

Annual Child Protection Report

Diocese of Arlington

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Continuing to Address Change

By: Deacon Marques Silva, Director of the
Office of Child Protection and Safety

The Diocese of Arlington, in 1991, put in place a structured and proactive program for the prevention of child sexual abuse. Bishop Paul S. Loverde continues to improve diocesan programs and policies that safeguard our youth in every youth activity throughout the diocese. *The Policy for the Protection of Children and Young People and the Prevention of Sexual Misconduct* is our diocese's comprehensive and systematic program designed to protect children. This policy guides our diocesan programs and is in full accord with the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People* of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

During Fiscal Year 2012, the Office of Child Protection and Safety (OCPS) continued its commitment to assist every diocesan location in providing the safest environment possible for youth and adults through education and training. In addition, background checks were conducted for all employees and volunteers that have substantial contact with children.

In an effort to update these services, OCPS chose to:

- Review all youth training programs.
- Increase the number of adult safe-environment trainers.
- Update the training for parish safe-

environment liaisons.

- Review and update the 2004 Arlington Diocese Code of Conduct.
- Obtain Social Media resources for parents and parishes.
- Research and collect the latest demographic data on the use and effects of pornography.

As a result of these activities, OCPS:

- Purchased and offered to all diocesan locations a new high school safe-environment training that focuses on relationship boundaries.
- Trained additional adult safe-environment facilitators to serve all seven diocesan deaneries. These facilitators provided 92 training seminars for over 3,800 employees and adult volunteers.
- Developed and disseminated the *Child/Youth Safe-Environment Program Technical Assistance Guide* for diocesan locations, answering the most common – and not so common – questions related to safe-environment policies.
- Developed an expanded Code of Conduct to address the specific ministries of clergy and laity, which Bishop Loverde signed into effect beginning November 5, 2012.
- Researched and developed a Social Media safety presentation which has been communicated to two parishes and a diocesan school.
- Produced an eight-page pornography

statistics resource to assist in prevention talks with diocesan youth and presentations to adults.

- Reduced the safe-environment training grace-period from six months to 45 days, to align the diocese with industry standards.

Maintaining these programs, while anticipating continual cultural and technological changes, is one of the main goals of the diocesan Office of Child Protection and Safety. Constant effort is necessary to be able to adequately adapt to and address evolving youth safety issues. However, it is the faithful assistance of the thousands of diocesan volunteers and employees who work with young people that allows us to prevent harm in the lives of our children.

Please join us in our mission to provide the safest environment possible by continuing your education. Visit our webpage to view our current policy and additional resources to help protect all of God's children at www.arlingtondiocese.org/childprotection.

Catholic Diocese of Arlington Child Protection Advisory Board 9th Annual Report

By: Jim Byrne, Chairman

The Catholic Diocese of Arlington's *Policy on the Protection of Children/Young People and Prevention of Sexual Misconduct and/or Child Abuse* directs the Diocesan Advisory Board to publish a "public report of the status of the Diocesan child protection activities" in the diocesan newspaper. This section of the report focuses on the Advisory Board itself – it reviews the chartered purpose of the Advisory Board and formally documents changes in board membership. Additionally, this section highlights an Advisory Board program that conducts outreach in each deanery to promote compliance with the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*. Finally, this section discusses the results of an independent review to determine whether any impropriety may have occurred in the administration of the diocesan Office of Child Protection and Safety under the former director.

Chartered Purpose

The Catholic Diocese of Arlington's Child

Did You Know That:

- Over 3,850 adult employees and volunteers received "Protecting God's Children" training in FY 12
- Over 38,000 employees and volunteers have received "Protecting God's Children" training in the diocese since its introduction
- More than 6,000 employees and volunteers underwent background checks in FY 12
- More than 40,000 diocesan employees and volunteers of the diocese have completed these checks since August 2004
- Since the program began in 2005, over 68,000 children have received *Formation in Christian Chastity* training

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Protection Advisory Board has a broad mandate to:

- a. Review diocesan policies and procedures at least every year and recommend ways in which they can be strengthened, improved or modified;
- b. Oversee the implementation of the policies throughout the diocese and its ministries;
- c. Assist in developing appropriate mechanisms to ensure compliance with the policies;
- d. Assess the effectiveness of victim assistance efforts by the diocese and make recommendations for improvement; and
- e. Review and advise on standards of conduct for those in positions of trust and on education, training and outreach programs for clergy, staff, educators and others, as well as safe environment programs for children.

This diocesan effort is in conformity with the word and spirit of the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People* which was approved by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) in June 2002, and the *Essential Norms for Diocesan/Eparchial Policies Dealing with Allegations of Sexual Abuse of Minors by Priests or Deacons*, which was approved by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) at the November 2002 general meeting and revised in June 2011.

As stated in last year's report, the Diocese's Child Protection Advisory Board directly advises Bishop Loverde and was created voluntarily by him, not pursuant to any directive or mandate. The Advisory Board's charter is to provide confidential advice to the bishop and his staff regarding how to best protect the children and young people in our diocesan community. Bishop Loverde recognizes that religious leaders in the Church need the benefit of lay experience and knowledge, and he has demonstrated the importance of that need by voluntarily establishing this Advisory Board. This is not an oversight body -- it is accountable only to the bishop. Note also that the Advisory Board is distinguished from the mandated Diocesan Review Board, which exists primarily to advise the bishop in his assessment of specific allegations of sexual abuse by clergy and in his determination of suitability for further ministry. Both boards may be asked to advise the bishop on matters of non-sexual abuse and/or neglect.

Board Members –

Incorporated Annual Reports

This past year, Kathleen Cotter Cauley, M. Ed., of Falls Church, joined the Advisory Board. Kathleen brings over 25 years of experience as a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist in private practice and experience with other diocesan review boards. Additionally, earlier this year, pursuant to the Advisory Board's recommendation, Bishop Loverde appointed Robert Chirles, M.S., of Ashburn. Bob also currently serves on the Diocesan Review Board, and in this new dual role, he will additionally serve as a liaison between the two boards. Bob has served on the Review Board for the past nine years and brings extensive experience to both boards from his many years as the former director of the Loudoun County Department of Family Services.

Again this year, the accomplishments of Deacon Marques Silva, director of the Office of Child Protection and Safety, and Mrs. Patricia Mudd and Ms. Adlin DeCardi, Victim Assistance Coordinators, have been reported quarterly to the Advisory Board.

Deanery Outreach

In 2013, the Advisory Board will be holding meetings in each of the diocese's seven deaneries to discuss the diocesan efforts to comply with the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*. Our focus is also to express the Church's sorrow for the past and to emphasize diocesan efforts at reconciliation and healing. The presentations will provide information on the following topics: a message from Bishop Loverde; an introduction and overview of the Review and Advisory Boards; thoughts from a victim/survivor; overviews of the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People* and the Office of Child Protection and Safety; and a report from the Office of Victim Assistance.

The intent is to hold a series of meetings in each of the seven deaneries of the Diocese of Arlington beginning in the fall of 2013. These meetings will consist of a 60-minute presentation with additional time allotted for questions and answers. They will be followed by a reception so that those attending may have time to socialize and speak with Advisory Board members, victim/survivors, local clergy, and diocesan staff. The dates and times for these meetings will be published later in 2013 on both the diocesan website, as well as parish bulletins.

Investigative Review

Consistent with the need for transparency in the Church, this report will address a component of the actions taken by the Diocese of Arlington in regard to the allegations against the former director of the Diocesan Office of Child Protection and Safety, Rev. Terry Specht. In April 2012 the diocese announced that Rev. Specht, who was then serving as pastor of Holy Spirit Catholic Church in Annandale, was being placed on administrative leave after he was accused of sexual misconduct in the 1990s involving an underage boy.

Rev. Specht had helped establish and operate the diocesan Office of Child Protection and Safety. For several years, Rev. Specht also presented alongside the Victim Assistance Coordinators at the Advisory Board's quarterly meetings on various metrics and on the functioning of the two offices.

Upon learning of the allegations against Rev. Specht, the Advisory Board supported Bishop Loverde's decision to commission the diocese's Chancellor, Mark Herrmann, to facilitate an independent review of the possibility of any impropriety in the functioning of the Office of Child Protection and Safety under Rev. Specht's leadership, particularly in regard to the granting of waivers. This review was beyond the scope of any other internal or external investigation related to the allegations themselves. The consultant who conducted this focused review is of impeccable character and sufficient independence, with superior investigative abilities and experience. After an extensive file review, the consultant to date has found no information indicating that Rev. Specht had intentionally or negligently granted any inappropriate waivers, or was imprudent in deciding waiver applications during his tenure as director of the Office of Child Protection and Safety. Attempts will be made in the weeks ahead to contact and interview former employees of the Office.

I do not pretend to know the challenges that others have endured regarding this "crisis in the Church." I am fortunate that I was allowed to be part of the solution. I challenge and invite you to attend our deanery briefings and also take part in the solution with your parish, our diocese, and our Catholic Church. I will end this report with the same language as last year by stating that "our children are counting on you to do the right thing -- at any cost."

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Victim Assistance Coordinators' Report Diocese of Arlington

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As directed in the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People developed by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) in June 2002 and revised in 2011, and based on Bishop Loverde's concern for the individuals and families of this diocese, our office is charged with providing outreach and compassion to victims/survivors of clergy sexual abuse and their families. Additionally, we also provide assistance to victims of non-church related sexual abuse and violence. To offer the most assistance to our victims/survivors, a learned best practice is to encourage a combination of competent therapy and spiritual assistance to enhance their progress through their journey of healing.

We would like to personally thank Most Reverend Paul S. Loverde, Bishop of Arlington, Father Mark S. Mealey, O.S.F.S., Vicar General for Administration and Moderator of the Curia, Deacon Marques Silva, Director of Child Protection and Safety, and the members of the Review and Advisory Boards for the generosity and dedication they have shown to protect our children and to assist our victims/survivors in this diocese.

During fiscal year 2012, the Office of Victim Assistance received 28 calls seeking assistance in relation to sexual abuse. Among the 28 calls, 6 involved allegations of clergy abuse. Two allegations were made against two of our diocesan priests; one remains temporarily removed from active ministry and the other was determined unfounded by Child Protective Services and is pending final determination by our Diocesan Review Board. Three allegations were made against religious order priests/deacons. One allegation was made against a priest from another diocese. Our office also received approximately 15 calls from the community seeking assistance for non-sexual abuse related issues.

Our Victim Assistance Coordinators (VAC) provided referrals for therapy and spiritual assistance, invitations to the Support Groups and Annual Retreat for victims/survivors and a support person, and information on our Healing Masses and

Prayer Services. Since 2002, we have provided assistance to a total of 389 people.

Healing Masses and Prayer Services to Pray for Healing for Victims/Survivors - During this audit period, three Healing Masses were held in our diocese. Bishop Loverde was the presider and over the past nine years, a total of 34 Masses have been celebrated with an estimated 2,500 people in attendance.

Prayer Services to Pray for Healing for Victims/Survivors - During this audit period, three Prayer Services were held in our diocese. These services were initiated to assist victims/survivors of abuse who found it difficult to attend Mass. Rev. Mark S. Mealey, O.S.F.S., celebrates these services throughout our diocese. Since 2005, we have had 23 Prayer Services with an estimated 370 people in attendance. During the Prayer Service a victim/survivor gives their testimony in regards to their healing journey.

Both the Healing Masses and Prayer Services are ways in which the community can gather together to pray for healing for all victims of abuse. Additional information is provided at each of these services and a reception follows for those gathered to meet with Bishop Loverde, Fr. Mealey and other diocesan staff.

Support Groups for Victims/Survivors - Bishop Loverde has hosted 22 Support Group Meetings at the Dominican Retreat House in McLean. The meetings begin with prayer and a shared meal between the victims/survivors, Bishop Loverde and diocesan staff.

During the meeting we remind all participants of the confidentiality agreements they have signed. The diocesan staff participates as quiet listeners during the 1¼ hour group discussion with our members sharing their thoughts and concerns. The group has agreed not to discuss specific details of their abuse so as not to trigger any of the members. Victims/survivors share their pain from the abuse and their efforts to heal. As the evening draws to a close, Bishop Loverde and Fr. Mealey remind all of God's love and share their thoughts and feelings about the group discussion. Bishop and Father also continually reassure victims/survivors that the abuse was not their fault. Our meeting ends with an evening Prayer Service in the Chapel. Since 2005, an estimated 413 people have participated in

these groups. The evenings permit victims/survivors to support one another and to receive the support, prayers and concern for healing from Bishop Loverde, Fr. Mealey and the diocesan staff.

From a perspective of over 10 years now, the Victim Assistance Coordinators have come to believe that a combination of good therapy, prayer, spiritual guidance and the Support Groups have provided optimal assistance to the victims/survivors.

Several of our victims/survivors have also expressed that they can hear the Bishop and Father reassuring them of God's love even when not in their presence.

Our Support Groups have come to be one of the most powerful services provided by the diocese.

Annual Retreat - Our 3rd annual retreat was held at Our Lady of Good Counsel Parish in September 2011. A meeting was held with victims/survivors and the Retreat Master, Fr. William N. Dougherty, O.S.F.S., prior to the retreat to educate him about victims, their possible triggers and what might upset them. Fr. Dougherty presented on "The Spirituality of the Human Condition." Fr. Dougherty shared that the pilgrim thinks "I'm in a different place than I was yesterday. What does it mean for me? What is God saying to me? You have to look forward

Update: Rev. Terry Specht

In April 2012, Rev. Terry W. Specht, a priest of the Diocese of Arlington, was placed on administrative leave pending investigation of an allegation of sexual misconduct involving a male minor in the late 1990s. The allegation was reported by the diocese to police in Fairfax County, the jurisdiction where the incident was alleged to have occurred.

Since that time, the diocese has cooperated with Fairfax County Police in their investigation. That civil investigation is ongoing, and no decision has been made as to whether criminal charges will be filed.

The diocese's own investigation has proceeded simultaneously with the civil authorities' investigation, with care taken not to interfere with the police investigation in any way. No final recommendation will be made by the Diocesan Review Board until after the civil proceedings are completed.

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from where you are no matter where that happens to be – this is classically what we call hope – hope is born while facing the unknown and realizing that one is not alone.” The retreat was well received by all in attendance.

Victims/Survivors Planning Group – For the past six years, this group has served to share the perspective of victims/survivors with our program staff. The group has helped our victims/survivors take ownership of this program and to give them an avenue to make suggestions to help others with their healing. During this audit period, they participated in a training program for seminarians.

During this audit period, Deacon Bernard Nojadera, the new Executive Director of the Secretariat of Child and Youth Protection, invited three victims/survivors, Deacon Marques Silva and both Victim Assistance Coordinators to meet with 2 European delegations at the USCCB. In October 2011, we met with Bishop Stephan Ackerman of the Diocese of Trier, Germany and Bishop Noel Treanor of Down and Connor, Ireland, and their respective delegations to provide information and answer questions about our Victim Assistance Ministry. After our meeting, they requested we provide them with a CD with information on our various services. This CD included sample letters, Scriptural readings, and other ways we provide

outreach and opportunities for reconciliation for our victims/survivors and their families as directed by the Charter. We hope that this information will assist them as they continue to develop their own programs to address this crisis in our Church.

It is our hope and desire that we continue to provide compassionate outreach to all who seek healing from abuse. Please continue to join us in praying for all victims/survivors of abuse that they might find healing as well as the way back to their rightful place in the Catholic Church.

Submitted by Adlin deCardi, M.A., L.M.F.T. and Patricia Mudd, M.S.W., A.C.S.W.

No One Can Separate Me from the Love of God

As a young boy, I came to know about God through the beauty of nature that surrounded me. I realized that I was not alone and someone was watching over me. I felt protected and knew God would never abandon me. I started to go to Mass more, joined a youth group and met a young lady who volunteered there. “Anna” was very devoted, and everyone loved her for her great sense of humor. We became very good friends.

I learned so much from her, especially about God. Most importantly, she taught me to always talk to God, anywhere and anytime. She said that He would always listen to me and I would feel at peace every day. Being a part of that Church made me feel safe and protected, and I was glad I had found good, caring friends.

One day, I went to talk to a priest. I told him that I just needed to talk. He told me to meet him later on, so I did. He was waiting for me, and when I entered, he closed the door. Afterwards, he took me to McDonald’s. I felt terrible. I didn’t want to be with him. I felt he was trying to make me feel guilty for what had just happened.

At that moment, my life was taken away. The person I once thought I could trust and be safe with took advantage of me personally and destroyed my life; I felt different. My faith was gone, and I didn’t know what to believe anymore. I saw the world differently. I lived day to day with no one to turn to. I couldn’t tell anybody, because I felt that I had done something terrible. I felt guilty, and I didn’t know if God would forgive me for what I had done. When I went to school, it was as if my classmates knew what had happened. I would look around, and I felt that the people around me knew everything. I was embarrassed and ashamed of myself. It was terrible.

I continued going to Mass, but it wasn’t the same. I didn’t feel anything, and I wondered why I was even there. That priest was still

celebrating Mass, and I no longer wanted to be there. I thought that it was normal for priests to have sex with boys and then celebrate Mass. I was very confused, and I had no one to talk to.

One day, I invited Anna over to my apartment, because I had decided to share my experience. As I shared, she told me that I was crazy and that this priest was good and he would not do that to anybody. Since she was upset with me, I didn’t insist and let it go. I knew she was not going to listen to me.

I stayed in touch with Anna over the years, and one day she called me. With great remorse, she shared her sorrow for not believing me. I asked her what she was talking about. It was then I learned that the priest had been arrested for molesting boys. I was still upset at her former disbelief and questioned it. She said she was sorry, and we continued to talk for a long time.

I decided one day to try to get assistance through the services offered in my diocese. I met with the Victim Assistance Coordinator, Pat Mudd, several times, and she really made me feel very important; I could tell that she was willing to help me in any way possible. Pat accompanied me to a healing Mass where I met Bishop Loverde for the first time. I was very happy, and I could tell by the expression on his face how sorry he was for what had happened to me.

Pat also accompanied me to a local parish so I could meet with the pastor. The conversations gave me hope and helped me understand that not every priest intends to harm people. I used to get angry when I saw priests around me, and I definitely would not give them the respect they deserved. To me, they were all the same. In time, I began the process of learning to trust them again.

I have joined a support group, and it is helping me to see that I am not the only person suffering in silence. Hearing other people’s stories has given me hope. They share how they’ve grown in their faith and learned to cope with their past, and I hope to do the same. What I really like about the group is that everything we discuss

stays there. I feel I can talk openly without being judged. The support I have received from Bishop Loverde, Father Mealey, Pat Mudd, Adlin deCardi and many others has given me strength to move forward, because I know that I am not alone anymore. Having people who care about me has helped me begin the healing process.

My faith in God continues to grow every day because of the spiritual help I have received. I attend church more often, I love my life more, I pray more and my conversation with God is amazing, because I know that He has always been on my side - even through the difficult times. I have learned how to forgive because I believe that forgiveness is the key to freedom. I now can see God’s light shining on me. I still don’t know how I was able to overcome all that has happened to me, except by the love of God. God has always been there standing by my side. He never left me alone. I now see that God’s purpose for me is to be an example for others who are still fighting and struggling. He wants me to be a light to shine the way and strengthen others so they, too, can move on with their lives and be able to see the Lord’s greatness and love.

I am very grateful for all the assistance and support I have received from everyone. Therapy, attending the support group, receiving support from Bishop Loverde, Father Mealey, Pat, Adlin, and many others, has helped my heart and mind heal. I see now that not every priest is the same, and I can trust them again. After my last Confession, I was able to ask the priest for spiritual direction. It was very emotional, and as I cried, all I could say was, “Thank you God!” When I stood up, I felt full of joy, because at that moment I realized that the Lord had restored my trust in priests like when I was a young boy. I felt safe again. That day, I felt very proud to be Catholic, and I continue to thank God for always giving me the daily strength to move on with my life. I know that there is nothing or no one who can ever separate me from the love of God.

Submitted by a survivor of abuse who wishes to remain anonymous.