, p. 787). If the case would otherwise be barred by prescription, because sexual abuse of a minor is a grave offense, the bishop/eparch may apply to the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith for a derogation from the prescription, while indicating relevant grave reasons. For the sake of canonical due process, the accused is to be encouraged to retain the assistance of civil and canonical counsel. When necessary, the diocese/eparchy will supply canonical counsel to a priest. The provisions of CIC, canon 1722, or CCEO, canon 1473, shall be implemented during the pendency of the penal process.

b. If the penalty of dismissal from the clerical state has not been applied (e.g., for reasons of advanced age or infirmity), the offender ought to lead a life of prayer and penance. He will not be permitted to celebrate Mass publicly or to administer the sacraments. He is to be instructed not to wear clerical garb, or to present himself publicly as a priest.

9. At all times, the diocesan bishop/eparch has the executive power of governance, within the parameters of the universal law of the Church, through an administrative act, to remove an offending cleric from office, to remove or restrict his faculties, and to limit his exercise of priestly ministry.⁶ Because 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) and is a crime in all civil jurisdictions in the United States, for the sake of the common good and observing the provisions of canon law, the diocesan bishop/eparch shall exercise this power of governance to ensure that any priest or deacon who has committed even one act of sexual abuse of a minor as described above shall not continue in active ministry.⁷

10. The priest or deacon may at any time request a dispensation from the obligations of the clerical state. In exceptional cases, the bishop/eparch may request of the Holy Father the dismissal of the priest or deacon from the clerical state *ex officio*, even without the consent of the priest or deacon.

11. The diocese/eparchy will comply with all applicable civil laws with respect to the reporting of allegations of sexual abuse of minors to civil authorities and will cooperate in their investigation. In every instance, the diocese/eparchy will advise and support a person’s right to make a report to public authorities.⁸

12. No priest or deacon who has committed an act of sexual abuse of a minor may be transferred for a ministerial assignment in another diocese/eparchy. Every bishop/eparch who receives a priest or deacon from outside his jurisdiction will obtain the necessary information regarding any past act of sexual abuse of a minor by the priest or deacon in question.

Before such a diocesan/eparchial priest or deacon can be transferred for residence to another diocese/eparchy, his diocesan/eparchial bishop shall forward, in a confidential manner, to the bishop of the proposed place of residence any and all information concerning any act of sexual abuse of a minor and any other information indicating that he has been or may be a danger to children or young people.

In the case of the assignment for residence of such a clerical member of an institute or a society into a local community within a diocese/eparchy, the major superior shall inform the diocesan/eparchial bishop and share with him in a manner respecting the limitations of confidentiality found in canon and civil law all information concerning any act of sexual abuse of a minor and any other information indicating that he has been or may be a danger to children or young people so that the bishop/eparch can make an informed judgment that suitable safeguards are in place for the protection of children and young people. This will be done with due recognition of the legitimate authority of the bishop/eparch; of the provisions of CIC, canon 678 (CCEO, canons 415 §1 and 554 §2), and of CIC, canon 679; and of the autonomy of the religious life (CIC, c. 586).

13. Care will always be taken to protect the rights of all parties involved, particularly those of the person claiming to have been sexually abused and of the person against whom the charge has been made. When

an accusation has been shown to be unfounded, every step possible will be taken to restore the good name of the person falsely accused.

NOTES

- 1 These Norms constitute particular law for the dioceses, eparchies, clerical religious institutes, and societies of apostolic life of the United States with respect to all priests and deacons in the ecclesiastical ministry of the Church in the United States. When a major superior of a clerical religious institute or society of apostolic life applies and interprets them for the internal life and governance of the institute or society, he has the obligation to do so according to the universal law of the Church and the proper law of the institute or society.
 - 2 If there is any doubt whether a specific act qualifies as an external, objectively grave violation, the writings of recognized moral theologians should be consulted, and the opinions of recognized experts should be appropriately obtained (*Canonical Delicts*, p. 6). Ultimately, it is the responsibility of the diocesan bishop/eparch, with the advice of a qualified review board, to determine the gravity of the alleged act.
 - 3 Due regard must be given to the proper legislative authority of each Eastern Catholic Church.
 - 4 Article 19 *Sacramentorum sanctitatis tutela states*, “With due regard for the right of the Ordinary to impose from the outset of the preliminary investigation those measures which are established in can. 1722 of the Code of Canon Law, or in can. 1473 of the Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches, the respective presiding judge may, at the request of the Promoter of Justice, exercise the same power under the same conditions determined in the canons themselves.”
 - 5 Removal from ministry is required whether or not the cleric is diagnosed by qualified experts as a pedophile or as suffering from a related sexual disorder that requires professional treatment. With regard to the use of the phrase “ecclesiastical ministry,” by clerical members of institutes of consecrated life and societies of apostolic life, the provisions of canons 678 and 738 also apply, with due regard for canons 586 and 732.
 - 6 Cf. CIC, cc. 35-58, 149, 157, 187-189, 192-195, 277 §3, 381 §1, 383, 391, 1348, and 1740-1747. Cf. also CCEO, cc. 1510 §1 and 2, 1°-2°, 1511, 1512 §§1-2, 1513 §§2-3 and 5, 1514-1516, 1517 §1, 1518, 1519 §2, 1520 §§1-3, 1521, 1522 §1, 1523-1526, 940, 946, 967-971, 974-977, 374, 178, 192 §§1-3, 193 §2, 191, and 1389-1396.
 - 7 The diocesan bishop/eparch may exercise his executive power of governance to take one or more of the following administrative actions (CIC, cc. 381, 129ff.; CCEO, cc. 178, 979ff.):
 - a. He may request that the accused freely resign from any currently held ecclesiastical office (CIC, cc. 187-189; CCEO, cc. 967-971).
 - b. Should the accused decline to resign and should the diocesan bishop/eparch judge the accused to be truly not suitable (CIC, c. 149 §1; CCEO, c. 940) at this time for holding an office previously freely conferred (CIC, c. 157), then he may remove that person from office observing the required canonical procedures (CIC, cc. 192-195, 1740-1747; CCEO, cc. 974-977, 1389-1396).
 - c. For a cleric who holds no office in the diocese/eparchy, any previously delegated faculties may be administratively removed (CIC, cc. 391 §1 and 142 §1; CCEO, cc. 191 §1 and 992 §1), while any *de iure* faculties may be removed or restricted by the competent authority as provided in law (e.g., CIC, c. 764; CCEO, c. 610 §§2-3).
 - d. The diocesan bishop/eparch may also determine that circumstances surrounding a particular case constitute the just and reasonable cause for a priest to celebrate the Eucharist with no member of the faithful present (CIC, c. 906). The bishop may forbid the priest to celebrate the Eucharist publicly and to administer the sacraments, for the good of the Church and for his own good.
 - e. Depending on the gravity of the case, the diocesan bishop/eparch may also dispense (CIC, cc. 85-88; CCEO, cc. 1536 §1-1538) the cleric from the obligation of wearing clerical attire (CIC, c. 284; CCEO, c. 387) and may urge that he not do so, for the good of the Church and for his own good.
- These administrative actions shall be taken in writing and by means of decrees (CIC, cc. 47-58; CCEO, cc. 1510 §2, 1°-2°, 1511, 1513 §§2-3 and 5, 1514, 1517 §1, 1518, 1519 §2, 1520) so that the cleric affected is afforded the opportunity of recourse against them in accord with canon law (CIC, cc. 1734ff.; CCEO, cc. 999ff.).
- 8 The necessary observance of the canonical norms internal to the Church is not intended in any way to hinder the course of any civil action that may be operative. At the same time, the Church reaffirms her right to enact legislation binding on all her members concerning the ecclesiastical dimensions of the delict of sexual abuse of minors.

A STATEMENT OF EPISCOPAL COMMITMENT

We bishops pledge again to respond to the demands of the *Charter* in a way that manifests our accountability to God, to God's people, and to one another. Individually and together, we acknowledge mistakes in the past when some bishops transferred, from one assignment to another, priests who abused minors. We recognize our roles in the suffering this has caused, and we continue to ask forgiveness for it.

Without at all diminishing the importance of broader accountability, this statement focuses on the accountability which flows from our episcopal communion and fraternal solidarity, a moral responsibility we have with and for each other.

While bishops are ordained primarily for their diocese or eparchy, we are called as well to protect the unity and to promote the common discipline of the whole Church (CIC, c. 392; CCEO, c. 201). Participating in the college of bishops, each bishop is responsible to act in a manner that reflects both effective and affective collegiality.

Respecting the legitimate rights of bishops who are directly accountable to the Holy See, in a spirit of collegiality and fraternity we renew our commitment to the following:

1. Within each of our provinces, we will assist each other to interpret correctly and implement the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*, always respecting Church law and striving to reflect the Gospel.

2. We will apply the requirements of the *Charter* also to ourselves, respecting always Church law as it applies to bishops. Therefore, if a bishop is accused of the sexual abuse of a minor, the accused bishop is obliged to inform the Apostolic Nuncio. If another bishop becomes aware of the sexual abuse of a minor by another bishop or of an allegation of the sexual abuse of a minor by a bishop, he too is obliged to inform the Apostolic Nuncio and comply with applicable civil laws.

3. In cases of financial demands for settlements involving allegations of any sexual misconduct by a bishop, he, or any of us who become aware of it, is obliged to inform the Apostolic Nuncio.

4. Within each of our provinces, as an expression of collegiality, including fraternal support, fraternal challenge and fraternal correction, we will engage in ongoing mutual reflection upon our commitment to holiness of life and upon the exercise of our episcopal ministry.

In making this statement, we firmly uphold the dignity of every human being and renew our commitment to live and promote the chastity required of all followers of Christ and especially of deacons, priests and bishops.

This Statement of Episcopal Commitment will be reviewed by the Committee on Clergy, Consecrated Life and Vocations upon the next review of the *Charter*.

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 his Blood on the 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 the cries of our brothers and sisters
who have been gravely harmed,
and the cries of those who love them.
Soothe their restless hearts with hope,
steady their shaken spirits with faith.
Grant them justice for their cause,
enlightened by your truth.

Holy Spirit, comforter of hearts,
heal your people's wounds
and transform brokenness into wholeness.
Grant us the courage and wisdom,
humility and grace, to act with justice.
Breathe wisdom into our prayers and labors.
Grant that all harmed by abuse may find peace in justice.
We ask this through Christ, our Lord. Amen.