

# **T RESTORING T** **TRUST**

## **A Pastoral Response to Sexual Abuse**

Summary

Bishops' Ad Hoc Committee on Sexual Abuse

November 1994



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November 14, 1994

National Conference of Catholic Bishops  
Annual General Meeting  
Omni Shoreham Hotel  
2500 Calvert Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20008

Dear Brother Bishops:

Ever since its inception during the June 1993 general meeting of the Conference, your Ad Hoc Committee on Sexual Abuse has been meeting bimonthly with staff and various consultants to develop resource material to assist you and your staff in dealing with the difficult challenge of child sexual abuse by clergy your own diocese.

This binder contains the first material approved by the Committee:

1. A review of the 157 policies received, together with highlighted sections and a commentary.
2. A report on ten Evaluation/Treatment Centers.
3. Articles on selected topics in different areas by authors with experience in the field. These are the first of approximately eleven articles which we have commissioned especially for your use.

Many people with expertise in different areas of this problem have willingly contributed their time and knowledge in the development of this material.

The Committee intends to continue developing, approving, and passing on to you, additional resource material for your binder as it becomes available.

We hope that this material will be of assistance in keeping you, and all those working with you in your dioceses, up to date in the most effective ways to deal with the problem of child sexual abuse.

If there are areas you would like to see covered in future materials or articles, please contact a member of the Committee or staff.

With kind personal regards, I remain,

Sincerely yours,

Most Reverend John F. Kinney  
Chairman, Bishops' Ad Hoc Committee  
on Sexual Abuse

001585

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### INTRODUCTION

### POLICIES

### TREATMENT CENTERS

### ARTICLES

**"Pedophilia: Diagnostic Concepts, Treatment, and Ethical Considerations"**  
*Fred Berlin, MD, Ph.D. and Edgar Krout, M.A., Johns Hopkins Hospital, Baltimore, MD.*

**"The Role of the Diocesan Outside Counsel"**  
*Andrew J. Eisenzimmer, St. Paul, MN.*

**"Care for Victims and Their Families"**  
*Archbishop Harry J. Flynn, D.D., Archbishop of St. Paul and Minneapolis*

**"Priests, Power and Sexual Abuse"**  
*Dr. James J. Gill, S.J., M.D., Institute of Living the Harvard University Health Services*

**"The Role of the Diocesan In-House Attorney"**  
*Jack Hammel, Archdiocese of San Francisco (Legal Dept.), San Francisco, CA.*

**"The Media and Sexual Abuse Cases: Elements of a Media Plan"**  
*Msgr. Francis Maniscalco, Media Relations, NCCB.*

**"Recovered" Memories of Abuse - An Historical Reflection"**  
*Paul R. McHugh, MD, Johns Hopkins Hospital, Baltimore, MD.*

**"Parishes as Victims of Child Sexual Abuse:"**  
*Stephen J. Rossetti, Ph.D., D.Min., St. Luke Institute, MD.*

**"Expectations of Treatment for Child Molesters"**  
*Frank Valcour, MD, St. Luke Institute, Suitland, MD.*

001587

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **RESTORING TRUST**

#### **A PASTORAL RESPONSE TO SEXUAL ABUSE**

Because of instantaneous media coverage, or possibly direct experience, virtually all corners of this country are responding to the sexual abuse phenomenon. The spiritual, physical, and emotional harm caused by the actions of a few have affected the well being of many, most especially the victims, their families, and their communities.

Whenever someone is wounded by the betrayal of another member of the human family, restoring trust becomes the paramount need for the one offended. In the context of sexual abuse in the church, this need is recognized individually in the many diocesan policies and programs in place throughout the country, and collectively in the past statements and guidance offered by the NCCB. One of the instruments currently assisting the conference in this regard is its Ad Hoc Committee on Sexual Abuse.

The Ad Hoc Committee is pleased to offer this first installment of resource materials to help NCCB members respond to the need for restoring trust in this extremely sensitive and challenging area of sexual abuse by members of the church and in society at large. Responding to the pastoral needs of the diocesan church comes within the purview of the local bishop. Therefore the comments or suggestions made by the Ad Hoc Committee in any of its reports are to be seen in this context, and are in no way binding for local implementation.

001588