Salina Diocese releases list of substantiated allegations of clergy sexual abuse of a minor

By The Register

Salina — On Aug. 14, 2018, the Pennsylvania Grand Jury Report was released. The report exposed a vast scandal within the Church and incited Catholics, lay and clergy alike, to demand greater transparency and accountability from the leaders of the Catholic faith.

On Sept. 18, 2018, the Diocese of Salina informed the Attorney General’s office that newly appointed Bishop Gerald Vincke would be retaining the independent outside counsel of Cottonwood Law LLC of Hillsboro to conduct a thorough review of clergy personnel files and identify any potential cases of clergy misconduct with minors. Bishop Vincke had been serving in his new role as the Bishop of Salina for less than a month when he opened the investigation of the clergy files.

From September 2018 to January 2019, Courtney Boehm from Cottonwood Law conducted an audit of the diocesan clergy files. Boehm was selected for her expertise in criminal law and her independence from the Salina Diocese. At the time of the audit, Boehm was the Marion County Attorney and has since been appointed a district court judge in the 8th Judicial District which consists of Dickinson, Geary, Marion and Morris counties. Boehm reviewed 109 clergy files, ranging from clergy serving in the late 1800s to present day. The files reviewed consisted of any member of the clergy with allegations of misconduct against them. Upon the completion of the review, Cottonwood Law submitted a comprehensive report to Bishop Vincke. The report summarized the contents of each clergy misconduct file and the allegations that were made against each priest. The entirety of this comprehensive report was immediately turned over to the Attorney General’s office, who then forwarded it to the Kansas Bureau of Investigation (KBI).

Within the report, the auditor recommended which cases needed to be reviewed by the Lay Review Board. The Lay Review Board, formed in February 2000, is a group that reviews any allegation made against a member of the clergy and includes mental and medical health professionals, social service providers, civil and canon law professionals, law enforcement officials and two priests. In order to be thorough and transparent as possible, Bishop Vincke asked that files recommended by Boehm be reviewed, including those that were previously reviewed. During the month of February 2019, the Lay Review Board met and discussed the cases recommended by Cottonwood Law. Upon the completion of the Lay Review Board’s review of the Cottonwood Law report, 14 cases of diocesan clergy abuse of a minor were found to be substantiated.

The Diocese of Concordia was founded in 1887. The Diocese of Concordia then became the Diocese of Salina in 1944. During a span of 132 years, the diocese did not have a Diocesan Lay Review Board to address the needs of the people who are victims of abuse. In 2000, Bishop Gerald Vincke asked that the Lay Review Board be reviewed and the diocese made a commitment to be as thorough as possible in addressing the claims.

The Diocese of Concordia faced a number of challenges during this time, including the closure of several parishes and the consolidation of others. The diocese also had to deal with a number of financial issues, including a $2 million lawsuit settlement.

In September of 2018, shortly after I arrived in Salina, I asked that an independent review be conducted on our priest files. In this edition of The Register, you will find the results of that investigation. There are 14 diocesan priests who have substantiated allegations of abuse of a minor. Additionally, you will also find the results of the independent investigation conducted by the Order of Francisca Minor Province of St. Conrad, headquartered in Denver. They have listed 13 Capuchins who have served in our diocese at some point within their ministry and who have credible allegations of abuse of a minor.

I begin by offering my apologies to all people who are victims of clergy abuse and to the families of any person who was abused. My heart aches for you. I am sorry for any time in the past when the Church did not appropriately respond to the plea of an individual who was a victim of abuse. There have been times in the past when the Church failed to address the needs of the people who are victims in favor of protecting the reputation of the priest. I am sorry for any time in the past when the Church attempted to address the issues on their own instead of informing the proper law enforcement of an allegation. By our omission, we committed a terrible injustice to all people who are victims of abuse. We realize that the majority of the clergy abuse occurred decades ago; however, the wounds of that abuse are very deep. I have made mistakes, too. I haven’t always given the people who are victims of clergy abuse my best attention and prompt response. I am also very sorry to the faithful, who like me, wonder, “How could this happen?” I know for many of you, the clergy abuse scandal has caused great pain and angst. I also apologize to any of you who were hurt by my decision to allow Theodore McCarrick to live at the St. Fidelis Friary in Victoria.

For the sake of transparency, I would like to identify some of the most prominent mistakes the Diocese of Salina has made in the past with regard to clergy abuse of minors. First of all, the indepen-
BACHAND, LOUIS
Year of birth: 1931
Year of ordination: 1957
Last known status: Deceased 1991
Estimated time frame of abuse: late 1950s–early 1960s
Abuse reported: 2011
Diocesan action: The priest was deceased at time of reported allegation. Diocese conducted an investigation.
Pastoral assignments: • Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Concordia
• St. Francis Xavier, Junction City
• St. Aloysius Gonzaga, Osborne
• St. Thomas Hospital, Colby
• St. Ann’s Home, Concordia
• Mount St. Joseph Home, Concordia
More than one allegation: No

DREILING, CHRISTIAN
Year of birth: 1887
Year of ordination: 1915
Last known status: Deceased 1990
Estimated time frame of abuse: 1930s
Abuse reported: 1939
Diocesan action: Diocese conducted an investigation. In 1940, he was placed on diocesan and court-ordered leave, which lasted eight years, due to criminal activity. During his leave, Father Dreiling received five years of treatment. Treatment was found successful, and Father Dreiling was re-instated to ministry from 1948 to his death.
Pastoral assignments: • Henrietta, Texas
• St. Martin of Tours, Seguin
• Sacred Heart, Oberlin
• SS. Philip and James, Phillipsburg
• Sacred Heart, Selden
• St. Michael, Collyer
• St. John Hospital, Salina
• Sacred Heart, Park
• Sacred Heart Cathedral, Salina

Hough, Roger
Year of birth: 1936
Year of ordination: 1964
Known status: Deceased 2018
Estimated time frame of abuse: 2001–2002
Abuse reported: 2002
Diocesan action: Diocese conducted an investigation and removed priest from ministry in 2005. He was ordered by the Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith in Rome to live a life of prayer and penance.
Pastoral assignments: • St. Michael, Chapman
• St. Columb K Elmo
• St. Patrick, Gypsum
• St. Joseph, St. Joseph
• St. Isidore, Cuba
• St. John the Evangelist, Logan
• St. Mary, Densmore
• St. Mary, Rusco
• St. Ignatius Loyola, Kanopolis
• St. Mary, Holyrood
• St. Joseph, Brookville
• St. Mary, Queen of the Universe, Salina
• SS. Peter and Paul, Clay Center
• St. Mary, Deceased

MATTAS, LOUIS
Year of birth: 1928
Year of ordination: 1960
Last known status: Deceased 2011
Estimated time frame of abuse: mid 1960s and early 1970s

Abuse reported: 2005 and 2007
Diocesan action: Diocese conducted an investigation. The 2005 allegation was unable to be proven. The 2007 allegation was substantiated. Father Mattas was ordered by the Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith in Rome to live a life of prayer and penance.
Pastoral assignments: • St. Michael, Chapman
• St. Columbk Elmo
• St. Patrick, Gypsum
• St. Joseph, St. Joseph
• St. Isidore, Cuba
• St. John the Evangelist, Logan
• St. Mary, Densmore
• St. Mary, Rusco
• St. Ignatius Loyola, Kanopolis
• St. Mary, Holyrood
• St. Joseph, Brookville
• St. Mary, Queen of the Universe, Salina

More than one allegation: Yes

MERCHANT, WILLIAM
Year of birth: 1911
Year of ordination: 1938
Last known status: Deceased 2000
Estimated time frame of abuse: 1940s–1950s
Abuse reported: 1968, 1999, 2002
Diocesan action: The 1968 and 1999 allegations were not investigated at that time. The 2000-2004 allegations were investigated.

Q. What information are you releasing on this list?
A. This list contains the names of diocesan clergy members against whom an allegation of sexual abuse of a minor has been substantiated.

Q. How do you define “sexual abuse of a minor”?
A. Sexual abuse of a minor includes sexual molestation or exploitation of a minor or other behavior by which an adult uses a minor as an object of sexual gratification. The term “sexual abuse of a minor” is not necessarily synonymous with the definitions of sexual abuse under civil or criminal law. The determination of whether a recitation of child pornographic images constitutes sexual abuse of a minor for purposes of diocesan policy, a minor is any person below the age of 18 years. In addition, a person who habitually has the imperfect use of reason is to be considered equivalent to a minor — referred to as a “vulnerable adult” (see Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Norme de Gravissioribus Delictis, Article 6, § 1, 2°). Promulgated by Pope Benedict XVI, May 21, 2010).

Q. What are the criteria for inclusion on the list?
A. Clergy members’ names are included in this list if there was a substantiated allegation of sexual abuse of a minor against them. Their inclusion does not necessarily mean they were found guilty of a crime or are liable for civil claims. Many of the allegations received by the diocese from decades ago were reported many years after the alleged abuse, sometimes times after the death of the accused.

Q. What do you mean by a substantiated allegation?
A. When a complaint is received, the diocese starts with the presumption that the allegation is being brought forward in good faith, and therefore thoroughly investigates all allegations. An allegation is considered “substantiated” when it is corroborated with witness statements, documents, emails, photos, texts, or by another source, such as law enforcement. If the accused member of the clergy admits to the allegation, the accusation is substantiated. Allegations of abuse occurring significantly in the past, even if the accused is deceased, can also be substantiated when there is sufficient corroborative evidence that supports the veracity of the accusation. No matter how long ago the diocese received the alleged abuse occurred, every effort is made to determine if the accusation can be substantiated.

Q. How many clergy files were reviewed? For what time period did they cover and how many clergy with substantiated allegations were diocesan priests of the Diocese of Salina?
A. The Diocese of Concordia, now the Diocese of Salina, was established on Jan. 1, 1887. During that time, more than 600 priests have served in the diocese, including both diocesan and religious clergy. Of the more than 300 diocesan clergy files, there were 63 misconduct files; all misconduct files were reviewed. Of those 63 files, 14 files contained substantiated allegations of sexual abuse of a minor.

Q. What percentage of all diocesan clergy had a substantiated allegation?
A. 4.67 percent

Q. What happens to an allegation of sexual abuse of a minor by a member of the clergy once it is received?
A. The diocese initiates an investigation into all allegations of sexual abuse of a minor by a member of the clergy. If the allegation concerns a current act of sexual abuse, law enforcement is contacted immediately in accordance with Kansas state law and diocesan policy. Under these circumstances, the diocese will immediately put on leave and the diocesan investigation may be suspended until civil law enforcement has completed its investigation. The diocese fully cooperates in all criminal investigations conducted by civil authorities and will conduct its own investigation when it is certain that it will not interfere with any civil investigation being conduct- ed. Even if the civil authorities determine not to pursue an investigation, the diocese will conduct its own investigation. Allegations of sexual abuse of a minor are also communicated to the Diocese Lay Review Board (LRB) in accordance with the Diocesan Safe Environ- ment Policy. The diocese immediately notifies the LRB, two investigators to perform internal investiga- tions of allegations of sexual abuse. These investigators have extensive law enforcement and investigative backgrounds from local law enforcement agencies.
List of substantiated allegations for diocesan priests, continued

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Pastoral assignments:
• Sacred Heart Cathedral, Salina
• St. John Hospital, Salina
• Mary of the Assumption, Clifton
• St. Bernard, Clara
• SS. Peter and Paul, Morroville
• St. Francis Xavier, Junction City
• Immaculate Conception, Leola
• Sacred Heart, Selden
• SS. Peter and Paul, Clay Center
• Seven Dolors, Manhattan
• Sacred Heart Cathedral, Salina
• St. Joseph, Brookville

More than one allegation: Yes

MOEDER, JOHN
Year of birth: 1937
Year ofordination: 1957
Last known status: Deceased 2012
Estimated timeframe of abuse: late 1970s

Abuse reported: 2018
Diocesanaction: Priest was deceased at time of reported allegation. Diocese conducted an investigation.

Pastoral assignments:
• Sacred Heart, Plainville
• St. Andrew, Abilene
• St. Philip, Hope
• Seven Dolors, Manhattan
• Sacred Heart, Eden
• St. Mary, Smith Center
• St. Mary, Jamestown
• Nazareth Motherhouse, Concordia
• St. Anthony, Miltonvale
• St. Peter, Meridian
• St. Joseph, McDowell Creek
• St. Edward, Belleville
• St. George, Park
• St. Isidore, Cuba

More than one allegation: Yes

O’DONOHUE, THOMAS
Year of birth: 1887
Year ofordination: 1910
Last known status: Deceased 1952
Estimated timeframe of abuse: 1940-1945
Abuse reported: 2004
Diocesan action: Priest was deceased at time of reported allegation. Diocese conducted an investigation.

Diocesan action: Diocese conducted an investigation. Priest was asked to leave the Diocese of Salina in 1952, and he did in 1953. No court finding, no known protests.

Pastoral assignments:
• Immaculate Conception, Grinnell
• Sacred Heart, Park
• St. John the Baptist, Hanover
• St. Peter, Aurora and missions
• Sacred Heart, Oberlin and missions
• Immaculate Conception, Grinnell

More than one allegation: Yes

SCHLEITER, ROBERT
Year of birth: 1926
Year ofordination: 1954
Last known status: Laicized 1995; Deceased 1995
Estimated timeframe of abuse: 1950s

Abuse reported: 1957, 1970-1980
Diocesan action: Diocese conducted an investigation. Priest was asked to leave the Diocese of Salina in 1957, and he did. In 1980, no response to the allegation. In 2003, the same individual who reported in 1980 reported again, and the diocese responded appropriately.

Pastoral assignments:
• St. John the Baptist, Herington
• Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Concordia
• St. Joseph, St. Joseph
• Immaculate Conception, Grinnell and missions

More than one allegation: Yes

WALSH, JOHN
Year of birth: 1920
Year ofordination: 1955
Last known status: Deceased 2009
Estimated timeframe of abuse: 1972-1978
Abuse reported: 2002
Diocesan action: Diocese conducted an investigation. Priest immediately followed the recommendation of the report.

Pastoral assignments:
• St. Francis Xavier, Junction City
• St. John Hospital, Salina
• St. Martin of Tours, Seguin
• St. Francis Cabrini, Hoxie
• St. Joseph, Damar
• Holy Ghost, Sharon Springs
• St. Peter, Wallace
• St. Thomas, Stockton
• St. Francis, Claudell
• St. John the Baptist, Clyde
• St. Mary of the Assumption, Clifton
• St. Joseph, St. Joseph
• Sacred Heart, Park
• St. Agnes, Grainfield
• St. Francis of Assisi, Norton
• St. Joseph, Belton
• St. Michael, Chapman

More than one allegation: No

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SPECIAL REPORT: CLERGY ABUSE

Non-Diocesan Clergy

Francis Fugini
(Member of the Province of St. Augustine of the Capuchin Franciscans, headquartered in Pittsburgh)

Last known status: Retired, Pittsburgh

Estimated timeframe of abuse: late 1950s

Action: Removed Father Fugini’s permission to engage in priestly ministry. Father Fugini is of advanced age and resides in

Pittsburgh under a plan of supervision instituted and monitored by his religious superiors.

Assignments in the Salina Diocese:
• Capuchin Franciscan Seminary, Victoria
• Capuchin Franciscan Retreat Center, Victoria

Pastoral assignments:
• St. Mary, Queen of the Universe, Salina
• St. Theresa, Manhato
• St. Mary, Smith Center
• Sacred Heart, Eden
• SS. Philip and James, Phillipsburg
• St. John, Logan
• Sacred Heart Cathedral, Salina

More than one allegation: Yes

Theodore McCarrick
Cardinal Theodore McCarrick moved to the St. Fidelis Friary in Victoria on Sept. 28. On Feb. 16, Theodore McCarrick was laicized. He is still living in Victoria until he finds a permanent residence.

More than one allegation: Yes

St. Michael, Kimeo and missions
St. John the Evangelist, Herington
St. Paul, Angelus

Van Speybroeck, Arthur
Year of birth: 1875
Year ofordination: 1902

Last known status: Left Diocese of Salina sometime after 1908

Estimated timeframe of abuse: 1900s

Abuse reported: 1907
Diocesan action: Diocese conducted an investigation. Priest left Diocese of Salina after the allegation.

Pastoral assignments:
• St. John the Baptist, Herington
• Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Concordia
• St. Joseph, St. Joseph
• Immaculate Conception, Grinnell and missions

More than one allegation: Yes

Walsh, John
Year of birth: 1920
Year ofordination: 1955
Last known status: Deceased 2009

Estimated timeframe of abuse: 1972-1978

Abuse reported: 2002
Diocesan action: Diocese conducted an investigation. Priest retired immediately following the recommendation of the report.

Pastoral assignments:
• St. Francis Xavier, Junction City
• St. John Hospital, Salina
• St. Martin of Tours, Seguin
• St. Francis Cabrini, Hoxie
• St. Joseph, Damar
• Holy Ghost, Sharon Springs
• St. Peter, Wallace
• St. Thomas, Stockton
• St. Francis, Claudell
• St. John the Baptist, Clyde
• St. Mary of the Assumption, Clifton
• St. Joseph, St. Joseph
• Sacred Heart, Park
• St. Agnes, Grainfield
• St. Francis of Assisi, Norton
• St. Joseph, Belton
• St. Michael, Chapman

More than one allegation: No

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Listening Session

Bishop Jerry Vincie and Provincial Minister Christopher Popravak, O.F.M.CAP., will host a listening session regarding clergy abuse.

The listening session will be at 7 p.m. Tuesday, April 2 at St. Nicholas of Myra Church in Hoxie.

The public is invited to attend. Questions may be submitted anonymously in advance (email address is below), or at the listening session.

Listening session: FLEDDACHIAL@SALINADIOCES.ORG

Mailing label update

Please make the correction on this form and return to

The Register, P.O. Box 1038, Salina, KS 67402-1038 or go online at salinadiocese.org/the-register/change-of-address

Attach old mailing label here and print the corrected information below.

None

Address

City State Zip

Parish (If in the Salina Diocese) Email:
Salina frequently asked questions continued

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The Register, Catholic Diocese of Salina, salinadiocese.org

SPECIAL REPORT: CLERGY ABUSE

Salina frequently asked questions continued

Q. Is this list complete?

A. This is a complete and accurate representation of all substantiated allegations against diocesan clergy received by the diocese since the beginning of the diocese. This list contains allegations of sexual abuse of a minor that have been substantiated by the LRB based on the information available in the diocesan files.

The list is based on the extensive files handled by attorney Courtney Boehm of the independent firm StoneBridge Business Partners on behalf of the Bishop. The list includes all allegations of sexual abuse of a minor that have been substantiated by the LRB based on the information available in the diocesan files.

Q. Why are you releasing this list now?

A. In light of the confusion and concern caused by the Pennsylvania grand jury report and the Theodore McCarrick scandal this past summer, there has been a call for greater transparency on the part of the Church. The list reflects the ongoing efforts of the LRB and its independent firm to provide ongoing and complete training to all personnel regarding how to prevent, detect, and report allegations of sexual abuse of minors. The list also reflects a desire to prevent confusion and inconsistent information by detailed training to diocesan personnel in the treatment of allegations.

Q. What is the diocese doing to prevent sexual abuse within the Church?

A. The Diocesan Safe Environment Program.

Q. Are any of the men on this list still in active ministry?

A. No clergy with a substantiated allegation of sexual abuse of a minor is permitted to exercise ministry in any form of public ministry.

Q. What is the diocese doing to prevent sexual abuse within the Church?

A. The Diocesan Safe Environment Program has three components. First, all Church clergy, seminarians, employees, and volunteers are required to undergo criminal background checks. Second, persons who work with or around children are required to participate in ongoing child safety training and to keep it current. In addition, all children, too, are required to undergo personal safety training. Third, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) engages an independent firm that conducts an annual safe environment audit of the diocese. The most recent on-site audit was conducted in October 2018 by the independent firm StoneBridge Business Partners.

The diocese currently utilizes CMGConnect, an online training platform of the Catholic Church Publishing Group. CMGConnect presents the “Safe Haven – It’s Up to You” program to diocesan clergy, seminarians, employees and volunteers through interactive online modules.

Since 2003, the diocese has instructed and completed background checks on more than 1,000 diocesan priests, and has passed every independent audit — both remote and on-site — conducted since the audits were instituted by the USCCB in 2004.

Q. What topics are included in CMGConnect training?

A. CMGConnect training contains a required curriculum to provide ongoing training to all personnel regarding how to prevent, detect, and report allegations of suspected sexual abuse of minors. This training is provided to all diocesan clergy, seminarians, employees and volunteers. Additionally, there is a specific child-appropriate training provided to children. The platform also provides a multitude of options, such as bullying, online safety, social media safety, establishing appropriate boundaries, and others. The CMG-Connect platform is used by dioceses throughout the United States and Canada.

Q. What training do seminarians, or new employees, clergy and volunteers receive regarding the diocese receive regarding the Diocesan Safe Environment Program?

A. Of the 14 priests listed: four priests were laicized; three priests were removed from ministry, two of which were removed for a life of prayer and penance by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith in Rome; one priest died during the investigation; one priest left the diocese for another diocese; one priest continued to minister after the initial investigation was not properly investigated; four subsequent reports were made; one priest was removed from ministry by his parish priest; one parochial vicar received five years of treatment and was only allowed to assist at the nursing home where he resided.

Q. How did the diocese deal with 14 priests on this list?

A. Of the 14 priests listed: four priests died prior to the abuse being reported; three were removed from ministry, two of which were removed for a life of prayer and penance by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith in Rome; one priest died during the investigation; one priest left the diocese for another diocese; one priest continued to minister after the initial investigation was not properly investigated; four subsequent reports were made; one priest was removed from ministry by his parish priest; one parochial vicar received five years of treatment and was only allowed to assist at the nursing home where he resided.

Q. How does the diocese ensure that priests from other dioceses, ministering here either temporarily or permanently, are not a threat?

A. Every cleric from another diocese seeking to exercise ministry in the Diocese of Salina has to present from his bishop or provincial, confirmation that he is a priest or deacon in good standing.

Q. Does the diocese work with law enforcement and other agencies to report allegations of abuse?

A. All allegations of the sexual abuse of a minor are reported to the appropriate law enforcement and child protection agencies as required by Kansas state law and the Diocesan Safe Environment Policy. Moreover, the diocese fully cooperates with law enforcement in the process of ensuing investigations.

Q. What should I do if I know of a minor that is being abused or if I’ve been abused by a representative of the Diocese of Salina?

A. If new allegations are made and substantiated by the LRB, then the names of the diocesan clergy involved will be published in The Register, the diocesan newspaper, and listed on the diocesan website. The list will be maintained on the diocesan website.

Q. Why is Cottonwood Law chosen to review this list?

A. Cottonwood Law, out of Hillsboro and specifically attorney Courtney Boehm, was chosen for her expertise in criminal law investigations, and that neither her state and federal law enforcement agencies. The investigator’s reports are presented to the LRB to inform the bishop and provide the known facts on which to base a recommendation.

The LRB’s members include mental and health professionals, law enforcement officials, and two non-voting lay members. The LRB makes recommendations with respect to all aspects of the investigation conducted by the investigators. Following receipt of the report, the LRB submits its findings and recommendations to the bishop. The LRB makes recommendations to the bishop for approval and provides the known facts on which to base a recommendation.

If the accusation is not able to be substantiated, consistent with the recommendation of the LRB, the cleric may be returned to active ministry.

The Register of the Catholic Diocese of Salina

TO REPORT ABUSE

Any allegation of the abuse of a minor, may be reported to the Kansas Protection Center (1-800-922-5330), the KBI Crime Hotline (1-800-KSCHILD) or ClergyAbuse@kbi.ks.gov.

The Diocese of Salina fully cooperates in all criminal investigations related to abuse perpetrated by a member of the clergy or other Church official.

For the safety of children and the healing of those who have suffered abuse, the Diocese of Salina provides the following means of reporting abuse:

• Abuse Response Hotline (785) 825-0865
• Abuse Response Email reportabuse@salinadiocese.org
• Abuse Response Online Submission Form www.salinadiocese.org/safety-security

Reports will be responded to promptly by the Diocesan Assistance Coordinator. All reports are confidential with the exception of those involving the abuse of minors, which will be immediately reported by the diocese to the proper authorities, as required by Kansas State Law and Diocesan Policy.
Number of diocesan clergy files with substantiated allegations

43 diocesan priests with substantiated claims

Renew introduces small-group series to deal with clergy abuse crisis

By Mark Pattison
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON — Renew International, which has been offering small-group parish renewal series since the 1970s, has put together a six-week series for parishioners on dealing with the current clergy sexual abuse crisis.

Titled “Healing Our Church,” it offers reflections, Scripture passages, discussion questions to participants to ponder and statements from abuse victims.

“We brought in a lot more with the victims’ voices,” said Jennifer Bober, Renew’s manager of marketing and communications, who was in all of the development meetings for the new series. “That something we felt was missing from the earlier resource. Just the directness of the approach, the forthrightness of the approach in this, is different. It’s a different time, and people’s response is very different.”

The Diocese of Allen- town, Penn., will be “Healing Our Church” during Lent in a big way, with nearly 70 parishes — about 85 percent of all parishes in the diocese — offering the Renew series.

Allentown had Renew twice before, including in its 2003 series dealing with clergy sex abuse, “Healing the Body of Christ.”

“We’re trying to do the best we can to meet the needs of victims of abuse, physical victims of abuse,” said Bishop Alfred Schleif of Allentown, but “the people in the pew are hurting, too.”

“Healing the Body of Christ” drew 12,000 participants when Allentown offered it 16 years ago, Bishop Schleif noted. “I don’t know what we’ll get this time, but we need as much in the concrete number but who came, who felt comfortable to come, and who felt healing in some way,” measurements he acknowledged tend to manifest themselves in the long term.

“All of us are active in Church ministry in some form or another,” Renew’s Bober said, and when the latest priests to come last summer regarding bishops’ roles in the crisis, a common reaction from Renew staffers was got was, “How can you stay Catholics?”

“We looked around us and we said, ‘We need to do something.’ We know that people are upset, we know people are hurting,” Bober added. “As news broke, we were reading more victims’ stories and we were seeing the power in them, and knowing that, it really made us understand the depth of the hurt that is going on. We wanted to empathize with the victims and for them to do that, we had to include their stories.”

Ten Tips for Protecting Children and Offering Outreach to Victims/Survivors

1 Safety abuse is about the victim. Many people are affected by abuse but the individual most impacted is the victim who has suffered a violation that must can affect his or her entire life.

2 The residual effects of having been abused can last a lifetime. The sense of violation goes deep into a person’s psyche and feeling of anger, shame, hurt and betrayal can target long after the abuse has taken place. Those who have been abused can heal, but it often takes time, therapy, and the support of loved ones.

3 No one has the right to have access to children. No one, no matter who they are, has an automatic right to be around children or young people who are in the care of the Church without proper screening and without following the rules.

4 Common sense is not all that common. Diocese, schools, parish, and especially families, must educate themselves and others on how to protect children.

5 Child sexual abuse can be prevented. It is critical to build safety barriers around children and young people to keep them from harm—such as protective guidelines, codes of conduct, background evaluations, policies and procedures, and safety training programs.

6 Feeling heard leads toward healing. Relief from hurt and anger often comes when one feels heard, when one’s pain and concerns are taken seriously, and a victim/survivor’s suffering, pain, and anger are acknowledged.

7 You cannot always predict who will be an abuser. Experience shows that most abusers are committed by someone who has passed the most of a victim/survivor and his or her family.

8 There are behavioral warning signs of child abusers. Some abusers isolate a potential victim, giving him or her small attention or lavish gifts, others allow young people to participate in activities which their parents or guardians would not approve, such as reading pornography, drinking alcohol, using drugs, and excessive touching, among others.

9 People can be taught to identify grooming behavior. Grooming behaviors are the actions which abusers take to project the image that they are kind, generous, caring people, while their intent is to lure a minor into an inappropriate relationship. Olderbans can be taught to protect their family, or community for years.

10 Background checks are important. Background checks vary from diocese to diocese and other organizations keep predators away from children both because they run off some predators and because they uncover predators. Each church should have an adult from working or volunteering with children.
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BISHOP'S REPORT: CLERGY ABUSE

Called to serve during fiery times

BY Father Dan Zieverden

I t has been 15 years since the first wave of clergy abuse revelations hit the Roman Catholic Church. The last one in Kansas was in 2002, and yet another has surfaced. Where are we today?

When will it end? Addressing abuse is essential for Church

BY Father Dan Zieverden

When will it end? Addressing abuse is essential for Church

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When will it end? Addressing abuse is essential for Church

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Assume the correct analysis of the given document. Here is a brief summary:

1. **Evil will not prevail**
   - By Seminarian Luke Friesen
   - "When will it end?" – No one knows, but that has been asked by a number of parishioners with good reason. The heart of the story is that a group of clergy who have abused the good nature of another human being, either child or adult, hopes that not only the abuse will end, but also that the need to report is not easy, but rather, just the opposite. Being in the position of someone who has been harmed in this way – women, children, men, youth, adults, or elderly – it is important to remember that there is hope and love and understanding.

2. **Abuse of loved one leaves myriad of ripples**
   - By Special to the Register
   - A case of clergy abuse affects not only the victim and their family, but also the wider community. It is important to support and love from family, friends, and community members. When a family member is wounded, the entire Body of Christ is injured. It is important to support and find healing together.

3. **Promise to protect**
   - By Special to the Register
   - "When will it end?" – No one knows, but that has been asked by a number of parishioners with good reason. The heart of the story is that a group of clergy who have abused the good nature of another human being, either child or adult, hopes that not only the abuse will end, but also that the need to report is not easy, but rather, just the opposite. Being in the position of someone who has been harmed in this way – women, children, men, youth, adults, or elderly – it is important to remember that there is hope and love and understanding.

4. **Pledge to heal**
   - By Special to the Register
   - "When will it end?" – No one knows, but that has been asked by a number of parishioners with good reason. The heart of the story is that a group of clergy who have abused the good nature of another human being, either child or adult, hopes that not only the abuse will end, but also that the need to report is not easy, but rather, just the opposite. Being in the position of someone who has been harmed in this way – women, children, men, youth, adults, or elderly – it is important to remember that there is hope and love and understanding.
Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Many are shedding tears these days, including myself, because of the great harm caused to minors and vulnerable adults by priests, deacons and religious brothers. On behalf of the Capuchin Franciscans I must beg your forgiveness deacons and religious brothers and sisters. They caused the harm. Their shame and guilt rightly belong with the friars, especially those who were present for her. Through my horror, that the former seminarian had become a member of a community, I was forced to commit abuse himself. He was imprisoned for that.

So many people have been harmed. There is so much grief: the grief of victims, the grief of families of victims and families of abusers, the grief of children of victims, the grief of brothers and for those who are faithful, dedicated servants who are reeling with the constant disclosures about so many perpetrators. We cannot allow this to ever happen again.

I don’t believe that we friars will ever fully comprehend the great harm done to the victims of sexual abuse. I understand that there are people very disappointed pointed with the Church for not taking concrete steps to address these terrible crimes. Apologies are not enough. In fact, after a point, apologies sound meaningless, unless accompanied by protective measures. Worse still, apologies may have the effect of opening deep wounds of the survivors.

I hope that people refer to our webpage (www.capuchins.org) to see what positive actions we have taken to prevent this kind of sexual abuse from ever happening again. Many of the steps we are taking are mirrored across this country.

As believing Christians and as ministers of the Gospel of Christ, more is expected of us. We must not only be above reproach, we must be instruments of healing in the Church and in the world. Franciscans especially are called to be channels of God’s mercy, compassion and forgiveness.

We want to reach out to any who may have experienced abuse treatment at the hands of our brother Capuchins. Please come forward and report the abuse if you haven’t already. We want to work towards reparation of the harm done. We want to help restore faith in the Catholic Church and in the witness of those who follow the Gospel in the footsteps of St. Francis of Assisi.

I myself have tried to accompany victims in their healing process, as have other provincial ministers. We have not always done this well. Some victims were disappointed, even angered by our ineptitude. We need to do better.

We Capuchins also have a history of working to promote the conversion of abusers. Not everyone knows that the attacker of 11 year old Maria Goretti, Alessandro Serenelli, lived out his final days in a Capuchin Friary. In his crazed passion, the young Alessandro repeatedly stabbed Maria. Maria died the following day, her last words, “I forgive Alessandro Serenelli.” Serenelli was imprisoned for that heinous crime. Capuchins helped him live a life of penance and conversion after his release. He lived to see Maria become a saint. In a public act of reconciliation, Maria Goretti’s mother forgave Alessandro and together they were present for her canonization.

St. Maria Goretti is often seen as the patron not only of those who were abused, but also of those guilty of abuse.

Please see LET/7 Page 11
My brother: A priest and a sexual abuser

Special to The Register

How does one handle the news of learning that your brother, a priest, had sexually abused young men during his time as a priest? Before I expose my thoughts, I ask that you please allow me to give you a bit of context of who I am, what a little family of my own, and what was teacher and tutor to you in my school — it is then I would pull out the little held life insurance policy and say, “Father/Father! I am so sorry, I promise to not do that again!” I would just let him be, and this would just make me laugh inside. I willingly admit that I am thankful to this very day to have had my brother in my back pocket, even though he wasn’t in it. He had a cherivious behavior. Another benefit to having a brother who was a priest is available to say Mass in the home. When I moved away from home and gathered as a family, my brother would always have a Mass that was especially great on a weekend for Sunday Mass. The homily was shortened at our request.

I shall now fast forward the clock. In 2002, the Spotlight movie came to Boston Globe wrote a lengthy expose on the clergy sexual abuse in Boston. At the time, I was married, had a son and I was really enjoying my life. Having a brother as a priest, this story of course, made me pause and think. As a mother of a young man, my husband and I were very involved in his school. As a part of the volunteer program, we had provide credentials, be fingerprinted and we had to submit to our own background check. This was all for the safety of the children that he was teaching. My husband and I grew to understand the importance of the sexual priest misconduct and particularly the behavior that was a concern since we lived in a city. This was important to us to protect our own son and explain to him that nobody was to touch him if he did not want to. And we spoke about this as naturally as we explain other things about the rain falling outside. Sadly, it was a part of our lives. Mind you, it wasn’t an everyday conversation, but one which we discussed throughout our son’s growing years.

Fast forward, I simply brings me to a very real moment in my life. One summer, both my brother and I were planning a vacation at the same time. It was during that visit that I heard a story about my brother. He looked at my son in a very different way. This one glance gave me an uneasy, nervous feeling in my stomach. I cannot explain this feeling (call it a mother’s intuition), but I knew from that moment on, that I did not want to leave my son alone with my brother. I was terrified. At times he sat on a pedestal. My joy turned to sorrow, anger and frustration. I felt so deceived. My heart sunk, my gut was in a mixture of knots and weaves and I wanted to weep. I wanted love and gratitude.

I took some time to digest what I finally knew to be true. I cried. I thought, “How do I continue to love my brother?” Sexually abusing anyone was wrong. What had he done — criminal — simple and plain. He does not get a pass because he is a priest. What about the individuals that were abused? What must they be going through? Is it not possible that they cannot even begin to fathom their story, nor the shame and guilt they felt. It crushed me to think that this secret had been hidden. It runs through my mind like an invisible sorrow on my heart. I think about the deceptions. I think about the lies. It is not condone, nor accept this behavior. I grapple each day trying to understand why the person responsible could not admit to this terrible, terrible sin. I was taught as a Catholic that every young age to say “I am sorry” and to ask for forgiveness and admit my fault. Aren’t we all from the same Catholic Church? How does one get around? I have been angry and frustrated at times at my Church and have wanted to run in the opposite direction. There is not a day that goes by that I do not think about what my brother has done. How can I carry on? I think about the numerous homilies who are being someone who could sexually abuse an individual would be a sin. I had to have an answer. It was a hot summer day, and I made arrangements to meet with the person who I felt 100 percent certain could give me the answer I was looking for.

I met the person at an outdoor shopping center. I felt so out of place being there and the open would somehow ease things. I invited and asked to make some time to sit on the bench for a rest. My stomach was hurting. I was anxious, but I had to ask. Without any mumbling of words I looked at the person and said, “I have a question.” Is my brother responsible for sexually abusing individuals? Is my brother a priest? Without hesitation, the person looked at me with a look of kindness and simply uttered, “Yes.” That moment hit hard. I can still see it today. It is something one does not forget. It was the hard truth. It is a moment you do not want to believe. I had this huge pride in my brother, and I loved him so much that I would tell everyone that I had this wonderful brother, the one that every son should have. At times I would sit on a pedestal. My joy turned to sorrow, anger and frustration. I felt so deceived. My heart sunk, my gut was in a mixture of knots and weaves and I wanted to weep. I wanted love and gratitude.

I must mention again that Idid not condone this act. I hate the sin of sexual abuse, but I cannot hate him. That is the truth.

My Catholic faith teaches that we are all called to forgive. I personally find that the hardest part to forgiveness, is remembering and still forgetting.

Let us repent. I decided that during these 40 days I would just let God guide you. You must take the first step to life to help me find peace. I need to find that place where loving and forgiving each other is complete and whole, where questions no longer linger in my mind. Our conversations are no longer as frequent as they once were. I need my space to heal. I tell him that I love him. He does not respond back with the same affectionate tone as he once did. I find that ironic. We sat and listened to many homilies about love and forgiveness, and about healing. How many times he does not practice his own words. Truthfully, that kind of makes me laugh. I did learn things from him. I have told him that I hold him accountable for teaching me how to love. He doesn’t say much when I use his words, but I value what he taught.

Loving someone is hard, especially when they have hurt and failed. The priestly sexual abuse that has happened within our world is unacceptable. To the victims, it is not a stretch to have a deep sorrow. I am sorry for what has happened. It is my belief that we need to be honest and open about the wrongfulness. This will help make a stronger and better Church. My brother spoke in his homilies that we only have one life on this earth, “We have to make things right here. It is then that extraordinary things will happen. In my opinion, we must make a difference by sharing my story with you. The take away is to condition and without judgment, for one day we will all be judged. Again, something I learned in the many homilies, Thank you, my dear brother,

Let us pray together.

“Lord, heal those who have been sexually abused. Help them to find forgiveness in times of distress and sadness. Strengthen their heart with the love of God. For abusers, help them to seek truthfulness and be honest with themselves. Build up the many who are hurt. Wipe away any burden so that they can once again be carefree. Encourage them to take the journey home where we will exult with you in the heavenly kingdom. Give us strength, love, and light and the angels welcome us with open arms. Sorrows will be with us no more. Amen.”

This article was written by a woman whose brother was a priest who abused minors while he was serving in the Salina Diocese during several decades ago.
WASHINGTON — Child sexual abuse in the United States is at epidemic levels.

More than 60,000 children are reportedly to have been charged as victims of sexual abuse. Religious leaders have opened their churches to those who have been about the possibility of sexual abuse in their lives. This abuse often results in the destruction of those who survive. Survivors face a lifetime of trauma, pain, and difficulty in their personal lives.

In a recent interview, a young woman who was sexually abused by her father said: “I am not alone. There are thousands of us who have experienced the same thing.”

The problem of sexual abuse is not limited to children. Many adults have also been sexually abused, either by family members or acquaintances. The problem is pervasive, affecting people of all ages, races, and genders.

The Catholic Church has been called to account for its role in the sexual abuse of children. The Church has released a number of reports and investigations into the problem, but many believe that the Church is not doing enough to address the issue.

In a recent letter to the hierarchy, a survivor of sexual abuse wrote: “We need your help. We cannot do this alone.”

The problem of sexual abuse is part of a larger issue of sexual violence. Sexual violence affects millions of people around the world, and it is a problem that we must address together.

Victims desire truth of abuse to prevail

From page 6

offered him a replensishable supply of victims to satisfy his perversion.

Conflicting:

There is no single point of greatest tension or conflict in this story; rather, there were numerous points of tension and conflict. We will take another look at the world of sexual abuse and molestation.

Is this story an isolated occurrence? The record is abundantly clear on this matter: The John Jay Report, a reputable study commissioned by the Catholic Church, states that sexual abuse between 1950 and 2002 was such that “the problem was indeed widespread and affected 95 percent of the dioceses and 60 percent of the religious communities.” It also states that 4 percent of all Catholic priests were found to have engaged in sexual misconduct.

The current number of priests and religious in the United States is approximately 100,000. The Church has taken measures to address the issue, including the establishment of the National Catholic Conference for the Protection of Children and Young People.

Still, the problem persists. Sexual abuse in the Church continues to be a significant issue. The Church must continue to take action to address the problem and to provide support to those who have been sexually abused.

Victims desire truth of abuse to prevail

By Julie Asher

Catholic News Service

Child sex abuse called a ‘serious and pervasive’ issue in U.S. society

About one in 10 children will be sexually abused before their 18th birthday. About 90 percent of children who are victims of sexual abuse know their abuser.

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Darkness to Light (www.dzl.org), a South Carolina-based nonprofit organization dedicated to child abuse prevention. "Significantly, abusers are often other children," says Darkness to Light. Darkness to Light says. About 60 percent of those accused of sexual abuse are abused by the people they trust; approximately 30 percent of those sexually abused by family members.

The younger the victim, the more likely that the abuser is a family member. Of those molesting a child under 6, 50 percent were family members. Family members accounted for 25 percent of those molesting children ages 12 to 17.

About one in 10 children will be sexually abused before their 18th birthday, according to Darkness to Light. "About one in seven girls and one in 25 boys will be sexually abused before they turn 18."

Because of underreport- ing, it is possible that nationwide data collection, estimates of sexual abuse can be inaccurate.

"Child sexual abuse is far more prevalent than most people realize,"according to Darkness to Light. "Child sexual abuse is likely the most common of all problem children face with the most serious array of conse- quences.

Understanding the scope and scale of child sexual abuse in this country is only the start.

Epilepsy: After about half a century, we decided to pen a letter to your bishop regarding Msgr. Merchant. We did so with a considerable amount of reservation and low expectations.

About this letter, we know it has been a long-standing practice and policy of the Catholic Church to sanitize the harsh realities of alleged sexual abuse by the clergy by letting the lawyers do the work of advertising and disparaging the very victims of abuse.

We should not have been more wrong about the Most Reverend Gerald Vinnieke. He claimed to have no knowledge of the thing, and, indeed, he was clear in his understanding of events surrounding Msgr. Merchant and offered his genuine apology. You are fortunate to have a bishop with such an abundance of integrity and moral courage. He is a true spiritual leader. Take rationalism, he is unlikely you will ever again find someone of his quality.

We are assuming there are other individuals within the Diocese of Salina that have also suffered at the hands of a Catholic priest. If you are among them, it would be our recommenda- tion and encouragement that you communicate directly with them. We know it has been a long-standing practice and policy of the Catholic Church to sanitize the harsh realities of alleged sexual abuse by the clergy by letting the lawyers do the work of advertising and disparaging the very victims of abuse.

The Merchant of Venice is a play written by William Shakespeare in which Anto- nio defaults on a large loan provided by the money lender, Shylock. Shylock demands his "pound of flesh" as specified in the bond. The court system, however, Shylock explains the "pound of flesh" will feed me. We know there are differences between these two stories, but there are other individuals within the Diocese of Salina that have also suffered at the hands of a Catholic priest. If you are among them, it would be our recommenda- tion and encouragement that you communicate directly with them.
ONE CREDIBLE ALLEGATION OF SEXUAL ABUSE OF A MINOR:

GREGORY BEYER
Birth: 1935
Status: Deceased 2010
Estimated time frame of abuse: 1970s
Pastoral assignments:
• St. Bonaventure’s Friary, Hays
• Sacred Heart Friary, Atwood
• St. Fidelis Friary, Victoria
• St. Conrad Friary, Lawrence
• St. Joseph Friary, Hays
• Annunciation Friary, Denver
• Solanus Casey Friary, Colorado Springs, Colo.

DAVID JONES
Birth: 1962
Status: Dismissed from Order in 1987
Estimated time frame of abuse: 1986
Pastoral assignments:
None

MORE THAN ONE CREDIBLE ALLEGATION OF SEXUAL ABUSE OF A MINOR:

BENIGNUS SCARRY
Birth: 1944
Status: Left the Order in 2016
Estimated time frame of abuse: 1980s
Pastoral assignments:
• St. Joseph Friary, Hays
• St. Bonaventure Friary, Hays
• St. Crispin Friary, St. Louis
• St. Conrad Friary, Lawrence
• San Damiano Friary, Denver
• San Antonio Friary, Denver
• St. Francis of Assisi Friary, Denver
• Our Lady of Angels Friary, Colorado Springs, Colo.

FELIX SHINSKY
Birth: 1941
Status: Removed from ministry / Under supervision
Estimated time frame of abuse: 1977
Pastoral assignments:
• St. Charles Borromeo Friary, St. Louis
• Santa Clara Friary, Denver
• St. Elizabeth Friary, Denver
• St. Francis of Assisi Friary, Denver

CHARLES WOLFE
Birth: 1949
Status: Dismissed from Order in 1987
Estimated time frame of abuse: 1976
Pastoral assignments:
• St. Bonaventure, Hays
• Good Shepherd Friary, Shawnee
• St. Joseph Friary, Hays
• Holy Cross Friary, Thornton, Colo.

BENNETT COLUCCI
Birth: 1936
Status: Left Order in 1992; Deceased
Estimated time frame of abuse: 1960s-1970s
Pastoral assignments:
• St. Francis Friary, Washington, D.C.
• Good Shepherd Friary, Shawnee
• St. John Friary, Lawrence
• St. Conrad’s Friary, Allison Park, Penn.
• St. Francis Friary, Denver
• Our Lady of Light Friary, Colorado Springs, Colo.

RON GILARDI
Birth: 1947
Status: Removed from ministry / Under supervision
Estimated time frame of abuse: 1990s
Pastoral assignments:
• St. Bonaventure Friary, Hays
• St. Fidelis Friary, Victoria

DAVID GOTTCHALK
Birth: 1943

MORE THAN ONE CREDIBLE ALLEGATION OF SEXUAL ABUSE OF A VULNERABLE ADULT:

MATTHEW GROSS
Birth: 1935
Status: Removed from ministry / Under supervision
Estimated time frame of abuse: 2000s-2010s
Pastoral assignments:
• Our Lady of the Angels Friary, Erave Papua New Guinea

THADDEUS POSEY
Birth: 1944
Status: Deceased 2013
Estimated time frame of abuse: 1980s
Pastoral assignments:
• St. Francis Friary, Washington, D.C.
• Alverno Friary, Denver
• St. Conrad Friary, Kansas City, Mo.
• St. Patrick Friary, St. Louis
• University of St. Thomas, St. Paul, Minn.
• St. Fidelis Friary, Victoria

DANIEL SCHARTZ
Birth: 1942
Status: Left the Order in 1980
Estimated time frame of abuse: 1970s
Pastoral assignments:
• St. Bonaventure Friary, Hays
• St. Joseph Friary, Hays

Note: There were two credible allegations of the sexual abuse of a minor committed by members of the St. Augustine Province in our current jurisdiction prior to our establishment as the St. Conrad Province in April 1977.

Let us pray to St. Maria Goretti for assistance

From page 10

Let us pray through her intercession for the healing of those who have been deeply wounded and for the conversion of all those involved.

Dear God, we ask you to help all those who suffer from abuse. Help them find healing and peace in their lives. May Maria Goretti, who was strengthened by Your Grace, join with us in prayer for the healing of all victims of abuse, particularly those abused as children or young adults. Grant us your love that we might reach out to them in your name with hope in times of trial. As Maria Goretti prayed for her attacker, grant us the grace to pray for the true conversion of all involved with the abuse: that they might seek your mercy through prayer and penance. Loving God, pour into our hearts and lives your holy spirit, that the sacredness of every human person might be respected and protected as the precious image of God. Help us to live in the peace which Maria Goretti had found in Christ and in the love of his mother Mary.

We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

(Prayer taken from Aleteia.org/2018)

Yours in Christ,
Fr. Christopher Popravak
O.F.M.Cap.
Provincial Minister
Q. What information are you releasing?
A. The Capuchin Franciscan Province of St. Conrad (Mid-America) is releasing the text of the recent audit report findings and along with the list of names of Capuchin members or former members against whom there has been a made a credible claim that they were the sexual abuse of a minor or vulnerable adult. The Province shares the following criteria: advanced age, developmental disability, mental illness, physical disability, requires supervision or physical care, lacks the personal and social skills to live independently, is susceptible to the power differential of religious position and/or status.

Q. What criteria determined the inclusion of Capuchin members on this list?
A. Friars’ names are included on this list if there has been a credible allegation of the sexual abuse of a minor or vulnerable adult. However, inclusion on this list in no way implies that the allegations are true and accurate or that the accused friar has been found guilty of a crime or is liable for civil claims.

Q. What constitutes a credible allegation?
A. A credible allegation means, in the opinion of those completing or criminal investigation, it is determined to be more likely than not that the alleged abuse occurred. Credibility is established either through a friar’s own admission or through a criminal or internal administrative investigation. The absence of evidence in a sexual abuse claim does not mean that abuse did not occur. It is equally important to note that a reference to or allegation of sexual abuse does not necessarily mean that sexual abuse did occur.

Q. What is a Provincial Independent Review Board?
A. In keeping with the requirements of the USCCB’s Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People which are adapted for religious communities in the Conference of Major Superiors of Men’s Instruments of Hope and Healing: Safeguarding Children and Young People, the Province has an independent review board that takes into consideration complaints of sex abuse or other sexual misconduct involving a minor or vulnerable adult. The Province is one of the few Roman Catholic religious orders engaged in the prevenion of child abuse and the prevention of sexual misconduct.

Q. What are the Capuchins doing to ensure the protection of minors and vulnerable adults?
A. In 2002, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops issued the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People, a comprehensive protocol for addressing allegations of the sexual abuse of minors. Since that time, the Capuchins have had a zero-tolerance policy of sexual misconduct between a member and a minor or vulnerable adult. The Province is accredited by Praesidium, Inc., an independent organization providing risk management assessment, consultation, policy development and training materials for the prevention of sexual misconduct and appropriate response to allegations. The Province is regularly updated and audited by Praesidium to ensure the Province’s adherence to the standards set for the protection of minors and the sexual abuse prevention of the Major Superiors of Men. The Province’s most recent Praesidium audit and update was in late 2017 and a sexual abuse was re-accredited for another five year period starting in June 2018. Further, the Province has greatly enhanced its requirements and screening process for men wishing to join the Capuchins. These requirements include, but are not limited to:

- A completed national sex offender registry check.
- A completed criminal background check for every jurisdiction in which the candidate has resided for the previous seven years.
- A minimum of five references from specific sources.
- Two face-to-face interviews with Capuchins, legal professionals specializing in the prevention of child sexual abuse.
- A separate behavioral assessment which goes into great detail about the candidate’s family background and sexual history.
- A psychological evaluation and psychosexual history conducted by a licensed psychologist with experience in conducting psychosexual histories, assessing psychosocial health and identifying potential indicators of future misconduct.
- A review of all publicly accessible content on social media platforms, personal websites and/or blog sites.
- Finally, vocation directors responsible for the recruitment of future candidates are provided with education to assist in identifying candidates who may be at risk of sexually abusing a minor or vulnerable adult.

Q. What should I do if I have been abused by a Capuchin?
A. If you or someone you know has been abused by a member of the Capuchin Province, you are urged to contact local law enforcement and/or the appropriate child protection agency in the area where the abuse took place. You are further encouraged to contact Jason Farti, the Safe Environment Coordinator for the Capuchin Province of St. Conrad at (303) 477-5436. If the alleged victim is a minor, the State is required to report the allegation immediately to civil authorities.

Q. What happens when a Capuchin member is accused of sexual abuse?
A. If a Capuchin member is accused of sexual abuse involving a minor or vulnerable adult, several things happen simultaneously. First, the Province reports the allegation to law enforcement. Second, the accused member is suspended from public ministry pending the outcome of an administrative investigation in accordance with the Independent Review Board. Third, if so desired, the Province offers pastoral care to the alleged victim. The results of the initial investigation are then submitted to the Province’s Provincial Minister and his council who help determine if the accusation is credible and, if so, provides a recommendation to the Province’s Provincial Minister. If law enforcement decides to conduct a criminal investigation of the allegations, the Province’s own internal investigation is suspended until any criminal investigations are concluded.

Q. Have the Capuchins sought guidance from any other organization specializing in the prevention of abuse?
A. The Capuchin Province of St. Conrad is accredited by Praesidium, Inc., an independent firm that provides organizations with guidance and training in the area of sexual abuse prevention. Praesidium’s training process is intentionally rigorous and ensures that the Province’s policies and practices are consistent with current standards of child protection.

Q. Do the Capuchins receive training in the Province’s Safe Environment Program?
A. Every member of the Capuchin Province of St. Conrad, beginning with the first year of formation, must read and sign the Province’s “Provincial Policy on Sexual Misconduct” and complete comprehensive safe environment training. In addition, all members of the Province renew their safe environment training annually through updates and materials provided by Praesidium, Inc.

Q. Does the Province of St. Conrad work with law enforcement to investigate claims of abuse?
A. The Capuchin Province of St. Conrad reports allegations of sexual abuse of a minor or vulnerable adult to law enforcement and/or appropriate child protection agencies, as required by state and federal standards. The Province will cooperate with law enforcement during the course of a criminal investigation.