## Comparison of 2002 and 2006 Essential Norms Texts

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<th><strong>NORMS 2002</strong></th>
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Church, which has traditionally considered the sexual abuse of minors a grave delict and punishes the offender with penalties, not excluding dismissal from the clerical state if the case so warrants.

Sexual abuse of a minor includes sexual molestation or sexual exploitation of a minor and other behavior by which an adult uses a minor as an object of sexual gratification. Sexual abuse has been defined by different civil authorities in various ways, and these norms do not adopt any particular definition provided in civil law. Rather, the transgressions in question relate to obligations arising from divine commands regarding human sexual interaction as conveyed to us by the sixth commandment of the Decalogue. Thus, the norm to be considered in assessing an allegation of sexual abuse of a minor is whether conduct or interaction with a minor qualifies as an external, objectively grave violation of the sixth commandment (USCCB, Canonical Delicts Involving Sexual Misconduct and Dismissal from the Clerical State, 1995, p. 6). A canonical offence against the sixth commandment of the Decalogue (CIC, c. 1395 §2; CCEO, c. 1453 §1) need not be a complete act of intercourse. Nor, to be objectively grave, does an act need to involve force, physical contact, or a discernible harmful outcome. Moreover, "imputability [moral responsibility] for a canonical offense is presumed upon external violation…unless it is otherwise apparent" (CIC, c. 1321 §3; CCEO, c. 1414 §2). Cf. CIC, canons 1322-27, and CCEO, canons 1413, 1415, and 1416.2

**NORMS**

1. Having received the recognitio of the Apostolic See on December 8, 2002, and having been legitimately promulgated in accordance with the practice of this Episcopal Conference on December 12, 2002, these Norms are complementary to the universal law of the Church and are to be interpreted in accordance with that law. The Church has traditionally considered the sexual abuse of minors a grave delict and punishes the offender with penalties, not excluding dismissal from the clerical state if the case so warrants.

For purposes of these Norms, sexual abuse shall include any offense by a cleric against the Sixth Commandment of the Decalogue with a minor as understood in CIC, canon 1395 §2, and CCEO, canon 1453 § 1 (Sacramentorum sanctitatis tutela, article 4 § 1). (2)

**NORMS**

1. These Essential Norms have been granted recognitio by the Holy See. Having been legitimately promulgated in accordance with the practice of the United States Conference of
Norms constitute particular law for all the dioceses/eparchies of the United States of America. Two years after recognitio has been received, these norms will be evaluated by the plenary assembly of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.

2. Each diocese/eparchy will have a written policy on the sexual abuse of minors by priests and deacons, as well as by other church personnel. This policy is to comply fully with, and is to specify in more detail, the steps to be taken in implementing the requirements of canon law, particularly CIC, canons 1717-1719, and CCEO, canons 1468-1470. A copy of this policy will be filed with the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops within three months of the effective date of these norms. Copies of any eventual revisions of the written diocesan/eparchial policy are also to be filed with the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops within three months of such modifications.

3. Each diocese/eparchy will designate a competent person to coordinate assistance for the immediate pastoral care of persons who claim to have been sexually abused when they were minors by priests or deacons.

4. To assist diocesan/eparchial bishops, each diocese/eparchy will also have a review board which will function as a confidential consultative body to the bishop/eparch in discharging his responsibilities. The functions of this board may include

A. advising the diocesan bishop/eparch in his assessment of allegations of sexual abuse of minors and in his determination of suitability for ministry;

B. reviewing diocesan/eparchial policies for dealing with sexual abuse of minors; and

C. offering advice on all aspects of
these cases, whether retrospectively or prospectively.

5. The review board, established by the diocesan/eparchial bishop, will be composed of at least five persons of outstanding integrity and good judgment in full communion with the Church. The majority of the review board members will be lay persons who are not in the employ of the diocese/eparchy; but at least one member should be a priest who is an experienced and respected pastor of the diocese/eparchy in question, and at least one member should have particular expertise in the treatment of the sexual abuse of minors. The members will be appointed for a term of five years, which can be renewed. It is desirable that the Promoter of Justice participate in the meetings of the review board.

6. When an allegation of sexual abuse of a minor by a priest or deacon is received, a preliminary investigation in harmony with canon law will be initiated and conducted promptly and objectively (CIC, c. 1717; CCEO, c. 1468). All appropriate steps shall be taken to protect the reputation of the accused during the investigation. The accused will be encouraged to retain the assistance of civil and canonical counsel and will be promptly notified of the results of the investigation. When there is sufficient evidence that sexual abuse of a minor has occurred, the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith shall be notified. The bishop/eparch shall then apply the precautionary measures mentioned in CIC, canon 1722, or CCEO, canon 1473—i.e., withdraw the accused from exercising the sacred ministry or any ecclesiastical office or function, impose or prohibit residence in a given place or territory, and prohibit public participation in the Most Holy Eucharist pending the outcome of the process.

7. The alleged offender may be requested to
seek, and may be urged voluntarily to comply
with, an appropriate medical and psychological
evaluation at a facility mutually acceptable to
the diocese/eparchy and to the accused.

8. When even a single act of sexual abuse by
a priest or deacon is admitted or is established
after an appropriate process in accord with
canon law, the offending priest or deacon will
be removed permanently from ecclesiastical
ministry, not excluding dismissal from the
clerical state, if the case so warrants (CIC, c.
1395 §2; CCEO, c. 1453 §1).

A. In every case involving canonical
penalties, the processes provided for in canon
law must be observed, and the various
provisions of canon law must be considered
(cf. Canonical Delicts Involving Sexual
Misconduct and Dismissal from the Clerical
State, 1995; Letter from the Congregation for
the Doctrine of the Faith, May 18, 2001).
Unless the Congregation for the Doctrine of
the Faith, having been notified, calls the case to
itself because of special circumstances, it will
direct the diocesan bishop/eparch how to
proceed (Article 13, "Procedural Norms" for
Motu proprio Sacramentorum sanctitatis
tutela, AAS, 93, 2001, p. 787). If the case
would otherwise be barred by prescription,
because sexual abuse of a minor is a grave
offense, the bishop/eparch shall apply to the
Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith for a
dispensaion from the prescription, while
indicating appropriate pastoral reasons. For the
sake of due process, the accused is to be
encouraged to retain the assistance of civil and
canonical counsel. When necessary, the
diocese/eparchy will supply canonical counsel
to a priest. The provisions of CIC, canon 1722,
or CCEO, canon 1473, shall be implemented
during the pendency of the penal process.

B. If the penalty of dismissal from the
clerical state has not been applied (e.g., for

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process.

B. If the penalty of dismissal from the
reasons of advanced age or infirmity), the offender ought to lead a life of prayer and penance. He will not be permitted to celebrate Mass publicly or to administer the sacraments. He is to be instructed not to wear clerical garb, or to present himself publicly as a priest.

9. At all times, the diocesan bishop/eparch has the executive power of governance, through an administrative act, to remove an offending cleric from office, to remove or restrict his faculties, and to limit his exercise of priestly ministry. Because sexual abuse of a minor by a cleric is a crime in the universal law of the Church (CIC, c. 1395 §2; CCEO, c. 1453 §1) and is a crime in all jurisdictions in the United States, for the sake of the common good and observing the provisions of canon law, the diocesan bishop/eparch shall exercise this power of governance to ensure that any priest who has committed even one act of sexual abuse of a minor as described above shall not continue in active ministry.

10. The priest or deacon may at any time request a dispensation from the obligations of the clerical state. In exceptional cases, the bishop/eparch may request of the Holy Father the dismissal of the priest or deacon from the clerical state ex officio, even without the consent of the priest or deacon.

11. The diocese/eparchy will comply with all applicable civil laws with respect to the reporting of allegations of sexual abuse of minors to civil authorities and will cooperate in their investigation. In every instance, the diocese/eparchy will advise and support a person's right to make a report to public authorities.

12. No priest or deacon who has committed an act of sexual abuse of a minor may be
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<td>Before a priest or deacon can be transferred for residence to another diocese/eparchy or religious province, his bishop/eparch or religious ordinary shall forward, in a confidential manner, to the local bishop/eparch and religious ordinary (if applicable) of the proposed place of residence any and all information concerning any act of sexual abuse of a minor and any other information indicating that he has been or may be a danger to children or young people.</td>
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<td>This shall apply even if the priest or deacon will reside in the local community of an institute of consecrated life or society of apostolic life (or, in the Eastern Churches, as a monk or other religious, in a society of common life according to the manner of religious, in a secular institute, or in another form of consecrated life or society of apostolic life).</td>
<td>In the case of the assignment for residence of such a clerical member of an institute or a society into a local community within a diocese/eparchy, the major superior shall inform the diocesan/eparchial bishop and share with him in a manner respecting the limitations of confidentiality found in canon and civil law all information concerning any act of sexual abuse of a minor and any other information indicating that he has been or may be a danger to children or young people so that the bishop/eparch can make an informed judgment that suitable safeguards are in place for the protection of children or young people. This will be done with due recognition of the legitimate authority of the bishop/eparch; of the provisions of CIC, canon 678, (CCEO, canons 415 §1 and 554 §2), and of CIC, canon 679; and of the autonomy of the religious life (CIC, c. 586).</td>
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receives a priest or deacon from outside his jurisdiction will obtain the necessary information regarding any past act of sexual abuse of a minor by the priest or deacon in question.

13. Care will always be taken to protect the rights of all parties involved, particularly those of the person claiming to have been sexually abused and of the person against whom the charge has been made. When an accusation has proved to be unfounded, every step possible will be taken to restore the good name of the person falsely accused.

Notes

1 In applying these Norms to religious priests and deacons, the term "religious ordinary" shall be substituted for the term "bishop/eparch" mutatis mutandis.

2 If there is any doubt whether a specific act qualifies as an external, objectively grave violation, the writings of recognized moral theologians should be consulted, and the opinions of recognized experts should be appropriately obtained (Canonical Delicts, p. 6). Ultimately, it is the responsibility of the diocesan bishop/eparch, with the advice of a qualified review board, to determine the gravity of the alleged act.

3 Due regard must be given to the proper legislative authority of each Eastern Catholic Church.

13. Care will always be taken to protect the rights of all parties involved, particularly those of the person claiming to have been sexually abused and of the person against whom the charge has been made. When an accusation has been shown to be unfounded, every step possible will be taken to restore the good name of the person falsely accused.

Notes

1 These Norms constitute particular law for the dioceses, eparchies, clerical religious institutes, and societies of apostolic life of the United States with respect to all priests and deacons in the ecclesiastical ministry of the Church in the United States. When a major superior of a clerical religious institute or society of apostolic life applies and interprets them for the internal life and governance of the institute or society, he has the obligation to do so according to the universal law of the Church and the proper law of the institute or society.

2 If there is any doubt whether a specific act qualifies as an external, objectively grave violation, the writings of recognized moral theologians should be consulted, and the opinions of recognized experts should be appropriately obtained (Canonical Delicts, p. 6). Ultimately, it is the responsibility of the diocesan bishop/eparch, with the advice of a qualified review board, to determine the gravity of the alleged act.

3 Due regard must be given to the proper legislative authority of each Eastern Catholic Church.
Removal from ministry is required whether or not the cleric is diagnosed by qualified experts as a pedophile or as suffering from a related sexual disorder that requires professional treatment.

With regard to the use of the phrase "ecclesiastical ministry," by clerical members of institutes of consecrated life and societies of apostolic life, the provisions of canons 678 and 738 also apply, with due regard for canons 586 and 732.

The diocesan bishop/eparch may exercise his executive power of governance to take one or more of the following administrative actions (CIC, cc. 381, 129ff; CCEO, cc. 178, 979ff):

a. He may request that the accused freely resign from any currently held ecclesiastical office (CIC, cc. 187-189; CCEO, cc. 967-971).

b. Should the accused decline to resign and should the diocesan bishop/eparch judge the accused to be truly not suitable (CIC, c. 149 §1; CCEO, c. 940) at this time for holding an office previously freely conferred (CIC, c. 157), then he may remove that person from office observing the required canonical procedures (CIC, cc. 192-195, 1740-1747; CCEO, cc. 974-977, 1389-1396).

c. For a cleric who holds no office in the diocese/eparchy, any previously delegated faculties may be administratively removed (CIC, cc. 391 §1 and 142 §1; CCEO, cc. 191-192, 178, 193 §§1-3, 191, 1389-1396).
§1 and 992 §1), while any de iure faculties may be removed or restricted by the competent authority as provided in law (e.g., CIC, c. 764; CCEO, c. 610 §§2-3).

d. The diocesan bishop/eparch may also determine that circumstances surrounding a particular case constitute the just and reasonable cause for a priest to celebrate the Eucharist with no member of the faithful present (CIC, c. 906). The bishop may forbid the priest to celebrate the Eucharist publicly and to administer the sacraments, for the good of the Church and for his own good.

e. Depending on the gravity of the case, the diocesan bishop/eparch may also dispense (CIC, cc. 85-88; CCEO, cc. 1536 §1-1538) the cleric from the obligation of wearing clerical attire (CIC, c. 284; CCEO, c. 387) and may urge that he not do so, for the good of the Church and for his own good.

These administrative actions shall be taken in writing and by means of decrees (CIC, cc. 47-58; CCEO, cc. 1516 §2, 1°-2°, 1511, 1513 §§2-3 and 5, 1514, 1517 §1, 1518, 1519 §2, 1520) so that the cleric affected is afforded the opportunity of recourse against them in accord with canon law (CIC, cc. 1734ff; CCEO, cc. 999ff).

7 The necessary observance of the canonical norms internal to the Church is not intended in any way to hinder the course of any civil action that may be operative. At the same time, the Church reaffirms her right to enact legislation binding on all her members concerning the ecclesiastical dimensions of the delict of sexual abuse of minors.