

June 17, 2010

Background

Archbishop ListECKi and Bishop Callahan are attending the semi-annual national meeting of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, which all bishops across the United States attend. At their June 2002 meeting, the Bishops of the United States adopted the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*. The *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People* set forth a comprehensive set of procedures for addressing allegations of sexual abuse of minors by Catholic clergy. The *Charter* includes guidelines for reconciliation, healing, accountability, and prevention of future acts of abuse.

Statement from the Most Reverend Jerome E. ListECKi
Archbishop of Milwaukee

My priority while in La Crosse and the priority of any bishop in the United States is to implement effective policies to ensure the safety and protection of children and young people, and to hold perpetrators accountable for their criminal and sinful actions. This is the case in the Diocese of La Crosse, as well as in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee.

Through the implementation of the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People* (adopted at the U.S. Bishops' meeting in June 2002), every Catholic diocese in the United States has implemented policies to ensure the protection and safety of children and young people, and to hold perpetrators accountable.

Father Connell's concerns were presented to me and I immediately responded to assure him that no child was at risk in the Diocese of La Crosse because of the policies and protocols in place.

I personally pledged to Father Connell that the Diocesan Review Board in La Crosse, as well as the new bishop of La Crosse, upon his installation, would examine its policies to determine if changes were needed and review those with the new diocesan bishop. Since then, the leadership of the diocese, along with its Review Board, has re-examined past cases to ensure the safety and protection of young people. The Diocesan Administrator of the Diocese of La Crosse has communicated this directly to Father Connell.

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**Statement from the Most Reverend William Patrick Callahan
Bishop-designate of the Diocese of La Crosse**

As a priest and as a bishop, my priority is the safety and protection of our children and young people. Now, as the newly named bishop of the Diocese of La Crosse, one of my immediate responsibilities will be to make sure the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People* is effectively implemented, which includes the activities and policies of the Diocesan Review Board. I remain steadfast to our commitment that no priest with a substantiated allegation of sexual abuse of a minor ever serves in public ministry.

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