

Report to
Father Joseph P. Chinnici, O.F.M.
Provincial Minister
Province of St. Barbara

**INDEPENDENT BOARD OF INQUIRY
REGARDING ST. ANTHONY'S SEMINARY**

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NOVEMBER 1993

INDEPENDENT BOARD OF INQUIRY

Regarding St. Anthony's Seminary

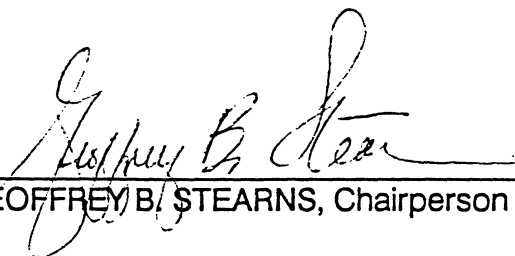
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TO: JOSEPH P. CHINNICI, O.F.M.
Provincial Minister
Province of St. Barbara

On behalf of the Independent Board of Inquiry Regarding St. Anthony's Seminary, and in accordance with the *Board of Inquiry: Guidelines and Procedures*, I herewith submit to you the Board's final report.

Dated: November 22, 1993



GEOFFREY B. STEARNS, Chairperson

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FOREWORD

This report of the Independent Board of Inquiry regarding St. Anthony's Seminary deals with a problem which is currently receiving a great deal of attention. It treats an especially painful situation of sexual abuse of young men whose total care was entrusted to a group of friars. Some of those friars abused that trust.

In fulfilling their responsibilities, the members of the Board have been dedicated to the discovery of the truth, however painful it might be. We have done so for the good of all concerned: victims and their families, perpetrators, the friars of the Province, and the Church at large. It is our conviction that healing can begin only when the full truth is recognized and acknowledged.

This report deals specifically with developments at St. Anthony Seminary in Santa Barbara from 1964 until the closing of the seminary in 1987. The Board did not have a commission to investigate any circumstances unrelated to the seminary. Its attention went beyond St. Anthony Seminary only insofar as this was deemed necessary to provide background for developments there, to follow up further possible activity on the part of friars who were found to have perpetrated abuse at St. Anthony's, and to assess treatment of these friars.

The majority of the friars at the seminary were not perpetrators of sexual abuse, nor were most of the students victimized. Moreover, the overall education and personal growth fostered by the seminary were accomplished despite the unfortunate and tragic developments described in this report. Still, it must be clearly stated that a cancerous evil existed in the institution which exerted, and

continues to exert its pernicious effects in the lives of those who were abused and in the life of the Province. This report is offered not only in the desire to expose the full truth, but with the concomitant hope of promoting continuing healing for all concerned. This report is also offered in the hope that the findings and recommendations made herein will aid in preventing abuse in the future.

BACKGROUND

From 1898 until 1987, St. Anthony's Seminary of Santa Barbara, California, was a minor seminary operated by the Province of St. Barbara of the Order of Friars Minor of the Roman Catholic Church. It operated as a boarding school for male high school students who aspired to become Franciscan priests or brothers. While the numbers varied over the years, an average of 5 to 10 percent of the graduates pursued their vocation into membership in the Order. The school was closed in 1987 for financial reasons.

In 1989 a former St. Anthony's student reported that over a two-year period, he was sexually molested by a St. Anthony's friar on numerous occasions, sometimes in the student's own home. The younger brother of the first student then reported in May 1992 that a second St. Anthony's friar, the founder and director of the Santa Barbara Boys' Choir, had sexually molested him on numerous occasions.

In October 1992, while the Province and Boys' Choir were considering the best pastoral response, and after there had been a period of significant effort and urging by members of the St. Anthony's Seminary Greater Community (a group much like members of a parish), the Santa Barbara Boys' Choir and the Provincial Minister jointly sent a letter to parents of choir members to determine if other boys had been molested, and subsequently held a community meeting for parents of seminary students and choir members. At this meeting, two additional families reported that their sons had also been sexually molested by the second friar.

In November 1992 the Provincial Minister stated that a plan for an investigation to look into the allegations would be presented in December. In the interim, 25-30 members of the Greater Community developed a set of recommendations that they felt would be necessary for a thorough and independent investigation. (See Appendix, *Commission Requirements*.)

In December 1992, the Province of St. Barbara committed itself to establishing an independent board of inquiry to investigate the reports of abuse. (See Appendix, *A Comprehensive Approach to Provincial Policy and a Pastoral Response to Instances of Sexual Abuse of Minors at St. Anthony's Seminary*.) The Independent Board of Inquiry was convened in January 1993. The Board consisted of six members who were chosen jointly by the Greater Community and the Province of St. Barbara. (See Appendix, *Members of Independent Board of Inquiry*.) Its mandate was to assess the nature and extent of sexual abuse at St. Anthony's Seminary for the period from 1964 (the beginning of the tenure of a third alleged offending friar) until the closure of the seminary in 1987.

PROCESS

Convening the Board of Inquiry Regarding St. Anthony's Seminary

On January 14, 1993, the six members of the Board of Inquiry assembled for two days of briefing by the Provincial Minister, Fr. Joseph Chinnici, OFM, in order to get a thorough background about both existing reports of abuse and of the structure and scope of operations of the Province of St. Barbara. A set of guidelines and procedures for the Board, defining its mandate, authority, priorities and tasks, were jointly created by the Board and the Provincial Minister. (See Appendix, *Board of Inquiry: Guidelines and Procedures.*) Key guidelines were:

- 2.1. *The Board of Inquiry is established by the Province of St. Barbara, but it will function independently of the Provincial administration, and will report directly to the Provincial Minister.*
- 1.1.1. *The Board has an essentially pastoral purpose, acting to help the victims, the well-being of the community and the friars, and the integrity of the Church. It is fact-finding, consultative, and advisory to the Provincial Minister, not adversarial or adjudicative. Its process is to help identify victims of sexual abuse, the perpetrators of the abuse, and to assess the nature and extent of the reported abuse.*

The board was charged with reporting its findings and making recommendations to the Provincial Minister, which were to cover:

- 1) *An assessment of the nature and extent of sexual abuse of minors;*
- 2) *Whether or not there is reasonable cause to suspect the allegations against an individual are substantial;*
- 3) *How best pastorally to care for victims of abuse in accordance with the Province policies;*
- 4) *What steps can be taken to prevent the recurrence of such instances.*

The Board's members were Geoffrey Stearns, Esq., Chairperson, an attorney with expertise in mediation, and advocacy for children; Kathleen Baggarley, M.F.C.C., and Keith Mar, M.F.C.C., psychotherapists with expertise in the treatment of child and adult survivors of childhood sexual abuse; Eugene Merlin, M.F.C.C., a psychotherapist with expertise in treating sex offenders; Father Dismas Bonner, O.F.M., a Franciscan Friar from outside the Province, skilled in counseling and issues in the area of sexual abuse; and, Ray Higgins, Board Coordinator, father of a former St. Anthony's Seminary student.

Outreach to Victims

The Board's first important task was to develop and maintain an effective effort to contact as many of the approximately 950 former St. Anthony's Seminary students as possible. The intent was to inform them of the recent reports of sexual abuse, advise them of the existence and function of the Board, and, in as tactful a manner as possible, inquire whether they had experienced, or knew of any fellow student who had experienced sexual abuse by a friar or employee of St. Anthony's Seminary.

In February 1993, a letter was sent to all former students in the relevant time period. It was directed to their last known addresses, which were extracted and culled from seminary records through the considerable ongoing collaborative efforts of Ray Higgins and Father Alberic Smith, the friar in charge of the closed seminary. With particular help from the clinical members, the letter was drafted as carefully as possible to be clear, comprehensive, and sensitive to the potentially serious impact it might have on both students who had been victimized and

students who held cherished memories of a positive and meaningful high school experience (see Appendix, letter to students). Thus, it read in part:

While our purpose is to investigate incidents of sexual abuse, we recognize that victims sometimes remember or characterize such experiences in different ways. Therefore, if you believe you were the recipient of either physical or non-physical contact by a member of St. Anthony's staff or faculty, which hurt you or left you feeling confused, frightened, guilty or bad about yourself, we encourage you make confidential (or even anonymous) initial contact with a member of this Board of Inquiry listed on the accompanying sheet...

In its long history, St. Anthony's Seminary has educated, nurtured and been home to many generations of fine men. As an institution, it has done much good for many individuals. It is in the spirit of that education and in witness to the compassion and concern which have been its hallmark that we now write to you in the continued search to be truthful and to heal.

The initial mailing was made to approximately 350 students whose addresses were contained on a current St. Anthony's Seminary alumni list. Accompanying the letter was a return postcard for use of the student to indicate whether he would or would not respond further to the Board (see Appendix). Thereafter, a companion letter was prepared and sent to all clerical and lay faculty who worked at the seminary during the relevant time period (see Appendix).

Continuing review of seminary records produced the names of approximately 600 additional students for whom there was no known current address. The only addresses available were those of the students' parents at the time of attendance at the seminary. Consequently, the original student letter was slightly revised to be read by parents and mailed to them.

As the Board continued to operate and receive information from former students and their family members, it became apparent to it that the previous

outreach effort with respect to former members of the Santa Barbara Boys' Choir might not have been as effective as hoped, because:

- (1) concerns continued to be expressed about certain boys who had not responded to the previous choir letter;
- (2) the fact that the letter was co-authored by the Franciscan Province might have had an inhibiting effect on victims; and,
- (3) it was not clear that all former choir members had been sent letters.

Thus, with the cooperation of the current leaders of the Boy's Choir, a new letter was prepared by the Board and mailed to all former choir members listed on a complete roster furnished to the Board. The letter addressed the choir leaders' concerns about the reputation of their present choir and their ability to recruit for it; and the Provincial Minister's concerns that the choir not be misidentified as a Franciscan entity. It was drafted to avoid mention of the choir itself, and explained to the addressee that the Board wished to hear from anyone who might have come in contact with and been victimized by a friar or employee of St. Anthony's Seminary.

Approximately 175 student letters were returned as undeliverable. Two steps were taken with respect to these students. First, the names of all such students were published in the St. Anthony's Seminary Alumni Newsletter, with a request for information as to their current whereabouts. Subsequently, the services of a private investigator were engaged to perform skip tracing on all students whose letters had been returned. The efforts of the private investigator resulted in ascertainment of 30 valid current addresses.

The student letter produced various responses; in total, approximately 300 students responded in one way or another. When a postcard was returned indicating a further response was forthcoming (approximately 75 were received), but a significant lapse of time occurred without hearing from the student, the Board followed up with written reminders, followed by urgent letters and/or phone calls until the student had been contacted. Some students wrote letters of support with no specific information. A few students and faculty wrote letters critical of the process, although most of those tended to be mixed, e.g., urging the Board to use care and a healthy skepticism with respect to reports of abuse, while at the same time commending the effort to search for the truth. Any student who indicated, either in writing or by a phone contact to a board member, that he had been the subject of abuse, was interviewed.

Meetings with the Greater Community and Relationship with News Media

The disclosures of abuse by friars that predated the convening of the Board of Inquiry had received considerable coverage in the local press. Consequently, in the first months of the Board's operations, there were a number of inquiries from the media concerning numbers of victims and numbers of alleged or established perpetrators.

The Board was also charged with holding monthly meetings with the St. Anthony's Seminary Greater Community (a group much like a parish; for background on Greater Community, see Appendix) to "explain its procedures and give indications of its progress to those interested." (*Guidelines and Procedures, supra.*)

Its dealing with the Greater Community, and the larger community through the media, presented the Board with the challenge of preserving confidentiality without creating the appearance of perpetuating secrecy. On the one hand, we felt that the Greater Community in particular, and the larger Santa Barbara community, had legitimate interests in being kept abreast of our workings and significant developments in our process. We also felt that if we were to be thorough and effective in our solicitation of victims, the Board would need to be perceived as a credible, serious, humane entity, independent of the Franciscan Order, and definitely not part of any "whitewash" or cover-up. On the other hand, the Board was continually receiving and evaluating information of varying degrees of specificity and weight with respect to abuse. In order to assure victims that it was "safe" to contact the Board, and to prevent the premature condemnation through speculation or innuendo of any friar about whom some information had been received, the Board decided that not only would all names be held confidential, but that also there would not be any disclosure of the number of victims or number of possible perpetrators until its final report.

The Board held monthly meetings with members of the Greater Community during which progress reports were made which focused on the Board's process and efforts. At these meetings, valuable suggestions were made by those attending as to various courses of action that might enhance the Board's outreach and investigative efforts. Victims and parents of victims were encouraged to attend these sessions, and several openly vented their anger towards the Franciscans and the Catholic hierarchy for what had occurred. Others publicly revealed the devastating effect of the abuse on their lives. The meetings were filled with both intense emotion and thoughtful, profound

discussion. It was always our hope that these meetings would help promote healing of the great pain and confusion caused by the abuse.

Early on it was decided that members of the news media would be allowed to attend these meetings, provided that they identified themselves at the beginning of the meeting, and agreed to honor any attendee's request to speak "off the record," i.e., to not report anything that was said during that time. Once it had been determined that the media would be at these meetings, the Board decided to be as proactive as possible in its relationship with the media, and in March 1993, issued a press release (see Appendix) which was disseminated not only to local press and television representatives, but also to newspapers in all major metropolitan areas from which St. Anthony's Seminary students had traditionally come. The press release requested the news media's assistance in spreading the word of the Board's existence and operations.

Thereafter, a significant amount of news coverage, including television news stories and interviews of Board members, was focused on the Board, with emphasis on its desire to hear from any and all victims. The Board's contact phone number was given significant air time. Almost uniformly, members of the media were respectful of the need for confidentiality, supportive of the Board's mission, and cooperative and helpful in their dealings with the Board.

Board Process and Relationship with Provincial Minister

Victims

Immediately after being convened, the Board developed its Internal Guidelines. These were as follows:

INTERNAL GUIDELINES

1. **Guiding Principles:**
 - a. *Sensitivity to victims*
 - b. *Thorough gathering of information*
 - c. *Respect for confidentiality*
 - d. *Contemporaneous sharing of information among Board*
 - e. *Diligent and timely discharge of our duties*
2. **Questions for Anyone Contacting Us:**
 - a. *What do you want us to do?*
 - b. *What do you not want us to do?*
 - c. *What do you want us to do with information?*
 - d. *What do you not want us to do with information?*
 - e. *Which individual(s) would you feel most comfortable talking to?*
 - f. *Would you be willing to talk to the entire Board?*
 - g. *Is there any other person or persons you think we should talk to?*
3. **Communication:**
 - a. *Mail non-urgent written materials*
 - b. *Federal Express urgent written materials*
 - c. *Fax time-sensitive, non-confidential housekeeping documents*
 - d. *Keep others apprised of pending interviews and contacts*
 - e. *Report results of same ASAP to other members*
4. **Basic Operating Procedure:**
 - a. *First interview with clinical board member, unless person specifically requests non-clinician*
 - b. *Interviewer prepares and distributes to other members, his/her written summary of information received, impressions and recommendations*
 - c. *Victims and alleged offenders should be interviewed by full board in order to assess accuracy, nature and extent of reported abuse; recognizing that some victims may be not be ready,*

willing and/or able to do so, and that some offenders may decline.

5. **Decision-making Process:** *Consensus, with dissenting views given fullest exploration*
6. **Confidentiality of deliberations:** *Internal deliberations of the full board, and discussions among the board, or any of its members are confidential and shall be held in confidence, absent agreement of all board members for disclosure of specific information on a case-by-case basis, i.e., each and every disclosure needs to be specifically considered and agreed to by the board.*

The Board also developed a form (see Appendix, *Acknowledgment of Purpose and Scope of Operation*) which we requested that each interviewee sign. It essentially described the Board's status and mandate, and made it clear that it was not a legal, adjudicative body, nor was it to be relied upon for legal or mental health advice or services. With respect to legal issues, the Board decided:

1. That its mandated reporter members must and would report any instance of reasonably suspected abuse of an individual who was still a minor;
2. That it would make no non-mandated disclosures to the criminal authorities, but would encourage any victims with a case still within the applicable statute of limitations to consider direct reporting of same; and,
3. That it would neither encourage nor discourage the pursuit of civil damage claims by victims and/or their family members.

Thereafter, the Board met monthly for three-day sessions and began its process of interviewing former students who responded to its letter and who indicated that they had been victimized. A number of responses came from students who were not victimized, but who had information which substantiated statements of the victims. Depending on the weight of the information, geographical considerations, and the comfort level of the student, interviews were

held by telephone, personal sessions with one or more board members, and/or appearances before the full Board. We also interviewed several family members of victims.

The interviews started with explanation and signing of the Acknowledgment form, and a general presentation of the questions set forth in Section 2 of the above guidelines. Thereafter, interviewees were given the opportunity to relate their story in their own words, and convey other information they wished to communicate to the Board. While asking necessary and appropriate questions to clarify and elicit key points and to allow us to evaluate the credibility, weight and import of the information, we strove to keep victims at ease, and to avoid leading, challenging or argumentative questions or statements. In general, we tried to make the interviews as therapeutic as possible for victims and their family members.

The Board assembled a Resource Packet (see Appendix) which was distributed to victims, parents of victims and anyone else we felt could benefit from it. The packet included a list of Santa Barbara therapists who were selected by the Board as experienced and qualified in the treatment of survivors of sexual abuse. Selection was based on review of their *curricula vitae*, professional license, proof of professional liability insurance coverage, and personal interview with the Board's clinical members. Also included was a list of San Francisco Bay Area therapists, a bibliography of materials on sexual abuse, suggested guidelines for selecting a therapist, and relevant forms related to presenting a claim for therapy to the Board. In addition, we distributed two Hazelden Pamphlets, specifically written for male victims and their families, and a book, *Outgrowing the Pain* by Eliana Gil.

Because one of the primary functions of the Board was to facilitate victims requesting and receiving therapy paid for by the Franciscan Province, guidelines and procedures were created to handle this process. These were:

THErapy PROCESS GUIDELINES

1. *Requests for therapy by victims will be passed upon by the full Board in an expedited manner. Following initial Board authorization of a request for therapy, ongoing submission of billings will be handled directly between the victim and therapist and the Province.*
2. *If requested, victim's anonymity will be preserved; code names or numbers will be assigned for use by victims and/or therapists in direct dealings with the Province.*
3. *In order to attempt to see that all victims get necessary therapy services, the following guidelines will be observed:*
 - a. *After fifty (50) sessions (group sessions will count as 0.4 of an individual session), or the expiration of eighteen (18) months, whichever comes first, further therapy sessions will be arranged by and between the victim, his therapist and the Province. In the event of disagreement, any dissatisfied party will be entitled to present the matter to the Permanent Board. (cf. p. 64)*
 - b. *Families of victims will be entitled to therapy on the same basis as victims, per subparagraph "a" above; provided that there will be a maximum of fifty sessions, absent extraordinary circumstances determined to exist by the Permanent Board, upon review requested by the family.*
 - c. *The requests of any "secondary victims", e.g. siblings of victim/perpetrators, will be carefully reviewed on a case-by-case basis with attention to the causal nexus, if any, between friar abuse and secondary abuse in light of all presenting circumstances.*
4. *The Board will develop a referral list of therapists who are experienced and qualified in the area of sex abuse treatment, and who have personally indicated their willingness to take on victims' cases on an expedited basis.*
5. *The Board will develop criteria for approval of pre-existing therapists of victims requesting compensated therapy, and will have the authority to impose conditions on payment for continuing therapy services of such therapists.*

6. *The Board will make recommendations to the Province for future treatment of offending friars and will evaluate any past or ongoing treatment of such friars.*

The above guidelines were formulated with reference to the State of California Victim Witness program. Although it was anticipated that some victims might require more than fifty sessions, it was decided that fifty sessions would be an appropriate point for the therapist to assess progress and provide a clinical rationale for additional sessions. A number of victims and family members wished to remain anonymous to the Franciscan Province, and were thus assigned code numbers. The therapy claim process was also designed to leave the Board "out of loop" after initial approval, unless a disagreement arose and either the therapist, the victim or the Province requested the permanent board to resolve the issue.

Offenders

Because of the gravity of its charge, and the risk that an identified perpetrator might continue to offend if not restrained, the Board decided early on that it needed to forge a working and collaborative relationship with the Franciscan Provincial Minister, Father Joseph Chinnici, O.F.M., with due respect for our respective areas of authority and operating constraints. While the Province had taken serious corrective steps with respect to certain previously disclosed friars, the Board received substantial information about friars whose offenses were either only partially known or previously unknown to the Province. On the other hand, although the Board was proving to be an effective receptacle of valid information from many victims, it had no subpoena, disciplinary or other power over any reported offender. The Provincial Minister, albeit constrained to a certain

extent by canon law precepts of confidentiality and personal privacy, was in a position to exert a substantial amount of influence and control over any given friar.

Consequently, when the Board determined that a previously unidentified friar had, to a reasonable certainty, been the perpetrator of sexual abuse, it promptly notified Fr. Chinnici in writing of its recommendation that such friar be sent for a complete and comprehensive sex offender psychological evaluation to one of the most expert, reliable and experienced evaluation facilities on the West Coast. Pending the evaluation, in accordance with existing Provincial policy, Fr. Chinnici handled the friar's case by placing severe restrictions on public ministry, ordering no contact with minors, and assigning a monitor to the friar.

The Board also acted in an advisory capacity to the Provincial Minister concerning friars who had been identified to the Province as perpetrators prior to the convening of the Board, and already had been subjected to evaluation, treatment and restrictions in accordance with Provincial policy (see Appendix, *Operating Policies and Procedures in the St. Barbara Province for Friar Misconduct*). In some cases, releases were obtained so that Eugene Merlin, M.F.C.C., the member of the Board with expertise in sex offender treatment, could review reports of previously performed evaluations and assess the quality and efficacy of treatment being provided to friar offenders. As evaluations of Board-identified friars were completed by the evaluation facility, its recommendations for treatment and handling of the friar were discussed with Fr. Chinnici; the Board continued to act in an advisory capacity, assisting in, among other things, selection of appropriate outpatient sex offender treatment for individual friars.

Report

The Board's report was written in accordance with the following provisions of its Guidelines and Procedures:

- 2.2.6 *When the Board is prepared to make its final report, it will meet with the Provincial Minister to review the contents of the report and make further remarks as is agreed appropriate.*
- 2.2.7 *The text of the report as discussed in 2.2.6., respecting confidentiality, will be made public jointly by the Board of Inquiry and the Provincial Minister.*
- 6.1.1 *The final report of the Board to the Provincial Minister, respecting confidentiality, will be made public to the members of the Greater Community of St. Anthony's.*

Prior to the public release of this report, the Board presented it to the Provincial Minister, and reviewed it with him in great detail. This internal confidential review process allowed us to thoroughly discuss with Fr. Chinnici our findings about each offending friar's activities with his victim(s), whose experiences we synopsisized and edited to avoid disclosure of any victim's identities. We also reviewed with him our prior and current recommendations, and the dispositions that he had effected, with respect to each offender.

We then turned our attention to the process of agreeing upon the version of the report to be made public in accordance with our above guidelines regarding confidentiality. The Board was not authorized or empowered to identify any offenders not previously known to the public; any decision as to whether or when to reveal any of their identities lies with the Provincial Minister and the offenders themselves, and would be made in light of, among other things, relevant precepts of Canon Law, the policies of the Province, and the therapeutic progress of any given offender.

Therefore, the Board's primary concern was that its findings with respect to the nature and extent of the sexual abuse at the seminary be presented accurately and completely without compromising the security of any victim. As much as possible, we wanted the reader to be able to understand (and even to some extent experience) the trauma and devastation of the abuse; and, we were committed to doing everything in our power to avoid revictimization of any victim through revelation of information that might lead to his being identified, or that might even make him worry that he could be identified.

The Board solicited the input of several professionals who had participated in similar investigatory and reporting processes. We thoroughly and carefully discussed the many considerations involved in creating the strongest and most effective report possible. As will be seen in the following Findings section, we have used quantitative information, as well as composite narrative case studies to convey to the reader both the extent and the nature of the abuse at St. Anthony's Seminary.

We believe the process of meeting and conferring with the Provincial Minister has made for two strong, clear and effective documents: an internal confidential version for use by the Provincial and permanent board for ongoing monitoring and management of friar offenders; and this public version which describes the true nature and extent of the abuse without jeopardizing victims security. Our hope is that while protecting those who came forward and spoke to us in reliance on our pledge of confidentiality, this report will convey their experiences in a way that has a real possibility of promoting changes necessary to significantly reduce the likelihood of recurrence of these tragic and extremely damaging events.

FINDINGS

INTRODUCTION

As indicated, the Board of Inquiry interviewed victims by phone and by personal interview, some of which were conducted by the full Board and some by individual Board members. Most of the interviews were in excess of one and one-half hours long; few were shorter than an hour. Some of the interviews were moving and difficult for the Board because of the deep pain expressed by victims and family members; others were inspiring because of a sense that the victims were able to tell their stories to a group of people who listened and believed, and did not judge them. A significant aspect of the interviews is that, for the most part, we heard from victims who had never had psychological treatment or been in therapy for the abuse perpetrated on them. In many cases, the interview constituted the first time a student had told his story to anyone, which is consistent with the fact that, in general, male victims do not reach out for help.

Thus, it should be emphasized that this report represents a careful, thorough and deliberate look at something that is nonetheless not fixed or static, i.e., the process of victims who were ready and able to describe their experiences (to the extent these experiences were accessible to their conscious minds), coming forward to speak to us about them. As indicated in the previous section ["Report", page 17], this Findings section was written to preserve the security and sense of security of the victims who placed their trust in us. We believe that such a report can serve to enhance the therapeutic progress of those in treatment, while increasing the likelihood that other victims, who have not yet come forward, will feel confident that when they are ready, they can safely bring their experiences to the permanent board.

Finally, it should be reiterated that the Board was not an adversary, adjudicative body with the fact-finding apparatus thereof, e.g., we had no subpoena power or power to compel testimony under oath. The vast majority of our interviews were with victims or family members of victims. A few faculty members also spoke to us. No friar identified to us as a perpetrator of sexual abuse chose to come forward to speak to us. We were not commissioned or able to make conclusive determinations of the kind made by juries in criminal cases.

However, our findings are far more than recitations of things that were told to us. Many victims, with no knowledge of each other's experience or of each other at all, came forward and provided us reports that cross-corroborated and fit together like pieces of a puzzle. Based on our interviews with and impressions of victims, our background and experience in the field of sexual abuse, our decades of collective experience in assessing peoples' stories, and our ability to collaboratively and complementarily analyze and understand the weight and import of the information presented us; we believe that our findings are solidly based on credible reports of abuse; and that they fully and firmly support the recommendations we have made concerning individual friars, as well as the larger issues discussed in the Recommendations section of this report.

NATURE AND EXTENT OF ABUSE

STATISTICS

The Board identified **eleven** friars who perpetrated sexual abuse on minors at St. Anthony's Seminary during the relevant time period (school years 1964-65 through 1986-87). Another friar was identified by the Board as having engaged in conduct that could have been preliminary to intended abuse ("grooming").

During the relevant time period, there was in any given year, at least one friar on the faculty that the Board identified to a reasonable certainty as having offended at some point during his tenure at St. Anthony's. One-fourth (11) of the forty-four friars who served on the faculty at St. Anthony's during this time period were identified to a reasonable certainty as having offended at some point during their tenure at St. Anthony's.

Of the twenty-three years in question, there were:

Nine years when there was one friar on the faculty that the Board identified to a reasonable certainty as having offended at some point during his tenure at St. Anthony's. Nine years when there were two friars on the faculty that the Board identified to a reasonable certainty as having offended at some point during their tenure at St. Anthony's. Four years when there were three friars on the faculty that the Board identified to a reasonable certainty as having offended at some point during their tenure at St. Anthony's. One year when there were five friars on the faculty that the Board

identified to a reasonable certainty as having offended at one point during their tenure at St. Anthony's.

Of the students who have thus far come forward as a result of the Board's outreach effort, ~~thirty-four~~ were identified as victims of sexual abuse during this time period. Another student was identified as someone probably being "groomed" for sexual abuse.

Two students were abused by more than one friar: one of these was the victim of two friars; the other was the victim of three friars. Of the eleven identified friar offenders: six friars had one known victim of sexual abuse; three friars had two known victims of sexual abuse; one friar had seven known victims of sexual abuse; and one friar had eighteen known victims of sexual abuse.

There was a wide range of sexually abusive practices perpetrated on victims by the eleven friars: one of the eleven friars photographed young children nude; three of the eleven friars engaged in forms of uninvited sexual touching of non-genital areas, such as fondling buttocks, rubbing backs, stomachs and thighs, palpating the lower abdomen, or embracing students; one of the eleven friars "disciplined" students by administering beatings to their naked buttocks in a manner that had clear sexual overtones; two of the eleven friars engaged in penetration of a student's anus with a digit or object; five of the eleven friars fondled students' genitalia; one of the eleven friars lay naked with an erection on top of a student; six of the eleven friars masturbated students; four of the eleven friars orally copulated students; one friar had a student engage in mutual masturbation with him and requested that the student sodomize him (the student refused); one of the eleven friars had a student engage in mutual fellatio with him and sodomized the student on numerous occasions.

The circumstances and locations of the abuse also varied: four friars abused students at night after lights-out; six friars isolated students in their offices in order to commit the abuse; five friars abused students on trips or outings off seminary grounds; four friars abused students who were physically ill; two friars used threats to ensure victims' silence; one friar made his victim feel guilty to ensure silence.

REPRESENTATIVE CASE STUDIES

The following case studies are composites drawn from the experiences of a number of victims. They contain descriptions of actual abuse that occurred, but in order to preserve confidentiality do not describe the experience of any one victim. They are also designed to illustrate and be representative of the range and nature of offenders' abuse and its effects on victims. .

Case Number 1

A friar summoned a student to his room to discuss academic problems the student was having. The friar instructed the student to lock the door and sit down. As a result of their discussion of the student's academic difficulties, the student became upset. The friar came around from behind his desk to "comfort" the student, and initially put his arm around the student's shoulders. The friar then knelt down in front of the student and began talking to him in a soothing tone. The friar proceeded to stroke the student's leg and then fondle his genitals through the student's clothing. The friar culminated the episode by orally copulating the student.

The student left the friar's room in a daze, not understanding what the friar had done to him. For the next couple of days, he was confused and felt like he was "in a fog". Subsequently, the same friar approached the student and directed the student to come to his room for further discussions of his academic progress. The student refused to comply, and the friar threatened him with disciplinary sanctions. At that point, the student ran away from the friar and did his best to

avoid him for the remainder of the school year. Because he took the friar's threat seriously, the student did not disclose the abuse to anyone.

The student cried every night for several nights following his molestation by the friar. He had difficulty concentrating in his classes. His grades went from a "B" average to "C"s and "D"s. He abandoned his aspirations to the priesthood, and did not return to the seminary the following academic year.

Case Number 2

During the performance of school play, a friar sat next to a student with whom he had had no previous contact. The room was dark. The friar put his hand on the student's thigh and began kneading it in a massage-like manner. Before the student had time to react, the friar reached into the student's trousers and grabbed the student's genitals. The friar then began masturbating the student, who remained frozen, unable to move. As soon the play was over, the student left the auditorium quickly, confused and afraid to tell anyone about the molestation.

Subsequently, on a field trip, the same friar and a couple of other students were sleeping outdoors in sleeping bags. The student sleeping next to the friar awoke to find the friar unzipping the student's bag and throwing it open. The friar proceeded to climb on top of the student and begin moving on top of him as if having intercourse. The student felt the friar's erection through their clothing. Frightened, repulsed and not knowing what else to do, the student, pretending still to be asleep, rolled over quickly and in so doing, dislodged the friar.

The student did not sleep all night out of fear. The next day, the student, thinking that no one would believe him over a priest, kept the assault to himself.

Case Number 3

A friar developed a friendship with a student and began tutoring him in his room. These sessions became more social, and the friar began providing the student with alcohol and cigarettes. He also let the student stay in his room after lights-out. After a couple of months, there was an evening when the student, who was homesick and upset about not being able to go home for a holiday, came to the friar's room for one of his regular visits. The friar had the student lie on his bed while the friar held him and stroked the boy's hair.

The next night the friar had the student strip to the waist and lie on his bed while the friar gave him a back massage with lotion. Subsequently, the abuse progressed rapidly from full body massage to genital fondling to masturbation of the student by the friar.

The friar continued to romance and seduce the student by devoting special time and attention to the him, e.g., inviting him on trips taken alone with the friar, including visits to the student's home and family. The "relationship" between student and friar, which was spoken of by the friar in terms of love and mutual support, continued for over a year with scores of acts of abuse, which ultimately included mutual masturbation, fellatio and sodomy of the student.

Finally, during a trip in which he was having sex with the friar every night, the student, confused about his sexuality and with no friends, was able to find the strength to separate himself from the friar permanently. The student struggled with his questions about his own sexual orientation for many years. It was not until he commenced therapy that he realized that rather than having been in a "relationship" with the friar, he had been the victim of sexual abuse.

Case Number 4

A friar had a practice of calling students to his room to conduct "hernia examinations" (despite the fact that the students had undergone legitimate physical examinations by licensed physicians prior to coming to the seminary). The friar instructed the students to entirely disrobe. His "examination" included handling the students' genitals. While some students brushed the experience off as an embarrassing episode, others were left dazed and devastated by it. Other students were subjected to the similar instances of genital fondling by this friar under the guise of treatment for various minor injuries or ailments.

Another student was called by this friar to his room on several occasions for the purpose of having his genital hygiene checked. Each time, in spite of the fact that the student was diligently keeping himself clean, the student's genitals were examined, washed and dried by the friar. Thereafter, on three additional occasions, the friar had the student come to his room and take a shower; the friar then showed him pornography and had him lie down naked on the friar's bed. The friar proceeded to masturbate and orally copulate the student, who attempted

to avoid becoming aroused. After each incident, the friar warned the student to keep the abuse secret under threat of expulsion from the seminary.

A third student was called to this friar's office for a minor infraction of seminary rules. The friar had the student strip naked. He then beat the student's buttocks with his bare hands until the student's skin broke. The student was reduced to sobbing. The friar pulled the student to him and held him for a long time while he consoled him. During this embrace, the student could feel the friar's erection through his clothing.

Case Number 5

It was normal and expected that friars would become close to certain families who were involved with activities at the seminary. Some friars arranged for financial assistance for poor families. One of the friars took advantage of this pastoral practice. He created organized activities at the seminary for children, and became a close friend of many of their parents, some of whom considered him a wonderful "big brother" for their son; others saw him as a "saint." The friar was a frequent guest in their homes, sharing meals and even spending the night on occasion, and presided at their weddings and baptisms.

As a consequence, this friar had free access to school-aged children of families, and selected some of them to take on extended trips and to his quarters at the seminary, where he would play strip darts or other physical games. These games often resulted in the boys being tickled and having their genital areas "accidentally" fondled. Other young children were photographed nude by this

friar. Hundreds of nude photographs were taken in the seminary and on the surrounding grounds.

After some of these children later became students at the seminary, they were molested by another friar who came into their dormitory cubicles after lights-out and performing uninvited massages on them. He would rub their backs, stomachs, legs and thighs, and, in some cases, masturbate them. One student remembers, that while he was sick with the flu, this friar came to his bed in the middle of the night and pressed a hard object against his anal sphincter. Some students would try ward off these advances by feigning sleep or neglecting their personal hygiene to attempt to become as unattractive as possible, but were for the most part unsuccessful, and continued to be the object of the friar's abuse until after puberty.

A recurring theme with respect to both friars discussed above was that their victims felt trapped by their clever perversion of innocent appearing activities, and that the families of victims felt guilty and betrayed by someone they had trusted completely with their children.

DISPOSITIONS OF OFFENDING FRIARS

On the one hand, as mentioned previously, the Board of Inquiry did not exercise any authority over the friars who were identified as offenders. It acted throughout in an advisory capacity to the Provincial Minister, and made recommendations to him on a friar-by-friar basis. Within the context of Provincial policy, civil and canon law, personal interviews, and specialized evaluations, the Minister received and discussed these recommendations with the Board, and then took the steps he deemed necessary with respect to each friar.

On the other hand, the process of disposition has been worked out in a collaborative fashion, with fairly constant communication between the Board and the Provincial Minister throughout. It is anticipated that the permanent board will continue and refine this collaborative working relationship with the Provincial Minister. The process itself enables any given friar's disposition to be subjected to ongoing evaluation as new information emerges or treatment progresses.

Based on the Board's recognition of the credibility of student's reports, eleven friars have been identified as performing sexually abusive behavior; and one additional friar was suspected of "grooming." It should be noted that all the dispositions listed below are subject to review and change by the Provincial Minister in consultation with the permanent board. **None of these twelve friars is assigned to ministry or placed in Santa Barbara County.**

Of these twelve identified friars, one is deceased; one pleaded *nolo contendere*, served six months in jail, and has left the Franciscan Order; one other left the Order before final profession.

The Board also made findings with respect to the remaining nine friars. **Seven** of these friars were sent to highly respected professionals, experienced in working with sexual offenders and recommended by the Board, where they are currently in various stages of assessment and treatment. The dispositions are as follows:

Two friars have been completely removed from the ministry and are currently enrolled in sexual offender treatment programs known to be rigorous. They are forbidden to have contact with minors, required to participate in therapy, and have a local monitor.

Two other friars, removed from ministry and forbidden contact with minors, are currently completing their assessments. Further decisions will be made based on the evaluations of the clinicians.

One friar who, according to the evaluation and recommendations is sufficiently and positively along in treatment, is engaged in some ministry with no contact with minors, continued therapy, offender-specific group work, and monitoring.

One friar, after an inconclusive assessment and disagreement over the facts in question, continues in ministry with restrictions on his contact with minors (e.g., no personal counseling of minors, no contact with them outside the presence of another adult), and a continued program of counseling/education.

Another friar is currently completing his sexual offender evaluation. Based on an earlier evaluation, he works only with adults and is restricted from contact with minors. Further disposition will be made based on the recommendations received.

Two other dispositions should be noted, to complete the discussion of the dispositions with respect to the nine friars still in the Order:

In one situation where the facts are disputed by the friar, the evaluation clinic recommended by the Board was declined by him. However, he did undergo evaluations conducted by a specialist in forensic evaluations with a specific focus on psychosexual issues and deviancy, and based on these recommendations, this friar continues in ministry with monitoring and restrictions on his contact with minors.

In the final situation, where the Board made a finding of probable "grooming" by a friar, more information and review are awaited before any final disposition is completed.

It should be noted that the Board discovered that of the first seven above friars sent to Board recommended professionals, four had, prior to convening of the Board, been identified to the Provincial Minister as sexual offenders. Following Provincial policy, appropriate and timely actions were taken based on information then available, i.e., psychological evaluations (in one case, a sexual offender evaluation), were conducted, and restrictions put in place (e.g., removal from ministry and continuing treatment, or, after evaluation and/or treatment, restricted ministry allowing no work with minors, requiring continued treatment, and monitoring). Given the additional new information received by the Board, these four friars were submitted for new, intensive, sex offender-specific evaluation and treatment, as noted above.

EFFECT ON VICTIMS

We talked with many men, some young men who are still leaving adolescence behind them, others who are middle aged with grown children. They described the impact sexual abuse at St. Anthony's Seminary had on their lives. The Board wants to share what it learned from these men by offering our impressions and observations of their experiences. It is important to keep in mind that children develop a sense and understanding of sexuality from authority figures, and that boys came to the seminary at age thirteen or fourteen years, when they were uniformly young and impressionable.

In general, reactions and responses to sexual abuse are not the same for each individual, except that an overwhelming majority rejected the Catholic Church. Thus, the effect and impact on victims abused at St. Anthony's varied from one victim to another. For some there was immediate, profound trauma, indelibly imprinted in their consciousness. For others, it was not until later in life that memories returned, sparked by an upsetting occurrence that triggered traumatic flashbacks. Although these episodes were painful, they often provided relief through a new-found understanding of the difficulties and struggles in their lives.

Central Themes

The following are recurring themes that we found among the victims:

No one would have believed me over a priest.

Some believed themselves to be the only ones who experienced sexual abuse. Others did not believe that they were the only ones subjected to such

abuse. As one man said, "No one would have believed me over a priest." That statement reflects the cultural attitudes the boys perceived to exist at that time, that a young boy's allegations against a priest would have had little or no credibility. As a general principle, it is more difficult for an adult victim to be believed when an offender is a respected member of the community, such as a teacher, doctor or law enforcement officer; and no one was more respected in the community of the seminary than a priest. Many students related that in addition to fear of being disbelieved, they felt there was simply nowhere to turn, no "approachable figures" to talk to about issues of sexuality, let alone sexual abuse.

Am I a homosexual or have I become homosexual?

Unlike girls who have been molested by a female, boys molested by a male often find themselves struggling to sort out the true nature of their sexual orientation. It is common for abused boys to ask, "Am I a homosexual or have I become homosexual because of being molested by a man?" Or they question why they were chosen: "Is there something feminine about me?" As a result of their sexual abuse, many St. Anthony's students were confused about their sexual orientation, and some subsequently experimented with homosexual relationships in an attempt to understand who they were sexually as men. In contrast, there were some who identified themselves as gay prior to being abused and did not believe the abuse to be a factor in their sexual orientation.

Had I been a real man, I would have been able to stop the abuse.

Some men experienced damage to their personal sense of masculinity. Our culture's definition of masculinity does not allow for boys to be nonassertive, fearful, vulnerable or helpless. From childhood on, boys learn that masculinity

means not being weak or passive, in short, not being a victim. It is common for victims of sexual abuse to have feelings of failure for not being able to live up to stereotypical views of masculinity by successfully protecting themselves. They reason that if they had been real men, they would have been able to stop the abuse. It is not surprising that some of the survivors have a history of hypermasculine behavior, violent acting out, rebelliousness, or problems with authority. They were demonstrating an overcompensating "maleness" to address feelings of inadequacy. The ability to find security or comfort in one's identity as a man is impaired or precluded by the experience of sexual victimization.

Even though I know I can trust my girlfriend, I am constantly haunted by the fear she will betray me.

Many of the victims disclosed a history of difficulty in establishing and maintaining stable, close, trusting, intimate relationships. Some became involved in abusive relationships, mirroring the sexually abusive episodes they had already experienced. They found it difficult to become intimate and vulnerable within a relationship because they were afraid to be hurt or taken advantage of again. One man expressed his feelings about this by saying, "Even though I know I can trust my girlfriend, I am constantly haunted by the fear she will betray me in some way." To some, just a simple touch on the arm by a girlfriend or wife is sometimes intolerable because it triggers their memory of the abuse.

I idolized priests. I wanted to be just like them.

Abuse perpetrated by a cleric often causes serious spiritual damage. Seminarians, whatever their level of commitment to becoming a priest, were at least contemplating such a vocation. One victim stated, "I idolized priests. I

wanted to be just like them." Many victims came from families who held priests in high regard and enjoyed close friendships with priests, in some instances, the actual offenders. However, a familiar pattern emerged: after being abused, many students left the seminary early, causing families to speculate about their reasons for returning home; the apparent reason in many cases was academic inadequacy, which in turn became another source of shame. Other students who disclosed the abuse to their families were re-victimized by their families' refusal to believe the priest in question could do such a thing. Some may also feel guilty or sinful for accurately perceiving a priest's sexual intentions towards them, thinking, "How can I think such evil thoughts about a priest who is a man of God?"

I believe God has a twisted sense of humor and he uses me for his amusement.

Another aspect of spiritual wounding is the experience of feeling forsaken by God. Victims ask, "How could God have allowed this to happen if He truly cares?" This is highly significant for young men of thirteen and fourteen who were attending the seminary out of a strong desire to lead a life in service to God. Sadly, most of the men we talked to had rejected the Catholic Church and a God they felt had abandoned them. One man stated, "I believe God has a twisted sense of humor and he uses me for his amusement." In some instances, those who were the most desirous of emulating priests were the most trusting, and thus, the most vulnerable. Students who came from families where the Church was the hub of their lives, who invited priests into their homes as friends, appeared to have been unable to be objective enough to question a priest's actions. They seemed to "normalize" such behavior by thinking it must be all right if a priest suggested it. Only later in life did some students who received back rubs from

priests, after lights-out, recognize their sexual nature. They remember the tension in the room, that the priest was acting or breathing strangely, and a feeling that something might happen, although they did not know what it might be. These were not fond or pleasant memories of affection, but rather memories of a confusing and frightening ritual that they prayed would go away.

I felt guilt and a crisis of conscience that I would have made a priest break his vows.

As indicated previously, there was no predictable effect related to the type of abuse. What might seem to be nonintrusive events to many, e.g., episodes that did not involve genital touching, had a profound impact on some victims. One victim experienced a priest's sexual designs on him and became confused and guilt-ridden, resulting in a crisis of conscience. The student, not the priest, broke off the contact. Though fortunate to break away before overt sexual abuse took place, the student stated he felt guilt and a crisis of conscience that he could make "a priest break his vows." This is an example of the role reversal that takes place when there is abuse of any sort.

The belief that because the perpetrator is a man of God, sexual abuse must be the fault of the victim, is an illustration of the power that priests wield, and of the vulnerability of their victims. There is a special power a priest possesses by virtue of his position. The victim reasons that since a priest would never voluntarily break his vows, it must be he who tempted the priest and is guilty. For some, this can be sin for which there may be no forgiveness.

For three months I planned my suicide to make it look like an accident to my family.

A number of the former students have a history of suicide attempts. One man who was contacted by the Board was actually planning his suicide when he received the letter from the Board of Inquiry. He stated that if it were not for the persistent, continuous and personal effort of Ray Higgins, Board Coordinator, he would not be alive today. Another stated that he would put a pistol in his mouth night after night but could not bring himself to pull the trigger.

How can I bring a child into a world this unsafe?

One of the crippling aspects of sexual abuse is the development of a "victim mentality," a view of oneself and the world that continues long after the abuse ends. This may involve feeling as powerless, helpless and worthless in present-day situations as during the abuse. Some victims also transfer the character of the offenders onto the rest of the world (the world is not safe; it is dangerous and unpredictable) or onto the gender of the perpetrator ("all men will hurt me") or onto all clergy ("all priests are offenders"). Victims may believe that everyone is like the perpetrator ("If I can't trust a priest, then who can I trust?").

A history of alcohol and drug abuse was prevalent among the victims. Many are still struggling with this as they try to numb the pain of sexual abuse. Other problems reported to the Board included difficulty managing anger, sexual compulsiveness, self-destructive behavior, depression, isolation, poor self-concept, dissociative behavior. The Board is aware of two student victims who later committed sexual offenses themselves. While most victims of abuse do not become perpetrators, molestation is found in the histories of offenders at a much

higher rate than for non-offenders. In summary, the Board found that for most of the victims it interviewed, the aftermath of sexual abuse is this: the pain and confusion from sexual violation at St. Anthony's is long lasting, traumatic, and caused many victims to adopt extremely unhealthy and isolating behaviors in attempting to cope with their experience.

Finally, it needs to be mentioned that another effect that we observed is the phenomenon Keith Mar, M.F.C.C. and Kathleen Baggarley, M.F.C.C. have characterized as the "Black Hole Theory." The men interviewed by the Board were mostly in their thirties or older, and had gone through enough painful life experiences to realize that the effects of their abuse were persistent and unavoidable. We believe that many, if not most, younger men seem to fall into a "black hole," i.e., for a time they feel strong enough to leave the abuse behind them or deny it altogether. It is significant that the men in their twenties who did contact us did so only because of continued personal outreach and support by family members involved with the Greater Community or fellow seminarians. Only a few men in their twenties responded to our mass mailings. We suspect that there are other students, as yet unidentified, who will come forward only when they are ready and able to begin dealing with the effects of their abuse. One of the main functions of the permanent board will be to help them when their time comes.

One Student's Experience

This student tried to detach himself during the abuse by watching the brightly colored aquarium fish in the darkened room where the molestations occurred. It happened frequently during the entire school year. The abuse preyed on his mind and he could not concentrate. His grades dropped, and he began to hate everything about the seminary, until finally one morning, he could not take it any longer. He threw a shoe at the wake-up bell, got into trouble and quit. He has never recovered his self-esteem, and to this day, in spite of the fact that he is a successful contractor, he still considers himself a failure.

After leaving the seminary, this student abused drugs, had problems with priests, religious leaders, college teachers and others in authority.

He continues to have problems with severe depression, substance abuse, and self-destructive behavior. He had planned his suicide because of his feelings of failure and low self-esteem, working out a way to make his death appear accidental to his wife and children.

He is now undergoing therapy and recently stated that he is trying to accept himself for who he is today; not who he might have been.

At present, this man is a very spiritual person, but he has totally rejected Catholicism.

Another Student's Experience

This student stated that he went into St. Anthony's as a happy young boy, but left as a confused and angry young man, who did not know why until he remembered being molested.

After leaving the St. Anthony's, he was very rebellious and could not contain his rage. Around age 23 or 24 he began to get into fights in bars, seemingly unable to leave a bar without hitting someone.

He has abused himself with drugs, including shooting cocaine, and continues to drink a lot. He has problems with severe depression and has attempted suicide on many occasions.

He cannot seem to trust anyone and as a consequence, is not successful in relationships. He has a son from a failed relationship. When he gets into a relationship, he becomes distrustful and jealous. He also has difficulty relating to his parents and gets into a fight with them almost every time he visits.

He has questioned his sexual orientation in the past because of his relationship problems, feeling that he must be gay. At one time he considered "chucking it all" and adopting a homosexual lifestyle. He is now glad that he did not because he is able to understand the source of his sexual confusion.

This student is currently in therapy paid for by the Province and is making a valiant effort to straighten out his life.

Summary of Effects on Victims

Not every victim had all the problems listed below, but each was experienced by one or more of the St. Anthony's students abused by friars.

1. *Feelings of anger*
2. *Rejection of authority*
 - a. *Blaming of parents*
 - b. *General distrust of men*
3. *Memory repression*
4. *Difficulty concentrating*
5. *Depression*
6. *Low self-esteem and achievement*
 - a. *Academic difficulties at St. Anthony's*
 - b. *Difficulty completing college*
 - c. *Feeling of failure no matter how successful years later*
7. *Damaged self-concept*
 - a. *Self-hatred*
 - b. *Feelings of unmanliness*
 - c. *Loss of innocence*
8. *Loss of spirituality*
 - a. *Rejection of Catholicism*
 - b. *Rejection of God*
9. *Alcoholism and drug abuse*
10. *Doubts about sexuality*
11. *Difficulty with personal relationships*
 - a. *Inability to maintain serious relationships*
 - b. *Broken marriages*
12. *A few victims' becoming perpetrators*
13. *Dissociative behavior*
14. *Suicidal ideation and attempts*

OBSERVATIONS

Effect on Family and Community

The pain and betrayal of sexual of abuse is felt beyond the circle of actual victims. The effect of the sexual abuse at St. Anthony's Seminary has generally been outrage that the abuse occurred and loss of credibility of the friars, as well as the credibility of the Church hierarchy and all clergy. Parents of victims go through a grieving process similar to experiencing the death of a family member. There is depression, guilt, sorrow, anger and pain. Even former seminarians who were not abused have suffered the loss of their cherished memories of the institution, and the mentors in whom they believed.

The families of the victims are also victims. Parents have feelings of guilt arising from lingering questions of whether they could have prevented injury to their children. They question the way they raised their child: What made him want to leave home? Were we wrong to turn over parental responsibility to the friars? Why didn't we recognize that our son was being molested? Should we have let him return home when he first asked? Why didn't he feel he could tell us? We should have been more understanding of his problems (anger, alcohol and drug abuse, etc.). We might have saved him from devastation and feelings of hopelessness. If we had spent more time with him when he was young, we could have done more to develop his self-confidence. Have we caused our son to lose the best years of his life?

Parents and members of the Greater Community are angry at God, Church hierarchy and all clergy in general, and toward the friars and faculty of St.

Anthony's in particular. Parents ask: Where was God when my son was so severely molested? Many people ask why the Church does not do something about sexual child abuse. Why do clergy continue to deny that it is a serious problem? Are they all perpetrators? Why don't they speak out against sexual abuse? Families sometimes think all that the friars care about is protecting themselves that they do not care about the victims, that they are more concerned about how much they hurt, and how the spectre of false accusations, and damage to the morale of the Franciscans. Many people wonder how other friars could not have known about the abuse at the time.

The effect on the St. Anthony's Seminary Greater Community is wide-ranging. There has been some divisiveness. Some members were in denial that anything happened. Some believed that it would ruin the Greater Community to have the investigation. Some thought the inquiry was a witch hunt that would bankrupt the friars. Nonetheless, in general there has been solid support for the Board from the members of the Greater Community.

A Mother's Experience

A student was molested by two friars. He had a clear memory of his abuse by one friar; however, he originally stated that he could not remember any of the details about another friar. He later reported to a member of the Board that his memory had been recovered and gave a detailed account of the molestation by the second friar.

His mother, who was with him at the time his memory returned, was later interviewed by a member of the Board. She related that about 5:45 on a Saturday morning she found him lying on the couch trembling, pale and staring at the ceiling. Trying to comfort him, she asked if he was all right. His response was, "No, I'm not okay. I'm a mess! It's this whole thing with [another student], seeing how it messed him up too...going through it again with him...the walk through the seminary until some shitass friar ordered us off the grounds...the interview with the Board of Inquiry...."

After expressing his anger at all priests and friars, he began to despair, saying, "I'm losing it...can't work...can't think straight...can't cope...I'm scared." He began sobbing and trembling with spasms involving his entire body. Comforting him and holding him in her arms as though he were a six-year-old boy, she asked what he was afraid of at that moment. He responded between spasmodic sobs, "Fear all around me...helplessness...I'm so damned mad...it's tearing me apart. The seminary was filled with it [sexual activity]...there was no protection...no peer support."

Sobbing and trembling, he clung to her for several minutes and then began to hyperventilate. When asked if he could remember any more details, he nodded yes, pulled away from her and put his arm across his face. Suddenly, he said, "I remember...I remember it. I remember it all now!" He told her who it was, then putting both arms across his face, he said, "I can't tell you...it's too awful...I wouldn't do that to you, Mom!"

She asked him if he could write out everything that had come back to him, and he agreed. She gave him a tablet, pen and envelope. Sobbing and trembling, he wrote for about twenty minutes. Writing seemed to have a calming effect on him. When he finished, he placed the writing in the envelope and sealed it, then held it a few minutes before placing it under his keys on a table near him. Almost immediately, he went to sleep on the couch in a fetal position, and slept for about four hours. When he awakened, he appeared rested and responded warmly to his parents, telling his father that it seemed like a heavy weight had been lifted from his shoulders.

His mother described the episode as having watched her son go through an emotional grand mal seizure while he recovered his memory of the molestation which had occurred over ten years ago. She stated that the destructive effects on her son could fill a volume of horror. He has lost his Catholic faith and his family is struggling to keep theirs.

She stated, "The devastating effects on me and the rest of my family do not seem to have a limit. Trust has been destroyed. Will I ever be able to cope with my outrage in a constructive mode? I will never forget the effects of these criminal acts that have created so much anguish for us, nor will I ever forgive the perpetrators; only God can do that!"

BOUNDARIES AND CONCERNS

This section explores issues of boundaries and other concerns of the Board arising from its findings. One of our premises is that the friars were teachers as well as guardians, and as such, should be held to the rules of conduct for teachers and guardians. From that viewpoint, an obvious question that arises is how abuse of this magnitude could have gone on unchecked. There is no simple answer. One must consider the historical context; for example, the institutional changes that occurred after Vatican II, e.g., the shift from a system using a prefect of discipline to one employing class moderators. One must also recognize that at the seminary there existed a complex dynamic which was contributed to by a familial atmosphere; by attitudes of trust among the friars and towards their respective areas of responsibility; by secretiveness and cleverness of offenders; and by nondisclosure and internalization of experiences of abuse by the victims.

It must also be stated that within this system, over the years, many rules were broken: rules governing the conduct of guardians and teachers, and rules both explicit (canonical and constitutional law) and implicit in the religious life. Perpetrators had to use their authority as priests to isolate, intimidate, confuse and manipulate these young boys in order to satisfy their own needs and ensure silence. From the information provided by the students with whom we had contact, it appears to us that at times there was non-communication, denial, avoidance, and lack of sophistication about sexual issues among faculty and staff at St. Anthony's. Further, students were provided no clear understanding of what constituted appropriate behavior of their caretakers. This allowed the offenders to victimize students without any apparent fear of repercussion.

Private Rooms: Although the Board of Inquiry was assured that no student was ever allowed into the private rooms of the friars, the converse of this was heard time and time again from victims during the investigation. Despite both physical and psychological barriers (doors and rules), the perpetrators often molested students who they brought into their private rooms. One offender had a private room in a house next to the seminary where he had children in his room overnight. The Board learned that on several occasions, two young boys, nonseminarians, were at the friars' table for both dinner and breakfast the following morning.

Alcohol/Drugs: While some friars expelled students for drinking, others allowed drinking in their private rooms; one friar actually bought alcohol for students and permitted them to "sleep it off" in his room. One student reported that a lay teacher encouraged him to try a drug (amyl nitrate) in his private room.

Medical Exams: As indicated previously, a substantial amount of sexual abuse was perpetrated under the guise of medical examination and treatment. It is clear that friars were not doctors or nurses and should not have been allowed to act as such. There was an available on-call physician who could have been used in these instances

Massage: The Board was made aware of the fact that massages of students by faculty members, not all of whom were perpetrators, was an accepted occurrence during the latter years of the Seminary's operation. Given the age of the students and the power relationship between student and friar or teacher, it is doubtful that a true informed consent to a legitimate massage could

have been made. A full body massage poses a delicate and tricky situation, even if both participants are adults. Where a minor is the intended recipient, it is a decision to be made by his parents. Further, the instances of massage at the seminary, albeit many may have been performed in a completely nonsexual manner, created a blurred boundary which allowed perpetrators an avenue to exploit.

Physical Abuse: As mentioned, some students told of being beaten until they were bruised and bleeding. One student was voted "Most Beaten" by his classmates. Another student told of being backhanded by a friar so hard that he was lifted up and knocked off the cart upon which he was sitting. One teacher kept a supply of yardsticks to break over students' backs during class. Such physical intimidation was one tool used by this friar to help keep silent the students he sexually abused. Another student was dumped upside down into a garbage can by a lay faculty member. This kind of physical misconduct towards students blurred boundaries and diluted any sense that students had a right to the security and sanctity of their own bodies.

Student Sexual Abuse: Student-to-student sexual abuse was similar to the abuse perpetrated by friars in that it often involved an upper classman as perpetrator and a younger, smaller student as victim. Clearly, students did not feel there was a safe adult with whom to discuss issues of sexuality or masculinity; and particularly to whom they could turn for help in warding off or coping with the effects of sexual advances by another student.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In accordance with its prescribed duties, the Board developed recommendations addressing the issues of prevention of abuse and the treatment of both victims and perpetrators. The Board recognizes that there are Provincial programs (e.g., education about psycho-sexual issues in both initial and ongoing formation; establishment of a program of pastoral outreach to victims) in place designed to address these difficult issues. The Board has not attempted to describe these programs in any comprehensive way; however, we wish to acknowledge the significant steps already taken by the Province and to make recommendations which augment and support existing measures, while proposing new ones where we believe such to be necessary and appropriate.

I. REGARDING FRIARS

A. Prevention of Future Abuse

In order to keep sexually aberrant behavior from happening in the future as much as is humanly possible, we are recommending the following measures be taken by the Province:

1. Screening of Applicants: With an eye to assuring, to the extent possible, that those accepted into the fraternity of Friars are appropriate for a communal, ministerial, and celibate life, we recommend that certain assessment procedures be instituted. They are as follows:
 - a. Psychological Testing: to assess the general emotional and characterological status and stability of applicants, a general battery of personality, projective, intelligence and vocational protocols be administered;

- b. Specific Psychosexual Testing: to assess for deviant attraction (but not for sexual orientation), values, behavioral risk and dysfunction, a series of specific tests should be administered, such as:
- Interpersonal Reactivity Index
 - Social Avoidance and Distress Scale
 - Fear of Negative Evaluation Scale
 - Michigan Alcoholism Screening Test
 - Buss-Durkee Hostility Inventory
 - Burt Rape Myth Acceptance Scale
 - Attitudes Toward Women Scale
 - Abel and Becker Cognitions Scale
 - Abel Becker Sexual Interest Card Sort
 - Wilson Sex Fantasy Questionnaire
 - Multiphasic Sex Inventory
 - Penile Plethysmograph
- c. Detailed Sexual History: to aid in the above, each applicant should be required to provide a detailed sexual history which would be reviewed by the evaluator and clarified/expanded at the latter's discretion;
- d. Polygraph: To assure the veracity of the sexual history;
- e. Penile Plethysmograph (or any successor test, e.g., Abel Screen): to give some "objective" information to both applicant and the evaluator, to help through any denial regarding deviant attraction;
- f. Fingerprinting: to do an appropriate records check for any disciplinary or criminal background (as is routine for teachers, daycare providers, therapists, *et al.*);

[N.B.: It should be noted that the purpose of the above "psycho-technologies" is not to trap, demean or persecute any applicant. The purpose, rather, is to help such a person be direct and honest regarding matters that he may be loath

to discuss given the shame, embarrassment or guilt attached to them. Additionally, the findings of such approaches do not prove, nor should they be seen to prove, what someone will do in the future. Rather they may be indicators of possible problems in the future.]

2. Training: In the Formation program, both initial and ongoing, there should be training on sexual ethics and boundaries. Such training would include informal discussions in the Formation program, as well as more structured, instructional arenas, such as regularly scheduled lectures, workshops, required readings, and the like. Equally important, there should be formal academic courses in these areas given and required, most especially for those friars who will be in direct ministry with people, whether such friars be priests or brothers.

The content of such trainings and education would include:

- a. healthy sexuality in general (including psychosexual development and moral development concerning sexuality);
 - b. celibacy as positively lived;
 - c. sexuality/celibacy in the context of a religious fraternity;
 - d. sexual boundaries and limits;
 - e. misuse of position and power;
 - f. effects of molestation and sexual misconduct on victims
3. Policies: The Province should have a clear set of published and promulgated guidelines, directives, and delineated boundaries of behavior for friars. These should not be set forth nor be seen as rigid repressive controls, but rather as indicators and guideposts for behavior that witness to a truly Gospel life. These "norms" should deal at least with the following areas:
 - a. Vocational: What behaviors and internal dispositions does a Gospel life, committed to fraternity, poverty and celibacy require of a friar in relation to other people? Such guidelines

should be both theoretical and quite specific. (For example, the Gospel requires that others be respected as fellow children of God and holy parts of Creation. Thus, one does not think of them or use them as sexual objects, either in fantasy or act, and one confronts any thinking that would permit such usage and looks for help to deal with it.) What are positive and healthy ways Christians interact with others?

- b. Ministerial/Professional: Norms or guidelines for the specific ministry each friar has should be established; that is, what is the way a person with a particular "job" within the Franciscan life comports himself? What are the difficult or problems areas? This may differ from ministry to ministry. Nonetheless, each task (whether it be parochial work, teaching, community development, AIDS ministry, physical labor, managerial direction, etc.) has its own rules and demands; these should be spelled out as to how they most especially apply to friars. Examples and resources might be:
- (1) School teachers' ethical and behavioral guidelines;
 - (2) Medical professionals' ethics;
 - (3) Dual relationship issues for psychotherapists;
 - (4) Norms for pastoral counselors.
- c. Communal: Given the training on sexuality that should be given to all friars, there should also be clear guidelines for personal interaction within Franciscan communities. A few areas such norms should address would be:
- (1) Healthy personal intimacy (within the fraternity but not limited to it);

- (2) Mutual respect for other friars, including care and concern for others' frailties and failings, and being each other's "keeper";
 - (3) A commitment through trainings and channels for clear, charitable and assertive communication, both between individual friars (lateral) and with superiors (vertical).
4. Help: When a friar realizes or fears that he has a problem with sexual behavior (or urges towards such), there should be a clear and generally anonymous channel set up for the friar to get help. Examples of such methods are:
- a. a friar or non-friar (or non-religious, non-cleric or non-professional) staffed confidential "hotline," from which a friar could get immediate support, guidance and referrals;
 - b. a designated therapist, expert in the area of sexual behavior problems, to whom a friar could go for confidential treatment;
 - c. the Provincial or his agent to whom the Friar could go in confidence to get help and/or specific and specialized assessment of his risk of acting out, and have the matter remain confidential from the rest of the Province.

B. Reported Friar Offenders

This report has described the conduct of friars we believe to have committed sexual offenses against minors at St. Anthony's Seminary, the number and type of offenses, and their effects on victims. We have been in contact with the Provincial Minister as offenders have been disclosed, so that he might take action to protect any further possible victims and to get assessment and treatment for known (and suspected) offenders. Below we summarize what we believe should be done in the future with friars who are reported to have molested children or who have acted out inappropriately or criminally in a sexual way.

1. Assessment/Investigation: With a credible report, a friar should undergo an assessment to see what risk he may pose in the future, and what treatment he needs for past offenses. Such assessment should minimally include:
 - a. Offense Information:
 - (1) Clear information of who has been victimized, what the friar is reported to have done and how often, recognizing that initial reports are often incomplete and get filled out later as victims' memories become more clear;
 - (2) Details of prior placements and former jobs and lifestyle, in case further investigation is needed;
 - (3) Information gathered from victim, friar, superiors, staff and other appropriate persons regarding friars' placement, behavior and lifestyle -- and, when possible, their reactions to the report(s);
 - b. Additionally, the Province should establish a current thoroughgoing protocol for investigation, looking to the experience of other Provinces, orders and dioceses, as well as to children's protective service and criminal procedures.

2. Clinical Evaluations: When a report is made and is credible, a referral of the friar for clinical evaluation should be made. The purpose of such evaluations is to judge the level of deviance, the openness to treatment, the risk of re-offending, the need for treatment and the best placement. The purpose of evaluation is not to determine whether the offense occurred, whether the friar can be "cured" (as distinct from being "treated"), or whether he and/or the Province can be sure that he will not re-offend.
 - a. Expertise: The mental health professional who performs the evaluation of any alleged friar-offender should be licensed in his field and state, should have practiced independently for at

least five years, should be experienced in the evaluation and treatment of sex offenders, should be able to demonstrate (not just claim) such experience (i.e., through published writing, through knowledge of the literature, programs and modalities in the field, through referrals [attorneys, probation officers, CPS workers, district attorneys, professional organizations, colleagues]), should be able to demonstrate ongoing training in the field and membership in organizations specific to sex offender treatment (e.g., Association for the Treatment of Sexual Abusers);

- b. Approach: The theory and technique such evaluators use should be mainstream and justifiable as usual and customary; they should not cater to special concerns (e.g., religious communities). They should not justify unusual or extreme methods, no matter the internal coherence of the justification.
- c. Procedure: The evaluation should contain many of the different tests available and not be limited to one or two. It should include contact with victims and collateral sources (e.g., former therapists, superiors, personnel file, placements, etc.). It should include both personality assessment and deviance evaluation (i.e., DSM III-R Axis One and Axis Two). It should be concise and should contain clear descriptions of the problems, and recommendations for the friar and for the provincial response.
- d. "One Hat": Any therapist or evaluator who agrees to do both the assessment and the treatment should not be used in either guise. It is unethical and clinically close to impossible to evaluate and treat the same sex-offender client.
- e. The Province should have a list of evaluators, who fit the above description, ready to present to a suspected offending friar so that he and the Provincial may pick one appropriate

to the friar's personality, offense, location and needs. While the Provincial should be sensitive to and supportive of the friar, he should also be aware of the friar's possible resistance and denial as an ultimate reason for avoiding evaluation.

- f. Outpatient: The norm for evaluation should be outpatient, that is, friars should be evaluated in the community by mainstream sources; they should not be sent away to residential treatment facilities no matter what these facilities claim to be able to do, and no matter what their reputation is (whether it be for treating "sexual addiction" or priest/religious offenders). The purpose for this preclusion is to get the best evaluations available; to avoid even the appearance of the "geographic cure" and of coddling an offender by sending him to a "country club"; to keep the friar's awareness connected to the community and not allow him to separate his offense from the people upon whom he perpetrated it; to conserve Provincial resources for the victims' needs (while attending to the friars'); and to avoid the risk and scandal of evaluation in a treatment facility that is later shown to be clinically incompetent and/or negligent in the supervision of patients and the safety of the community.
- g. Exceptions: Exceptions to outpatient evaluation and community placement would be cases in which an alleged offender is violent and needs a locked facility, or in which he is so substance-dependent that he needs sobriety prior to sexual offense evaluation, or in which a psychiatric condition (major depression, anxiety, suicidality, reactive psychosis, etc.) or characterological problem (e.g., avoidant or dependent personality) requires treatment before there can be evaluation for the reported offense. In such cases as the latter, inpatient treatment for such problem could be considered, but not in lieu of the sexual evaluation.

- d. It should not be "sexual addiction," 12-step or "self-help". The Board questions the efficacy and appropriateness of these treatment models for sexual offenders, due, among other things, to the lack of participation by trained professionals
 - e. Term: The length of treatment should be from two to five years, depending upon the severity of the offender's psychological and sexual disturbance; any program that alleges that it can do it sooner should be suspect and not used.
 - f. List: A list of appropriate treatment providers has already been provided the Province by the Board of Inquiry; the permanent board should look into expanding this list according to the diverse areas in the Province.
4. Prevention of Re-Offense/After-Care/Relapse Prevention: One of the main reasons for disclosing offenders is so that they may get treatment and, because of the treatment, be reasonably sure that they will not re-offend. However, treatment isolated to therapeutic work alone with a therapist in his/her office is not enough; complete treatment and preclusion of recidivism must include therapy, plus external social controls and reinforcement. This should be predicated on:
- a. Commitment on the part of the friar and the Province to change and control of the offender's sexual behavior should be paramount, not the "feeling good" of the friar, not a comfortable or convenient place to live, not the "getting this over with" discomfort of the offender.
 - b. The optimal situation is a program in one place, one friary/placement, where all friar offenders would go, located near a treatment program expert in sexual offense therapy (or, preferably, near several such treatment facilities). This placement would have a management team of monitors and

support personnel and a structure to assist behavioral, social, emotional, cognitive, and pastoral change and self-responsibility. Given the numbers of friars disclosed in this report and the statistical likelihood of future disclosures, such a placement facility would seem quite sensible and practical; and it need not cost the Province any more than attempts at individual placements. It could be done at existing facilities, say as a wing or part of a retreat center.

- c. Therefore, the Province of St. Barbara should establish its own Wounded Brothers program, possibly modeled after Bert Miller's program in the St. Louis area.
- d. During establishment of such a program, or if there are compelling reasons why creation of such a program is impracticable in the near future, the Province should establish, as the next best and significantly less viable alternative, a Comprehensive Relapse Prevention Program with the following elements:
 - (1) The central, governing feature is that each friar would be assigned to a comprehensive, multi-modal, outpatient sex abuse treatment program which consists of a group of professionals who operate in an ongoing, collaborative manner and provide the following services to the offender:
 - (a) Individual therapy;
 - (b) Group therapy;
 - (c) Assertiveness training;
 - (d) Stress reduction training;
 - (e) Psychiatric consultation and medication;
 - (f) Polygraphy; and,
 - (g) Plethysmography (or any successor test, e.g., Abel Screen).

- (2) Placement of friars shall be made to allow for participation in a outpatient program meeting the above criteria, rather than placing a friar and then trying to construct a program around the placement.

- (3) An individual friar's relapse prevention program should be directed and overseen by a Case Management Team consisting of:
 - (a) A designated representative from the outpatient treatment program;
 - (b) The friar deputed by the Provincial Minister to oversee and manage the Province's relapse prevention program on a Province-wide basis;
 - (c) The local superior of the facility where the friar is placed; and,
 - (d) A designated representative of the permanent board (known as the "Independent Response Team").

- (4) Each friar offender should be assigned a Monitor, who will:
 - (a) Be carefully and thoroughly screened, trained, and provided regular education on an ongoing basis;
 - (b) Be a lay person whenever possible;
 - (c) Report to and receive direction from the case management team, participating in team meetings, but without decision-making authority;
 - (d) Monitor and regulate the whereabouts and activities of the friar at all times, obtaining and maintaining written verification of thereof as necessary (e.g., attendance at therapy, workshops, work, etc.);

- (e) Be responsible for the friar's compliance with all applicable restrictions;
 - (f) Confront, support and encourage the friar as appropriate;
 - (g) Help the friar be more effective in, and supported by the friar's participation in the life of his placement community; and
 - (h) Keep the friar aware that his placement is a privilege, and if necessary, recommend termination thereof and transfer of the friar to a more restrictive and secure placement.
- (5) Unless a unified "Wounded Brothers" program has been established, no more than one friar should be placed at any facility, unless it can be clearly demonstrated that sufficient safeguards exist to allow for the secure placement of additional friars.
- (6) Guidelines, procedures and criteria with respect to secure ministry and secure work opportunities for friar offenders shall be modeled after and adapted from those of the Wounded Brothers program, St. Louis, Missouri.
- (7) Vocational (employment) counseling should be established for those friars who cannot safely be returned to ministry.

II. ONGOING RESPONSE TO VICTIMS AND FAMILIES

The primary issue in the abuse of minors is, of course, the effect on the victims and their families (including both emotional and spiritual effects). The Province should show concern for what has already happened to them by the abuse itself as well as by the disclosure process; additionally, the friars should attend to the chronic after-effects that will occur. This two-fold response, to both past and future, should minimally include the following:

- A. Pastoral Outreach: to past victims, where such has not already been done, and to any future victims who disclose, the Province should immediately attempt to reach out to and contact the victims in an empathic, concerned and supportive way. The victims should be shown genuine Christian loving concern for their emotional well being, as well as for their religious lives and belief. This would appear best done in an accepting and believing atmosphere rather than one fraught with suspicions about unfounded reports, disbelief, and adversarial positions. Though the victims may at times show great anger and resentment, the friars are urged to recall their vocation to be brothers of lesser estate and acceptance and service. Also the Province is urged to be aware of how fragile the faith of victims may be, and how an unmeasured or neglectful response by the friars could well aid in the death of that belief and thus further victimize those already hurt.
- B. Therapy: As a symbol of Gospel loving concern, the Province should be immediate in its offering and providing treatment specific to the needs of abuse victims. A process for this has already been established by the Board of Inquiry, and we offer it as a model for the Province to continue to follow.
- C. Support Groups: where possible and requested, support groups for victims, their families, Franciscan parishioners and laity (i.e., for the wider number of people negatively affected by the abuse's ripple effect) should be established to help healing of these victims, to provide true Franciscan service and concern for those hurt by the acts of fellow friars. The specific form of such groups should be affected by the particular needs of a given community. A model of one such effort has begun with the lay community around St. Anthony's Seminary.
- D. Revisiting St. Anthony's Seminary: For those wishing it as an effort to facilitate their healing, the frequent chance for victims and their therapists to visit the seminary, to review and recapture, according to the demands of their particular healing, should be afforded. Such a visit (or visits) can often

be important and powerful in recapturing and integrating assaults, in coming to terms with them.

- E. Apology Sessions: For both offender's and victim's growth and healing, it may be suggested by the victim and his therapist that there be a formal apology session between the victim and offender, with both therapists present, in a place and at a time of the victim's choice. The offender must be ready to accept total responsibility for his actions without placing blame elsewhere, e.g., alcohol, celibacy, or loneliness. The offender's therapist must have rehearsed with the offender, the latter's apology and gone over possible questions the victim might ask to be certain there are no thought-disordered comments or placement of blame on victims. Prior to the session, there should be written and agreed-to rules of procedure. It should be in a safe place for the victim (e.g., his therapist's office). The apology session can be preceded by a videotape of the offender apologizing to the victim in advance and/or a record of the actual session may be kept (e.g., audio or videotape). Such sessions allow the victim to tell the offender what he experienced and now thinks and feels, in an effort to recapture some power over the molestation. It allows the victim to ask the offender questions personally important to him, and it affords the offender a chance to openly accept responsibility, to admit his awareness of why what he did was abusive, and to respond to questions from the victim, outline a plan for amends, etc. The particular form of such sessions should be worked out on a case-by-case basis.
- F. Visible Accountability: In line with the above process, there should be some way that the victim and the extended affected community can be aware of how both the offender and the Province are taking responsibility. Thus there should be available to such interested parties information as to where the offender is in treatment, how he is doing, what, if any assignment he has or is planned, his plans for making amends. Additionally, information about the offender's HIV status may be of vital importance to the victim and should be shared. If the offender has not been tested, he should be so, for both his and the victim's benefit. (One is reminded that many offenders in the civil and criminal arenas are required by court order to undergo HIV testing for the knowledge and benefit of a

victim. Should any less be undertaken by a friar who has committed his life to love and service, who has violated that commitment and now wishes to right his wrongs?)

III. LAITY IN GENERAL

It would not be imprudent to suggest that the Province has some duty to aid in the assault on child abuse both within itself and in society at large. The latter call is due to both the involvement of members of the Province in the horror of molestation and to the more general call to religion in this regard. As Jade C. Angelica says:

I believe that the religious communities possess the opportunity and the power to name the atrocity of child abuse, to begin dismantling the denial, to offer solace to the victims and survivors, to insist upon accountability from the abusers, and to plant the seeds of universal outrage. I also believe that the religious communities are morally obligated to do so. "We didn't know" can no longer be accepted as an innocent excuse for not protecting our children. (A Moral Emergency: Breaking the Cycle of Child Sexual Abuse, p. xii)

Thus we are suggesting a two-fold response to the people and the Church with whom the Province comes in contact:

- A. Prevention: The Province should take upon itself to provide education and training in child abuse to parents, teachers, children in Confraternity of Christian Doctrine (CCD) and parochial schools and with its own employees.
- B. Resource Communication: The Province should also help to communicate to the public, both Catholic and not, the resources it has for those abused by fellow friars, to wit:
 - 1. The Independent Response Team (permanent board), its function resources and availability;
 - 2. The presence and availability of an ombudsperson, an independent lay person, trained in the area of child sexual abuse, who serves as

an additional contact to help in making report of sexual abuse within the Province and acts as an advocate and support within the reporting process;

3. The accessibility of the Provincial or his deputies to whom abuse by a friar can be reported and the provision of support and help through this office directly;
4. Information on the history of the problem within the Province, of the Province's response, of the purpose and goal of the Province's past, present and future response.

IV. PERMANENT BOARD ("INDEPENDENT RESPONSE TEAM")

The Independent Board of Inquiry Regarding St. Anthony's Seminary was established as a preliminary and temporary body to investigate and assess reports of abuse by friars at their minor seminary. Its purpose was also to set up a process whereby pastoral service could be provided to the victims (e.g., in the form of referrals and payment for treatment and the availability of a special pastoral agent) by the Province. Finally, its goal was to provide the Provincial with a report on its findings and recommendations. Part of the initial agreement with the Board was that when its term was over, there would be a permanent board established that would carry on its work as necessary regarding St. Anthony's Seminary and would handle any other such reports within the further confines of the Province.

The Board wishes to note regarding the permanent team:

- A. That a protocol for it was provided to us by the Provincial Minister and that we have responded with a suggested revised protocol (see Appendix, *Protocol for Independent Response Team for Sexual Misconduct and Abuse*);
- B. That special consideration must be given to the possibility that professionally mandated reports may be occasioned by future allegations and that a system for doing this must be set up. That in

its initial deliberations, the Response Team should determine a way to notify any people who come before it that allegations may have to be reported to the civil authorities (this is not an issue that this board had to face because all the people making allegations to us were adults and thus outside the purview of the Child Abuse Reporting law);

- C. That a neutral forum be established for talking with reported friars wherein their confidentiality be respected; That the fraternity in general be respected in its concerns for the impartiality of the Team's work; and that friars, too, be kept informed of the work and progress of the Team;
- D. That the Team develop a thorough protocol and description of the function and purpose of the ombudsperson (e.g., how this person is contacted, how he/she interacts with the Team, etc.);
- E. That it be clear to all coming into contact with the Team that any waiver of legal claims should not be a condition, nor the goal of the use of the ombudsperson or the provision of pastoral care or treatment through the Province;
- F. That it examine closely what should constitute a quorum and how this issue could impact its own process (i.e., should the quorum be a simple numeric one, or one by field, etc.);
- G. That it leave itself enough flexibility to deal with unforeseen issues, and new requirements or needs of victims and friar offenders.

THEOLOGICAL AND SPIRITUAL CONSIDERATIONS

Incarnational Theology

In the Mystery of the Incarnation, God became human in the person of Jesus Christ. Consequently, our human flesh is forever the meeting place of God with men and women. Our humanity in all its aspects is, therefore, holy ground. The human body and human sexuality are profoundly sacred, to be cherished and revered as privileged ways for people to come into contact with the Mystery of God. Spirituality based on this view of humanity empowers a person to make of these truths a lived reality in dealing with the practical situations of life.

Sadly, the full meaning and implications of the Incarnation have often been set aside as if they were too good to be true. Unable to comprehend that God could be humble enough to take up the weakness of human nature, Christological heresies through the centuries have watered down or denied the full meaning and power of the Incarnation. In so doing, they weakened and set aside the idea of the holiness and dignity of human nature. A kind of dualism resulted, which set the realm of the spiritual, the soul on a higher plane over against the material, the body, our "lower nature." Needless to say, this devalued notion of the body tended to weaken and destroy the notion of sexuality as a profoundly sacred reality. The integration of sexuality and deep spirituality was lost. Negative attitudes towards the body and sexuality became common, while the realm of the spiritual was safely set apart where it would not be contaminated by the material, bodily side of life. The attitude of reverence for the gift of sexuality was replaced by the outlook of a materialistic culture which exploits sex in many ways.

Current theology and spirituality have gone far in the effort to reinstate the values of Incarnational theology, to restore the sense of the sacredness of the human. However, we are still reaping the bitter fruits of failure to appreciate the sacredness of human sexuality. Many religious and priests, Franciscan friars included, received formation that included negative and even repressive attitudes toward sexuality. People were taught to pray and to engage in many practices of a fervent spiritual life which brought them close to the Lord, but these practices would often turn out to be a spirituality that was not really in touch with the practicalities of real life. Unable to deal with some very human psychological factors, out of touch with powerful emotions and needs for intimacy, this kind of spirituality was ill equipped to help friars deal with sexual needs and issues of intimacy. People with severe human problems, many of them sexual, found that prayer alone was not an adequate solution for their difficulties.

Spiritual Roots of Sexual Abuse

When people consecrated to God in the priesthood or religious life engage in dysfunctional behavior, such as sexual abuse of minors, one can only conclude that such behavior is symptomatic of serious and deeply rooted personal problems. Experience teaches that individuals who perpetrate such abuse are seriously wanting in regard to a spirituality that is in touch with their practical lives. The mystery of God fails to influence their choice of actions in significant ways. If their relationship to God is not vital, their relationships to other people are often woefully inadequate as well. Intimacy needs go unrecognized and unmet, and low self-esteem results. Often, these individuals deal with their alienation by compulsive absorption in only seemingly healthy involvements such as excessive work, and in patently unhealthy actions such as sexual abuse.

Needless to say, these unhealthy ways of coping only serve to accentuate the troubling personal difficulties of trying to live devoid of intimacy with God and others. Such people are alienated even from themselves. Dysfunctional and compulsive behavior such as sexual abuse proves an inadequate substitute for true intimacy. People who engage in this behavior are so very lonely and estranged.

The irony is that some, if not most, of these people are well educated and pastorally skilled in many ways. They may hold positions of authority which set them as mentors, teachers and spiritual guides for others. The problem is, however, that they are attempting to inculcate into others truths and ways of living they themselves have never integrated into their own lives; or perhaps they have gradually lost the power of ideals and values once interiorized but long neglected. Such men are in the painful position of leading a double life, living a lie as they try to teach and model for others a way of life they do not espouse deep in their own hearts. Small wonder that feelings of dishonesty and hypocrisy further erode self-esteem and serve to give greater impetus to abusive behavior. And all the while, the mind, in the face of the enormously painful truth of what is really going on builds up an ever more impregnable wall of denial.

How Can We Help the Situation?

Evidently, recovery from such spiritual disability requires that friars be helped once again, or perhaps for the first time, to espouse and live deeply the life they may have already vowed. This is absolutely necessary and crucial if there is

to be any chance for recovery from and cessation of abusive behavior. Is there any hope that this deep commitment can and will take place?

Such hope is fostered by a study of the psychological maturity of American priests published by the Bishop's Committee on Priestly Spirituality in a document entitled "The Spiritual Renewal of the American Priesthood." There is no reason to doubt that the results fit the situation of many religious as well. The pertinent text, slightly adapted to fit the situation of the offending friars reads as follows:

A large proportion of American priests [and religious] are underdeveloped psychologically. This does not mean that they are sick, but that their growth has been arrested. Generally they have not worked through the problems of intimacy, and their level of maturity is lower than their chronological age. They do not relate deeply or closely to other people. In itself, this is not an indictment of their spirituality, because they may possibly have a high degree of theological love for their fellow men and women but are unable to show it. In this case psychological blocks prevent the manifestation of love.

As a matter of fact, however, the spiritual life of these priests [and religious] is generally of a piece with their emotional arrest. Their faith tends to be superficial and not integrated into the rest of their lives. They tend to excuse themselves from the pain of the growing process into full maturity in Christ. The priesthood [the religious life], the Church, and the faith are used as screens and cover-ups for psychological inadequacy; religious ideals remain abstract and unactualized.

Once a psychological awakening occurs, however, and they come alive and start moving forward again as developing persons, they experience a spiritual conversion as well and begin to make progressive efforts to realize the spiritual ideals of the priesthood [and the religious life]. In similar reciprocity, a spiritual conversion can confront the immature person with the challenge of the Cross, by calling him to undergo the pain of growth into freedom or by helping him to accept what cannot be changed.

It would be hard to find a better statement of the challenge to spiritual growth that confronts some friars of St. Barbara Province at the present time. Sobering as it is, this study holds out hope that a psychological and spiritual growth process can begin which will deal realistically with dysfunctional behavior, and in particular, the issue of sexual abuse.

Nothing less than complete honesty, openness and sincerity in facing the present situation will do if true healing is to occur. This is the case for any spiritual growth, and it is surely needed in these crucial circumstances where the tendency toward denial is so strong. Needless to say, friars need a great deal of support and acceptance, as well as loving challenge and confrontation, if they are to be completely honest.

The Province can help this recovery process by providing and insisting upon adequate therapy and spiritual direction for friars who have perpetrated abuse. Moreover, the Province can provide preventive medicine by offering workshops, retreats and other programs dealing with issues of intimacy, sexuality and the affective life of the friars. But the Province and its administration can do only so much. When it comes to spiritual growth and striving for solid maturity, no one can do a friar's work for him or force him to grow. Deep personal reflection and prayer, fruitful use of spiritual direction, willingness to share personal faith and problems with one's brothers in the fraternity, and other aspects of a spirituality that is more than superficial can be implemented only by individual friars who make these things a regular part of their lives.

In this connection, it is worth citing Wayne Fehr's research on the importance of one's relationship to and understanding of God in the process of recovery for religious professionals in crisis:

The pathology of each patient almost always involves long-established images of God which are enslaving and anxiety-producing. The radical shift in mentality, ways of feeling, and patterns of behavior include new images of God which are liberating and empowering. (Fehr, W., "The Spiritual Assessment of Clergy in Crisis," Action Information, Alban Institute, Washington, D.C., 1990, vol. XVI, no. 4, p. 8.)

Evidently, all of this challenging work requires a great deal of courage and humility. It demands the recognition of personal weakness, sinfulness and serious misconduct. It requires one to experience a deep need for mercy and forgiveness. If all of this seems threatening, it is also vital to recall that it is precisely in the owning of our helplessness and need that we meet the God of mercy and forgiveness. This experience of meeting the God who forgives leads to a sense of inner healing and personal integration that comes in no other way. It is a fundamental movement of the spiritual life that brings life out of death, health out of sickness, new ways of living and acting out of our former dysfunctional attitudes. It is an experience of healing witnessed over and over again in the scriptures and in the lives of those who have opened themselves to the healing grace of God. Such a graced moment seems now at hand.

CONCLUSION

The Board is confident that it has made a thorough effort to reach as many students as possible. We also believe it is probable that, for one reason or another, not all victims have as yet come forward.

It will be the responsibility of the permanent board to carry on with the significant undertaking commenced by the Province of St. Barbara and to do so on a Province-wide basis. We wish to commend the Provincial Minister and the Province of St. Barbara for their willingness to initiate and maintain this concerted effort to pursue truth and healthy development, no matter how painful. It is only through commitment of this level by the Province, in conjunction with the continuing active and vocal participation of the Greater Community and other concerned laity throughout the Province, that this "graced moment" can be seized, and healing can begin.