

3.5 PRIESTS AND DEACONS AND THE ALLEGATIONS

Statistics from recent United States Justice Department studies of the prevalence of youth victimization confirm what other surveys have found: a startling proportion of young people experience sexual victimization¹ In a sample of 4,023 adolescents ages 12 to 17 across racial and ethnic groups, the lifetime prevalence for sexual assault is 8.1%²

Of all female victims of forcible rape whose ages were reported to enforcement agencies in 1992 (from 15 states), girls under the age of 18 represented approximately half of the victims.³ The younger the victim, the more likely that she knew the person who assaulted her.⁴

When similar research was done with data on all victims of sexual assault known to law enforcement between 1991 and 1996, juveniles represented the large majority of all victims of forcible fondling (84%), forcible sodomy (79%), and sexual assault with an object (75%)⁵ One in seven victims of a reported sexual assault was under the age of six.⁶ The single age with the greatest proportion of sexual assault victims among all victims reported to law enforcement was age 14.⁷

Table 3.5.1 ALLEGATIONS AGAINST PRIEST / DEACONS, GROUPED BY NUMBER OF ALLEGATIONS

Number of Allegations	Count	Percent
1	2,411	55.7%
2-3	1160	26.9%
4-9	600	13.9%
10+	149	3.5%
Total	4,311	100.0%

The Cleric Survey asked for the total number of victims who made allegations in the reporting diocese and for the total number of potential allegations that might be made about a particular priest or deacon. Respondents were also asked to complete a Victim Survey for each person making an allegation.

Table 3.5.1 is based on the data from the Cleric Survey.

If accused diocesan and religious priests are compared using the above classification into four groups, the results do not differ greatly

- 54% of diocesan priests had a single allegation compared to 61% of accused religious priests;
- 14.7% of diocesan priests have 4-9 allegations, compared to 10.9% of the accused religious priests;
- 4.2% of diocesan priests have ten or more allegations, compared to 1.5% of the religious priests.

Question 23 on the Cleric Survey asked the respondent to report the number of victims who had made formal allegations known to the diocese and religious community about an individual priest. These allegations are referred to in Table 3.5.2 as “Formal Allegations.” The following survey question asked “Is there any indication that the cleric has abused more victims than the official allegations made?” The affirmative responses, and the numbers associated with them, are referred to as “Potential Allegations.”

Table 3.5.2 FORMAL AND POTENTIAL ALLEGATIONS AGAINST PRIESTS, IN FOUR GROUPS

Number of Allegations	Count	Percent of all
1	2,154	50%
2-3	1138	26.4%
4-9	767	17.8%
10+	252	5.8%
Total	4,311	100%

If the formal allegations made against an individual priest or deacon are added to the potential allegations known to the diocese or religious community, the result is shown in Table 3.5.2.

Table 3.5.3 GENDER OF ALLEGED VICTIMS, BY NUMBER OF ALLEGED ABUSERS

Gender	Count	Percent of all
Male and Female	157	3.6%
Female only	991	22.6%
Male only	2,805	64%
Gender unknown	429	9.8%
Total	4,230	100%

Table 3.5.3 shows the percentage of all priests with allegations, grouped by the gender of the person who made the allegation.

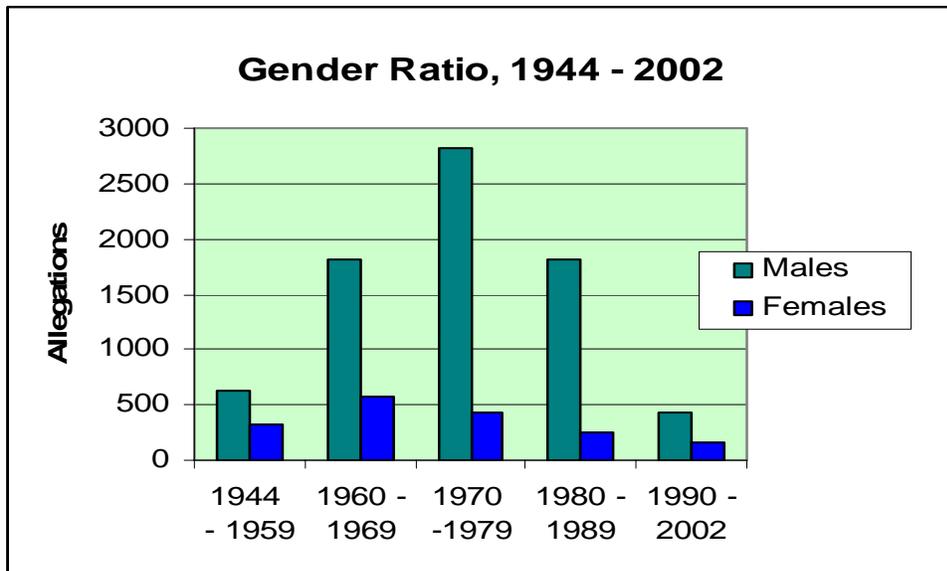
In 429 surveys, the gender of the alleged victim was not identified.

Table 3.5.4 ALLEGED VICTIMS OF SEXUAL ABUSE INCIDENTS, GROUPED BY GENDER AND AGE

Gender	1 - 7 years	8 - 10 years	11 - 14 years	15 - 17 years
Male	203 41.7%	992 71.4%	4,282 85.4%	2,892 85.2%
Female	284 58.3%	398 28.6%	734 14.6%	502 14.8%
Total per group	487	1,390	5,016	3,394
% of all incidents	5.8%	16%	50.9%	27.3%

The data for Table 3.5.4 are drawn from the Cleric Surveys. The question on that survey that asked for a listing of alleged victims' ages and gender was not completed for all surveys. Therefore the totals in Table 3.5.4, when summed, are not the same as the total number of alleged incidents.

Figure 3.5.1 GENDER RATIO OF ALLEGED VICTIMS, BY DECADE OF ACCUSATION



The year 1944 appears in this figure because one incident of abuse began in 1944, along with others that began in the late 1940s, but continued after 1950. The years of abuse before 1950 are not counted when the totals by year are derived, but are included here.

Table 3.5.5 ALLEGED MALE VICTIMS, AGE AT FIRST INSTANCE OF ABUSE BY DECADE

Decade	Ages 1 - 7	Ages 8 - 10	Ages 11 - 14	Ages 15 - 17	Decade Total
1950 - 1959	20	115	266	87	488
	4.1%	23.6%	54.5%	17.8%	100%
1960 - 1969	74	298	950	314	1636
	4.5%	18.2%	58.1%	19.2%	100%
1970 - 1979	80	354	1461	668	2563
	3.1%	13.8%	57%	26.1%	100%
1980 - 1989	48	170	818	585	1621
	3%	10.5%	50.5%	36.1%	100%
1990 - 2002	10	29	141	222	402
	2.5%	7.2%	35.1%	55.2%	100%

Table 3.5.6 ALLEGED FEMALE VICTIMS, AGE AT FIRST INSTANCE OF ABUSE, BY DECADE

Decade	Ages 1 - 7	Ages 8 - 10	Ages 11 - 14	Ages 15 - 17	Decade Total
1950 - 1959	79	87	89	24	279
	28.3%	31.2%	31.9%	8.6%	100%
1960 - 1969	92	129	207	98	526
	17.5%	24.5%	39.4%	18.6%	100%
1970 - 1979	46	97	164	119	426
	10.8%	22.8%	38.5%	27.9%	100%
1980 - 1989	28	48	110	75	261
	10.8%	18.5%	41.7%	29%	100%
1990 - 2002	11	16	75	43	145
	7.5%	11%	51.7%	29.7%	100%

The information in Tables 3.5.5 and 3.5.6 is taken from the Victim Surveys and available only for those surveys that included answers to the three questions about gender, date of incident and age at the time of the incident. Complete responses were received for 82%, or slightly more than four out of five, of the incident-level surveys.

Table 3.5.7 SUMMARY OF ALLEGED ACTS OF SEXUAL ABUSE

	Number of priests accused	Number of incidents reported	Percent of priests accused of each act
Verbal Abuse	626	1,105	15.2%
Victim Disrobed	1,057	1,442	25.17%
Priests Disrobed	695	1,129	16.9%
Touching over Victim's Clothes	2,161	3,600	52.6%
Touching over Priest's Clothes	494	968	12.0%
Touching under Victim's Clothes	1,848	4,022	44.9%
Touching under Priest's Clothes	553	968	13.4%
Shown Pornographic Video	107	150	2.6%
Shown Pornographic Magazine/Photo	149	240	3.6%
Photos of Victim	126	202	3.1%
Masturbation	466	741	11.3%
Mutual Masturbation	587	1,089	14.3%
Manual Penetration	283	389	6.9%
Penetration with Object	64	87	1.6%
Cleric Performed Oral Sex	1,068	1,477	26.0%
Victim Performed Oral Sex	585	922	14.2%
Penile Penetration/Attempt	920	1,219	22.4%
Hugs and Kissing	339	501	8.2%
Other	363	580	8.8%
No Record	754	991	18.3%
Unspecified Sexual Abuse	853	1,184	20.7%
Sexual Games (Strip Poker, Skinny Dipping)	78	104	1.9%
Group Sex or Coerced Sex w/ Others	14	52	0.3%
<i>This table is a Multiple Response Table. The categories are not mutually exclusive, as an individual may have participated in more than one act during the course of an incident.</i>			

¹ Dean G. Kilpatrick, Benjamin E. Saunders, and Daniel W. Smith. *Youth Victimization: Prevalence and Implications. NIJ Research in Brief*. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, 2003), 1.

² Kilpatrick, 7.

³ Patrick A. Langan and Caroline Wolf Harlow, *Child Rape Victims, 1992*, (U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics, 1992, Washington, D.C.), 1.

⁴ Langan., 2.

⁵ Howard N. Snyder, *Sexual Assault of Young Children as Reported to Law Enforcement: Victim, Incident, and Offender Characteristics, NIBRS Statistical Report*, (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2000), 2.

⁶ Snyder, 2.

⁷ Langan, 2.