



Diocese of Davenport

News

For Immediate Release

DATE: May 6, 2010
FROM: Deacon David Montgomery
Diocese of Davenport

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RE: Second Annual Report to the Bankruptcy Court

The Diocese of Davenport is in full compliance with the Non-Monetary Undertakings and is in conformity with the U.S. Bankruptcy Court's order dated June 26, 2008. The Diocese filed the second annual report to the U.S. Bankruptcy Court on May 3, 2010.

As part of the \$37 million settlement reached in May 2008 with survivors of clergy sexual abuse, the Diocese was required to submit a report in each of the three years following the settlement concerning non-monetary commitments. Both sides in the bankruptcy case are continuing to clarify issues concerning the 2009 annual report, especially concerning the posting of the names of all clergy, living or dead, who were credibly accused of sexual abuse of a minor. Disagreement exists about whether certain priests have been credibly accused.

The following is a summary of the report. The full report is available on the Diocesan website:
www.davenportdiocese.org.

The Diocese has completed all ongoing investigations concerning allegations of abuse. The names of those abusers credibly shown to have committed abuse have been publicly released and published on the Diocesan website. No new reports of abuse have been submitted since the last report. One investigation has been reopened at the request of a survivor concerning a deceased priest. The Diocesan Review Board and James Sweeney, a special investigator appointed by the bankruptcy court, are investigating the matter. Any future reports of abuse will be promptly submitted to law enforcement authorities.

Bishop Amos has visited and conducted atonement services at each of the 54 parishes where abuse occurred or where an abuser served. The visits were completed on June 13, 2009. At the atonement services the Bishop identified the abuser(s) who served in the parish and encouraged all abuse survivors to report abuse to local law enforcement authorities, to the Diocesan victim assistance coordinator, to healthcare professionals or to other trusted persons. The Bishop invited the known survivors in each parish to attend the service and provided time for a forum and discussion to address parishioner questions and comments. In addition, "allowed tort claimants", other than persons with allowed convenience claims, were allowed to speak publically at a mutually agreed time in the parish where they were abused. No requests to speak have been received. *The Catholic Messenger* offered to make space for "allowed tort claimants", other than persons with allowed convenience claims to publish stories of their abuse. No requests have been made.

The Diocese has published and will continue to publish contact information for the Diocese's Victim Assistance Coordinator in parish bulletins and *The Catholic Messenger*. The Diocese also continues to encourage abuse survivors to contact healthcare professionals for assistance in finding needed mental health or counseling and urges abused persons to report any abuse through notices in *The Catholic Messenger*.

Bishop Amos publicly supports the complete elimination of all criminal statutes of limitation for child sexual abuse committed by clergy or others in a position of authority. During the past year the Bishop met with the Iowa Catholic Conference on October 21-22, 2009 and with a group of legislators in Des Moines on February 2, 2010 to urge the passage of a bill regarding the elimination of the criminal statute of limitations for child sexual abuse committed by clergy or others in a position of authority.



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The Bishop personally sent two additional letters of apology to survivors as requested. The letters of apology state that the survivor was not at fault for the abuse and that the Diocese takes full responsibility for the abuse. The letters were personally signed by the bishop and all members of the Diocese's Board of Directors. One woman met with Bishop Amos to share her story. The Bishop said he was moved by it. "It certainly affected me and I certainly hope it brought some healing to her," he said. The Bishop is available to meet with any survivor who requests it.

All prior confidentiality agreements with survivors were terminated as of June 9, 2008 with respect to the names of abusers and church knowledge of abuse. Diocesan policies regarding confidentiality agreements have been in effect since January, 2008.

The Diocesan victim assistance coordinator (a licensed social worker) continues to provide an outreach program for the survivors of abuse. Notices regarding outreach programs are published regularly in *The Catholic Messenger*. An ongoing program to provide a safe environment for children includes training to identify abuse and mandates background checks for all persons in contact with children. A "whistle blower" policy has been in effect since May, 2008.

The Bishop and all priests working within the Diocese have been required to sign a written statement that they have not sexually abused any minor at any time and have no knowledge that any other priest or employee of the Diocese has abused any person or knowledge that any abuse has been reported to law enforcement and the county attorney and the victims assistance coordinator. Each statement was signed and dated under penalty of perjury and copies of the signed and dated statements are retained in each priest's personnel file in perpetuity. A plaque has been placed at each school stating that the abuse of the spiritual, emotional, and moral development of young men and women shall not be tolerated.

On June 6, 2008, the Diocese made a full written report to the apostolic nuncio for appropriate action with respect to Bishop Soens. In addition, five earlier reports were made to the apostolic nuncio concerning Bishop Soens.

Additional Information:

For the fiscal year to date, the Diocese has spent \$47,867 on assistance to survivors of abuse. For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2009, a total of 17,489 individuals had been trained in safe environment programs for the protection of children. Nearly 14,000 of those individuals were children. The Diocese spent \$22,133 for all child protection efforts for the calendar year 2009.

The six-member Diocesan Review Board functions as a confidential consultative body for the Bishop that advises him in the assessment of allegations of sexual abuse of minors, the suitability for ministry; reviewing policies and procedures dealing with sexual abuse of minors; and offering advice on all aspects of responses required in connection with these cases.

The members of the Diocesan Review Board are:

- The Honorable Clarence Darrow: partner in the law firm of Law Offices of Clarence Darrow; Illinois circuit judge with jurisdiction over civil and criminal cases 1986-1996; Illinois Senate and House of Representatives for 11 years; assistant state's attorney in Rock Island County for four years; psychiatric social worker from 1966-1971 in group, marital and family counseling as well as a child abuse investigator/court liaison.
- Catherine Fouts: past president of the Diocesan Board of Education and vice president of the Newton Community School District Board of Education.



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- Bernard Hardiek: retired past-president of the Worldwide Agricultural Equipment Division; Internal Revenue Service for 16 years as field audit branch chief, chief of the appeals office and assistant regional commissioner, appeals, in Chicago.
- Msgr. James Parizek, JCL: promoter of justice for the Diocese of Davenport and pastor of Our Lady of Victory parish, Davenport; past assistant chancellor and Diocesan judicial vicar.
- Chris McCormick Pries, ARNP: associate director for research, evaluation and community relations with Vera French Community Mental Health Center in Davenport; advanced registered nurse practitioner, holding certification as a clinical nurse specialist in child and adolescent psychiatric and mental health nursing from the American Nurses Association; and earlier held positions of assistant director for quality assurance, coordinator of adolescent outpatient services, chief of nursing services, psychiatric nurse on the child/adolescent team, and consultant on the consultation team.
- Very Rev. Anthony Herald, VF : pastor of Jesus Christ Prince of Peace parish, Clinton and dean of the Clinton Deanery.

To report child sexual abuse

Contact the Iowa Department of Human Services

Child Abuse Hotline: 800-362-2178

If the abuse involves clergy or church personnel, also notify

Alicia Owens, Victim Assistance Coordinator: 563-349-5002

PO Box 232 Bettendorf, IA

52722-0004

vacdav@attglobal.net

Abuse Survivors' support group

The Diocese of Davenport is offering a support group for adult survivors of sex abuse as children. If you are interested in learning more about the support group, contact Alicia Owens, Victim Assistance Coordinator: 563-349-5002.

Protecting God's Children

Sessions are open to all adults in the Diocese of Davenport and are mandated for all employees and those volunteers who work on a regular basis with children. To schedule a session, contact your deanery facilitator listed on the diocesan website, www.davenportdiocese.org. To pre-register for a session, go to www.virtus.org and click on "registration."

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