



ARCHBISHOP'S REPORT

Archbishop's Report

CLERGY SEX ABUSE CRISIS

I have communicated with you about this crisis through columns in *The Record*, through letters sent directly to your homes, through our Web page, and through the media. Somehow it never seems enough when we are competing with daily front-page headlines, but we are trying to keep you informed as effectively and honestly as possible.

Our priority is fidelity to the Gospel as we deal with this crisis. This means that those who have been hurt are our first concern. We have consistently called for victims to come forward. I am willing to meet with all victims, and we consistently reach out to them with compassion and care.

Unfortunately, we cannot meet with those who have lodged lawsuits, and others may be uncomfortable coming directly to us. Therefore we have partnered with the University of Louisville's Kent School of Social Work to offer victims of clergy sexual abuse a resource and referral service for counseling assistance. I am pleased to report that about a dozen people are in counseling as a result of the Kent School's work. Victims receive six months of counseling assistance and more if needed. The Archdiocese pays for the counseling through a voucher system; victims' names are not released to the Archdiocese.

Since the Bishops' meeting in June, we have implemented most of the provisions of the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People in our diocese. This implementation includes:

- **Sexual Abuse Policies** – We will revise our policies, which were first drafted in 1993.
- **Archdiocesan Sexual Abuse Review Board** – We have appointed a wonderful group of professionals who will assist me in reviewing cases and in monitoring the implementation of our sex abuse policies.
- **Victim Assistance** – We have established formal procedures for victim assistance. Our Chancellor and Clergy Personnel Director are the contacts for victims and assist all those who choose to come directly to us.
- **Priest Assignments** – As stated in the Charter, all priests who have a substantiated accusation of abuse – past, present, or future – will be permanently removed from public ministry. We have had to take this action in several cases.
- **Reporting and Criminal Investigations** – We fully cooperate with the civil authorities on investigations and on the reporting of child abuse.

- **Safe Environment Programs** – We already have criminal background checks and screening procedures in place, but we will review all of these as part of the revision of sex abuse policies. We will improve training and resources for Church employees and volunteers.

Responding to the lawsuits has been a particular challenge. We are striving to be true to our desire to reach just resolution for victims, while being mindful of our responsibility to be good stewards of the resources of our Church – resources that are used to provide ministries and services to thousands of people.

We have pledged to be accountable about how funds have been used to address the problem of clergy sex abuse. The expenditures listed below reflect funds spent in the fiscal year ended June 30, 2002. Many of these expenditures took place in the last quarter of this past fiscal year. Next year's totals will be considerably higher, since they will reflect activity over the full fiscal year. This section will become a regular part of the annual Accountability Report.

CLERGY SEXUAL ABUSE EXPENDITURES

Counseling for Victims	\$ 9,380
Settlements for Victims/Legal Fees	154,913
Communications/Public Relations	86,202
	\$250,495

The communications/public relations expense includes the postage, printing, and handling costs for sending a June letter and report to every Catholic household (approximately 70,000 people), media monitoring and transcription services, and public relations counsel. Legal costs are primarily attorneys' fees.

Your gifts to the 2002 Catholic Services Appeal are used to fund ministries and services that address religious, educational, and social service needs in our Church and community. Gifts will not be used for expenses related to this crisis. These expenses will be handled through investments and possibly insurance.

As I have said many times, I look forward to the opportunity to sit down with every person who has been hurt and ask for forgiveness. Please continue to pray for victims of sexual abuse and for our priests who serve this Archdiocese so faithfully.