



Response to Clerical Sexual Abuse

The Archdiocese of Detroit was among the very first when it implemented its Policy on the Sexual Abuse of Minors by Clergy in 1988. The current revised policy takes into consideration the events and experiences of the past 27 years and [The Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People](#) (The Dallas Charter), enacted in 2002 by the Catholic bishops of the United States.

The Detroit archdiocese fully complies with the provisions of The Dallas Charter, including the permanent removal of a priest from ministry when the sexual abuse of a minor has occurred. Another key provision of the Charter involves safe-environment training for: all clerics serving in the Detroit archdiocese (including those who incardinate/transfer here and/or are in the area under different circumstances, e.g., as a student, and want to serve publicly in priestly ministry); priest candidates at Sacred Heart Major Seminaryⁱ; lay personnel, volunteers and students. Tens of thousands of individuals have been trained in the Detroit archdiocese over the past 12 years.ⁱⁱ

In 2002, a newly constituted [Board of Review](#) was established to consider all complaints and to advise the archbishop. The Board is led by a Michigan Appeals Court Judge (key in the drafting and adoption of the state's first Victim's Rights Act) and includes a retired prosecutor who established and led Wayne County's first dedicated child abuse unit; two psychologists; a health care executive; a former superintendent of Catholic schools; and an archdiocesan pastor.

Complaints come to the Detroit archdiocese in writing, by verbal report, or via the 24x7 toll-free victim assistance line (866.343.8055). There are no time limits or restrictions on making a complaint. Pursuant to a [2002 agreement](#) with the six Michigan county prosecutors within the Archdiocese of Detroit, every complaint is immediately turned over to civil authorities. Similarly, every complaint is considered by the Board. Regardless of what finding or course of action the civil authorities pursue, if a complaint is found by the Review Board to be "credible... containing a semblance of truth," the priest or deacon is removed from ministry pending further investigation and resolution of the matter. No priest or deacon with a credible complaint against him is allowed to continue in active ministry during the time his case is under review. The Detroit archdiocese was among the very first when it hired a retired parole officer to monitor its removed priestsⁱⁱⁱ, ensuring compliance with the restrictions placed on their ministry.

Intake/complaint calls are initially handled by a professional, degreed social worker. Victims are offered additional support to assist in their psychological and spiritual healing. This can take the form of professional counseling and/or spiritual direction. The archbishop's priest-delegate will meet with the victim, and, if requested and deemed helpful in the healing process, the archbishop himself will also offer to meet with the victim.

In 2004, aggregate statistics for all U.S. dioceses were released in a study done by the John Jay College of Criminal Justice^{iv}. (A subsequent study considered causes and context.)

UNLEASH THE GOSPEL

Extrapolating for the Detroit archdiocese, over the past 65 years, there have been 72 clerics credibly accused of the sexual abuse of minors. That number represents less than 2% of the total number of priests who served in the Archdiocese of Detroit between 1950 – 2015. During those years, there have been approximately 145 victims known to the Detroit archdiocese. The majority of complaints investigated in recent times go back decades. The names of priests and deacons removed subsequent to adoption of the 1988 policy, along with earlier cases that received public notoriety, are posted on the archdiocesan website at [Investigations](#). Those religious order clerics who have served in southeast Michigan, and of whom the Detroit archdiocese has learned of their restricted and/or removed status, are also listed.

Prior to 2004, the Detroit archdiocese paid out \$1,377,000 in settlements and counseling for cases involving clerics. Since 2005, an additional \$3,060,065 has been paid out, for clerics and lay employees, as follows:

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Settlement (cases)</u>	<u>Counseling (receiving treatment)</u>
2005-06		\$39,000 (11)
2006-07	\$30,000 (1)	\$36,000 (10)
2007-08		\$29,000 (8)
2008-09	\$725,000 (1)	\$26,000 (7)
2009-10		\$34,000 (12)
2010-11	\$900,000 (2) (\$250k + \$650k)	\$36,000 (17)
2001-12		\$28,500 (16)
2012-13		\$42,072 (22)
2013-14	\$310,000 (1)	\$30,275 (17)
2014-15		\$25,863 (14)
2015-16		\$28,504 (15)
2016-17	\$700,000 (1)	\$39,851 (17)

The Detroit archdiocese does not require a confidentiality agreement, but will respect one if requested by the victim. To date, all settlements have involved individual claims filed in civil court. There have been no class action lawsuits or Federal Grand Jury investigations involving the Detroit archdiocese.

The Archdiocese of Detroit has utilized two funding sources for settlement and counseling costs. Secondary would be insurance carriers that covered a portion of the costs (\$301,500) between

1987 and 2002. When such insurance became unattainable, the Detroit archdiocese and the other dioceses of Michigan set up a special fund similar to "self insurance" from investment income to replace the insurance coverage previously purchased. These funds grew to the point where the original deposit was then returned to the respective dioceses. The interest was left to provide the coverage that might be needed. This would be the primary funding source for the remainder of the settlement costs covered by the Archdiocese of Detroit.

Additional information and updates regarding the national scope and response to the clerical sexual abuse issue are available from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB)^v.

Respectfully submitted,

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ⁱ Beyond mandatory safe environment training and on-going updates, the matriculation process for seminarians includes, but is not limited to, background screening with law enforcement, spiritual and psychological evaluations/counseling, and formation in human/psychosexual development and celibate chastity.

ⁱⁱ The [VIRTUS Protecting God's Children](#)® was implemented in May 2003. Since that time, 88,790 adults have completed the training. Of the 70,180 students enrolled in Catholic schools in the Detroit archdiocese, 95% have completed safe environment training. In the last fiscal year, 104 Protecting God's Children workshops were held, training 5,710 participants. An additional 1,225 teens attended [Called to Serve](#) training at one of the 51 workshops hosted by parishes.

ⁱⁱⁱ Currently, the Promoter of Ministerial Standards monitors ten priests, one of whom is serving a sentence in federal prison.

^{iv} [The Nature and Scope of Sexual Abuse of Minors by Catholic Priests and Deacons](#) (2004)

[The Causes and Context of Sexual Abuse of Minors by Catholic Priests in the United States](#) (2011)

^v <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b6cW4YUsTIA>

Protecting Children: [From the USCCB](#)