



Committee on the Protection of Children and Young People

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MEMORANDUM

To: All Bishops and Eparchs

From: Most Reverend Edward J. Burns *+ EJB*
Bishop of Dallas
Chairman

Date: June 2, 2017

RE: Child Protection Resources for “Day of Prayer and Penance” and Fifteen Years Since the *Charter*

Since 2002, dioceses and eparchies across the United States have worked to fulfill the Charter’s “Promise to Protect, Pledge to Heal.” Mindful that our work continues and that we are to remain vigilant, we have focused on efforts to effectively prevent abuse, respond to allegations, and bring healing to victims/survivors. Since this June will be the fifteenth anniversary of the implementation of the Charter, this provides a great opportunity to once again dedicate ourselves to and remind our faithful of the work of child and youth protection within the Church.

At the same time, our Holy Father Pope Francis has called upon all episcopal conferences to commemorate a “Day of Prayer and Penance” for survivors of sexual abuse within the Church. In the U.S., the Administrative Committee has chosen to have a “Day of Prayer and Penance” Mass as part of our June Plenary Assembly in Indianapolis. This Mass will occur on Wednesday, June 14, 2017 at Ss. Peter and Paul Cathedral at 5:00 pm. Transportation to and from the Mass will be provided.

To assist in preparation for this Mass and for the fifteenth anniversary of the Charter, the Secretariat of Child and Youth Protection has prepared a resource document. The resource contains general information that can be shared regarding what the Church has done for child and youth protection over the past fifteen years, as well as specific resources for the “Day of Prayer and Penance.”

Regarding the “Day of Prayer and Penance,” prayers of the faithful are included that will be used during the Mass on June 14th. I encourage you to use these intercessory prayers at a Sunday of your choosing any time after June 14. This will create unity among all dioceses and eparchies in

praying for victims/survivors of abuse within the Church to further commemorate the “Day of Prayer and Penance” within the U.S.

Also included is the commemorative Prayer for Healing and Reconciliation. The bishops will be asked to kneel and recite this prayer together during the Mass on Wednesday, June 14. This prayer affords you the opportunity to distribute it throughout your diocese/eparchy to continue to pray for victims/survivors.

Thank you for your commitment to ensuring we have a culture of protection and healing within the Church: where all victims/survivors are cared for and all the vulnerable are protected.

I encourage you to provide these resources to your staff. For more information please contact Deacon Bernie Nojadera, Executive Director of the Secretariat at 202-541-5413 or bnojadera@usccb.org

PROMISE TO
PROTECT



PLEDGE TO
HEAL

**15 Years Since the *Charter*
Day of Prayer and Penance**

RESOURCE GUIDE

Secretariat of Child and Youth Protection
United States Conference of Catholic Bishops



Secretariat of Child and Youth Protection

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FIFTEEN YEARS SINCE THE *CHARTER*

Within the Catholic Church 2002 was a milestone year for child and youth protection. With the promulgation of the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*, or more commonly known as the *Dallas Charter*, national standards were set in place to bring healing to those who have been abused, as well as outline the prevention of future abuse. 2017 marks the fifteenth anniversary of the Charter, and provides the opportunity to reflect on the progress that has been made within the Church, as well as the areas where continued growth is needed.

Throughout these past fifteen years we have continued to establish cultures of protection and healing where all within the Church are treated with the respect they deserve as being made in God's image. As the fifteenth anniversary of the *Charter* approaches in June, now is a good time to remind the Faithful, and the public in general, about the progress that has been made regarding child and youth protection in the Church.

What You Can Do:

1. Acknowledge the reality of the sexual abuse scandal and the changes the Church has made in response.
2. Acknowledge the role victims/survivors played in bringing this issue forward for action.
3. Be open and transparent about any abuse in the diocese.
4. Make sincere apologies to victims/survivors and families.
5. Demonstrate the lessons learned; refer to *Annual Reports, Nature and Scope and Causes and Context* studies.
6. Remain vigilant; this is a reminder we cannot afford to become complacent.
7. Reiterate that child and youth protection (both healing and prevention) is a permanent ministry within the Church where the ultimate goal is a change in culture.
8. Use this as a reminder that the Church teaches that all human life is precious and is to be protected at all levels.

Specifically:

The Church has provided outreach to victims/survivors over the past fifteen years since 2002, as well as taken steps to prevent such harm from happening again.

1. Approved *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People* which includes:
 - Pastoral Care and outreach for victims (Article 1)
 - Policies and procedures, review boards (Article 2)
 - Prohibition of confidentiality agreements (Article 3)
 - Require to report allegations to public authorities (Article 4)
 - Zero tolerance of sexual abuse (Article 5)
 - Codes of Conduct (Article 6)

- Open and Transparent Communications about abuse allegations (Article 7)
- Training adults to create safe environments (Article 12)
- Training children how to keep themselves safe from abuse (Article 12)
- Background evaluations on clergy and adults working with children (Article 13)
- Prohibition of transfers of clergy who have committed an act of sexual abuse against a minor (Article 14)
- Ongoing formation of clergy (Article 17)

Words Reaffirming our Commitment to the *Charter*

In 2002, the crime and sin of child sexual abuse was brought out in the open for all to see. In bringing light to this crisis, the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People* was approved. A nationwide network of victim assistance and safe environment training was created to implement the requirements of the *Charter*. Individually and together we acknowledge mistakes of the past. We acknowledge our responsibility and role in the suffering this has caused and we continue to ask forgiveness.

Fifteen years later we remain committed to the principles of that *Charter* and we ask for your continued help, support and prayers as we: promote healing and reconciliation with victims/survivors of sexual abuse, respond effectively to allegations of sexual abuse, become accountable for our procedures, and protect the faithful in the future.

We humbly invite anyone who may have experienced abuse to please come forward. And if anyone is currently being abused, please contact the police.

What the Church is Doing Now

It has been fifteen years since the *Charter for the Protection of Children* was approved in Dallas. The *Charter* is a comprehensive set of procedures established by the USCCB in June 2002 for addressing allegations of sexual abuse of minors by Catholic clergy. It also includes guidelines for reconciliation, healing, accountability, and prevention of future acts of abuse. The *Charter* directs action in all the following matters:

- Creating a safe environment for children and young people
- Healing and reconciliation of victims and survivors
- Making prompt and effective response to allegations
- Cooperating with civil authorities
- Disciplining offenders

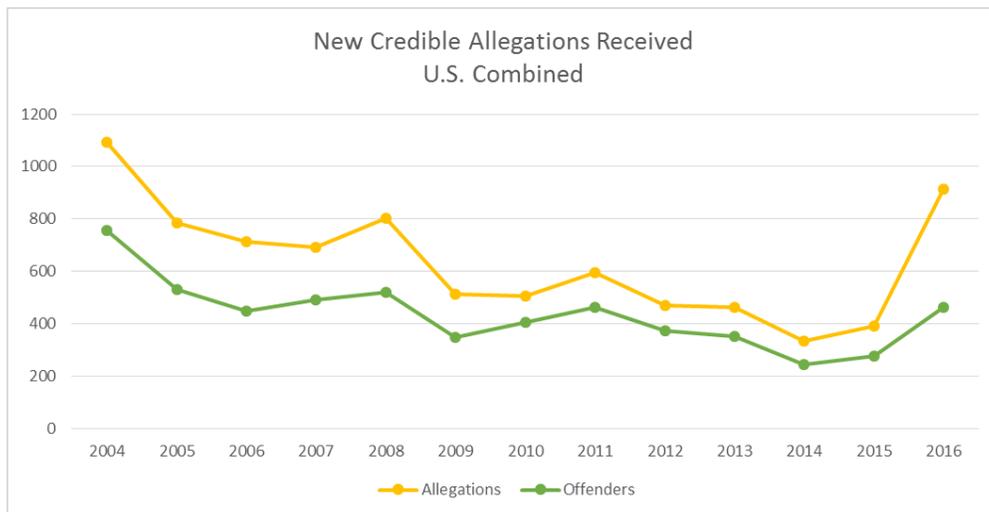
Since 2003 an *Annual Report* has been published on the progress made in implementing the procedures of the *Charter*. Those reports, based on annual independent audits, tell us progress has been made. Thousands of people have come forward to report past abuse and have received pastoral care in hopes they can find healing. In one audit year alone (from July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2016), over 4.5 million children in Catholic Schools and religious education programs were trained to recognize abuse and how to tell someone. Over 2.3 million adults working or volunteering in parishes and schools have been trained to recognize warning signs of abuse, grooming, healthy boundaries and how to report. Over 97% of these adults have also had a background check.

Refer to the following information gathered from CARA, the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate, regarding trends in allegations from 2004-2016.

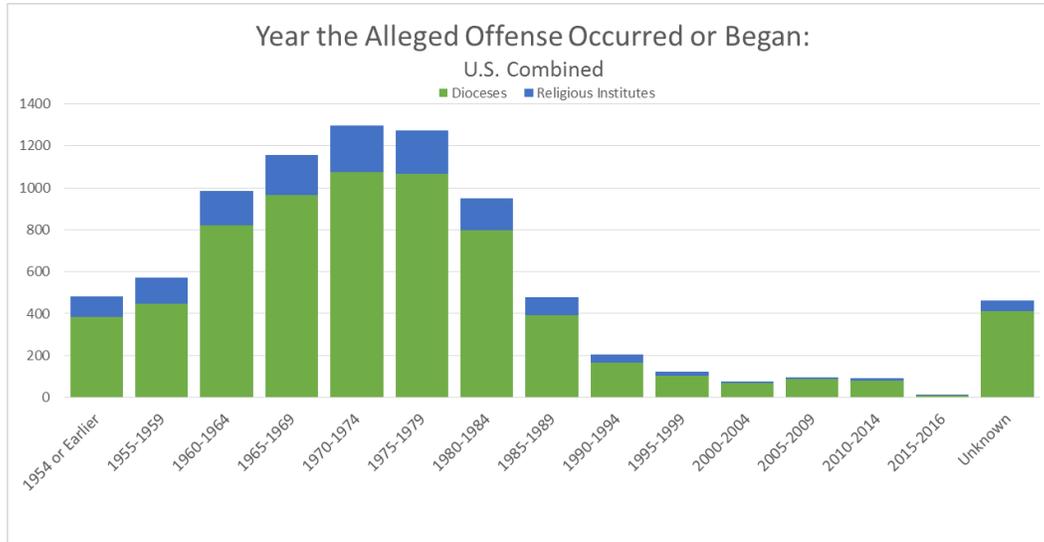
Trends in the Annual Survey: What do the Numbers Tell Us?

An Examination of CARA Reports since 2004

Dioceses and Institutes of Men Religious report annually the number of new credible allegations of clergy sexual abuse against a minor as well as the characteristics of the victims, perpetrators, and expenditures involved in implementing the Charter. Here are the key trends that are emerging from the data.



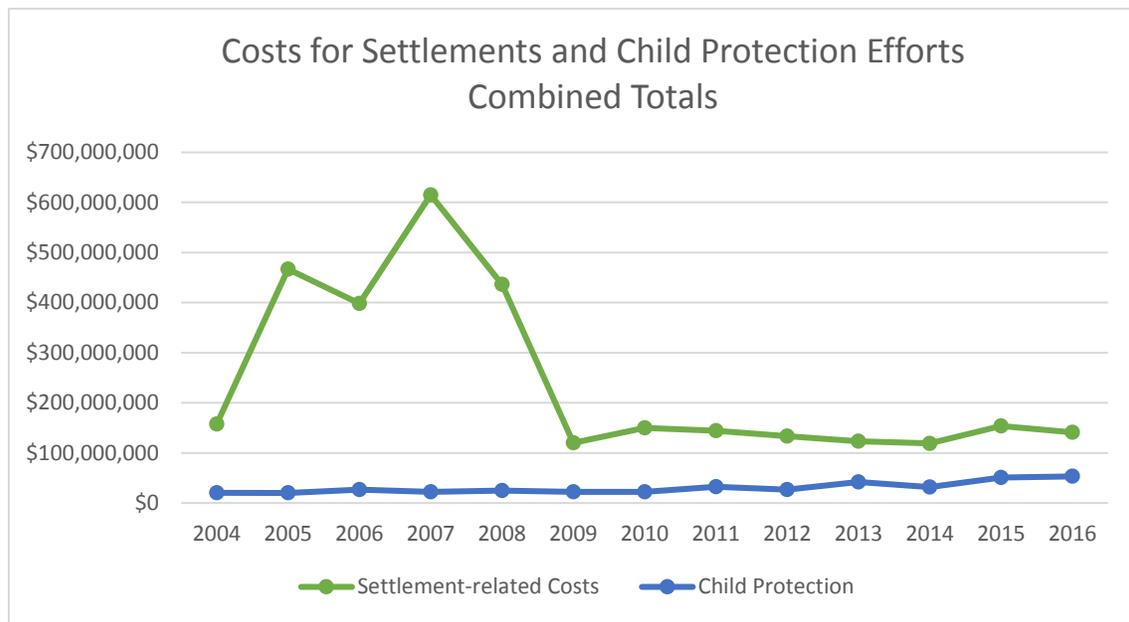
Since 2004, more than 8,200 new credible allegations of abuse against a minor have been reported by dioceses and religious institutes. The overall trend is a gradually decreasing number of new credible allegations, punctuated by reporting spikes attributed to class action lawsuits and states that have opened the statute of limitations for such claims.



Seven in ten of the allegations reported since 2004 occurred or began between 1960 and 1984. About one in ten allegations occurred or began in 1985 or later. Some other facts from the trends:

- About half of victims were between 10 and 14 when the abuse began, with about a fifth older and a fifth younger. About 80 percent of victims are males and 20 percent are females.
- About eight in ten allegations reported by dioceses involve a priest of the diocese. Less than 5 percent involve an international priest serving in the diocese. This is likewise true for religious institutes: very few allegations are against priests from another province outside the United States.
- About two in three priests in new allegations already have prior allegations against them. Eight in ten priests in new allegations are deceased, already removed from ministry, already laicized, or missing. The other two in ten are removed from ministry, either temporarily or permanently. Very few are ever returned to ministry.

Since 2004, more than \$3 billion has been expended by dioceses and religious institutes for settlement-related costs and almost \$400 million in child protection efforts. In recent years, approximately one dollar is invested in child protection efforts for every three dollars expended in settlement-related costs.



Take-aways from the trends:

- While the overall trend in new allegations is downward, these are not likely to end. Vigilance and proactive training remain vital and the financial costs to do so will remain significant.
- Although the vast majority of the allegations reported since 2004 occurred from the mid-1960s through the mid-1980s, current year allegations against minors remain small, but troubling.
- Most perpetrators are priests of this country, typically with one or more previous allegations. Few are international priests.
- Settlement-related costs have stabilized at a little over \$100 million per year. Costs for child protection efforts have increased steadily and are presently at about \$1 for every \$3 spent on settlement-related costs.

Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA)
Mary L. Gautier, Ph.D., Senior Research Associate
DAY OF PRAYER AND PENANCE
For Survivors of Sexual Abuse Within the Church

As part of the Church’s continuing efforts to bring healing to the Church, our Holy Father Pope Francis has called on all Episcopal Conferences worldwide to each commemorate a “Day of Prayer and Penance” for survivors of sexual abuse within the Church. Within the U.S., the bishops have decided to join together for a special Mass during their June Plenary Assembly in Indianapolis. During the Assembly, all of the bishops will be participate in a Mass dedicated to praying for victims/survivors, as well as joining together in penance for the sexual abuse that has occurred within the Church.

While this Mass will occur on a national level, all dioceses/eparchies are able to conduct their own event to commemorate a “Day of Prayer and Penance” for survivors of sexual abuse. It can either be along the same time as the Bishops General Assembly or anytime of their preference.

The Mass for the “Day of Prayer and Penance” is a great opportunity to continue to raise the awareness of the importance of providing outreach and healing opportunities for victims/survivors. It also provides the opportunity to share all that has been done to bring healing to victims/survivors, as well as what has been done to prevent child sexual abuse within the Church.

General Thoughts:

- The “Day of Prayer and Penance” is a time for the bishops and leadership of the Church to acknowledge the pain and suffering of those who have been abused by trusted members of the Church and pray for their healing.
- The healing of victims/survivors within the Church still needs to remain a priority, as there is still much pain within the Church.
- Acknowledge the reality of the sexual abuse scandal and the changes the Church has made in response.
- Acknowledge the role victims/survivors continue to play in bringing this issue forward for action.
- Allow this as an opportunity to provide further outreach to the victims/survivors within your diocese/eparchy.
- Be open and transparent about any abuse or allegations in your diocese/eparchy.

Creating a Culture of Healing:

1. Consider having a “listening session” for victims/survivors and the general community in your diocese/eparchy to learn more about what they would like to see happen in the Church regarding child and youth protection.
2. Verify the contact information for the Victim Assistance Coordinator and Child and Youth Protection office is prominently available throughout all parishes and schools.
3. Consider having local events commemorate the “Day of Prayer and Penance” within your diocese/eparchy (Note: This does not need to be on the same day as the bishops’ Mass). This can include:
 - a. Mass of Healing
 - b. Prayer Services
 - c. A rosary for healing
 - d. A prayer said by all priests within the diocese/eparchy during a weekend Mass
4. Communicate what has been done in your diocese/eparchy to promote healing within your community
5. Acknowledge your participation in the audit and your compliance.
6. Prepare speaking points for homilies by bishop or pastors.
7. Remind faithful of what the diocese is doing to promote healing and address clergy sexual abuse:

- a. If necessary, removed priests who offended
 - b. Ongoing support to victims and families
 - c. Training programs; how many have been trained, when the next session is
 - d. Background checks; how many have been done and what the process is
 - e. Diocesan policies and Codes of Conduct that pertain to the safety of children
8. Use Child Abuse Prevention Month materials.

Sample Petitions to Promote Healing

- For the Church and its leaders, especially our Holy Father, the bishops and all entrusted with the care of the Lord's flock, that they may truly fill the role of shepherd and protect all in their flock, especially children and young people, we pray to the Lord...
- For civic leaders entrusted with upholding the common good and justice, that they may act in ways that show their commitment to the protection of all, especially children and young people, we pray to the Lord...
- For those affected by abuse in anyway, that they may have the courage to tell their story, and to begin the process of healing, we pray to the Lord...
- For those who have suffered abuse by a trusted member of the Church, that the Lord may lead them toward healing and peace, we pray to the Lord...
- For those who provide help for the abused: counselors, therapists, and advocates that they may act with wisdom and compassion in their healing ministry, we pray to the Lord...
- For families, who are the first to show God's love, that they may have the necessary support to provide safe and nurturing environments for children and young people, we pray to the Lord...
- For teachers, mentors, coaches and all who work with children and young people, that they may look after them with a watchful eye and a protective heart, we pray to the Lord...
- For our sick, those without hope, and all who approach their end time here on earth, that they may experience the embrace of God's healing and love, we pray to the Lord...
- For those who have died, may they find themselves in the presence of the Almighty, we pray to the Lord...

Prayer for Healing and Reconciliation

Almighty and most loving God,
through your Son
your compassion brought healing to many.

We ask for your healing once more
for all who have been profoundly wounded by abuse,
especially those who have been hurt by your ministers.

In your mercy,
we also ask for forgiveness.
Words cannot express fully
the sorrow we have for the great harm done
by those who were called to be trusted.

In your goodness,
we ask for the grace
to be a source of healing
to all who have been abused
and to be ever vigilant
in protecting all your people.

Grant, we pray,
our prayers for healing and forgiveness,
for we ask them through your Son,
Christ our Lord. Amen