



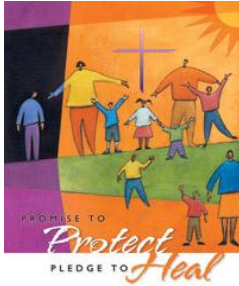
ARCHDIOCESE OF SANTA FE
OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS/MEDIA
4000 Saint Joseph Place NW
Albuquerque, NM 87120-1714

PRESS RELEASE

From: Celine B. Radigan, Director

Voice 505. 831.8180, FAX 505.831.8248, Email cradigan@archdiosf.org

Response to the John Jay College Report



ALBUQUERQUE, NM – Wednesday, May 18, 2011—IMMEDIATE RELEASE— *The findings of this recent John Jay College report underscore the critical role that each of us has in protecting our children and youth. The Archdiocese of Santa Fe **Safe Environment Training Program** founded on zero tolerance of any form of sexual misconduct and constant vigilance has proven to be successful. I am pleased to report as a result of our strong commitment and aggressive educational training, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops auditors (a team of retired FBI Agents) have found the Archdiocese to have successfully passed each of the last eight annual audits and has certified us to be in compliance with the **Charter of the Protection of Children and Young People.***

*The Archdiocese has done everything to renew and to restore the trust of our people. There is great life in the Church! Since I was installed as the eleventh Archbishop of Santa Fe, we have had over 55,000 teenagers confirmed and are now in the process of confirming an additional 3,500 young Catholics! Three new churches are being built and we are expanding and renovating several others. We currently have 26 seminarians who will be ordained within the next few years. I continue to pray for the recovery of all victims. **Archbishop Michael J. Sheehan***

The *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*, adopted by the U.S. Bishops in 2002, called for two studies on the issue of clergy sexual abuse in the United States. The John Jay College for Criminal Justice¹ conducted both studies. Today, the John Jay College released the second study, [*The Causes and Context of Sexual Abuse of Minors by Catholic Priests and Deacons in the United States 1950-2002*](#). The report is available at <http://tinyurl.com/3tnw753>. (The first, *The Nature and Scope of Sexual Abuse of Minors by Catholic Priests and Deacons in the United States 1950-2002*, was completed in 2004.)

The report explains how physical settings and personal psychology played a role within culture and organizational environments allowing abuse to occur. Since 1985, the Catholic Church has built and delivered training on sexuality and abuse for priests and laity. Seminaries in the United States, developed and implemented curriculum to teach seminarians about the causes of abuse, the harm done by abuse, and how to safeguard against abuse. Concurrently, most United States dioceses have implemented all-encompassing and aggressive programs specifically aimed at correcting environmental elements which contributed to the vulnerability of children.

No other private institution in the United States has more thoroughly studied its methods or implementation of protection of children. Nor has any other institution been held to such close scrutiny. In the end, the studies and the scrutiny have resulted in comprehensive measures which benefit children and society at large.

The *Charter of the Protection of Children and Young People* audit process is comprised of several areas, one being the verification of Safe Environment training. All adults and teens who care for or supervise children in the Archdiocese of Santa Fe must pass a background check and must complete the Safe Environment Training. To verify that training has been completed, records are kept to prove who registered for coursework, who attended training, and when they attended. Information is practical. For example, adult and teen participants are taught to

¹ Established in 1964, John Jay College of Criminal Justice of The City University of New York is an international leader in educating for justice. It offers a rich liberal arts and professional studies curriculum to upwards of 14,000 undergraduate and graduate students from more than 135 nations. In teaching and research, the College approaches justice as an applied art in service to society and as an ongoing conversation about fundamental human desires for fairness, equality and the rule of law.

avoid being alone with children for extended periods of time at school, church, or church sponsored settings such as during a retreat. The archdiocese completes background checks of all clerics, employees and adult volunteers working in each parish. The archdiocese also provides monthly training for adults to:

1. Recognize signs and symptoms of sexually abusive behaviors;
2. Create a safe environment for all children;
3. Mandatorily report suspected problems;
4. Understand how to intervene and offer emotional support.

In addition, students are taught about safe environments. They learn about personal space and the importance of keeping appropriate distances as well as proper/improper affection. Furthermore, they are instructed to report any incident in which they feel infringed upon.

Within the last year there have been over 60 Abuse Awareness Trainings throughout the Archdiocese resulting in over 3,500 background checks. Also, there is the Children and Youth Protection component which teaches our children to self protect. These classes are provided to all children enrolled in a Catholic school or attend religious education in their parishes. Every year in every grade, age appropriate materials are presented to children to give them the skills to know how to say *no*. The Archdiocese has teamed up with RCL Benziger to provide another resource for our catechists to use along with the many other established programs we already use. **The number of children now equipped with the skills to protect themselves more effectively is over 23,000 and continues to grow.**

Through the Charter, the United Conference of Catholic Bishops have made it clear it has been and always will be our responsibility to ensure the protection of our children and young people. The Archdiocese of Santa Fe has established and implemented policies such as codes of conduct, policies and procedures for the prompt reporting and handling of allegations, safe environment training, and nationwide criminal and sex offender background checks. Building safety barriers around children is an effective wall of protection from harm.

For more information and locations of the Abuse Awareness Trainings schedule go to www.archdiosf.org click on the *Prevention Workshops* link.

We, as members of the Church, should celebrate in what we have achieved even as we are mindful that is not an accomplishment that leads to a lessening of our efforts. Our efforts will always continue and grow.

Reporting possible abuse is mandated by law. Anyone who needs to report abuse should use one of two phone numbers:

1. The Victim Assistance Coordinator's telephone number 505.831.8144
2. The State of New Mexico Child Abuse Hotline 1.800.797.3260

For more information contact Annette Klimka, Archdiocesan Victims Assistance Coordinator 505.831.8144 or aklimka@archdiosf.org.