

September 23, 2010

The Diocese of Manchester's *Promise to Protect, Pledge to Heal, Policy for the Protection of Children and Young People (Policy)* provides that on a regular basis, the Diocesan Review Board will conduct an audit of the Office for Ministerial Conduct. In conducting this review, the Compliance Audit Instrument developed in 2007 was utilized, continuing to focus in the following areas: screening, educating, and training diocesan personnel.

I. Screening of Church Personnel

All compliance reports issued by the Diocesan Compliance Coordinator for the period of January 1, 2009 to December 31, 2009 were reviewed. There were no areas of concern. It was noted that when difficulties arise within specific parishes, these were immediately addressed in an appropriate manner.

II. Assignment of Priests and Deacons

Assignments and transfers of priests and deacons in 2009 were reviewed. It was determined that all requirements under the Policy have been followed and no priest or deacon who had admitted or was found guilty of sexual abuse of a minor had been assigned to any pastoral ministry.

Furthermore, the quarterly Priests, Deacons and Seminarian reconciliation report prepared by the Delegate for Ministerial Conduct was reviewed and no areas of concern were identified.

However, it was not possible at the time of the site visit to review the Priests personnel files as recommended in order to determine inconsistencies with information reported to the Board. The particular staff members interviewed appeared to be unclear as to the process of obtaining these files.

III. Training of Personnel

Both the Delegate for Ministerial Conduct and the Diocesan Compliance Coordinator were interviewed to discuss the evaluations of the existing safe environment training program and confirmed that it remains an effective program for the training of church personnel.

IV. Intervention and Reporting of Incidents, Allegations and Concerns

All quarterly reconciliation reports of sexual abuse made to the Diocese were compared to the Diocesan reports made to the NH Attorney General's Office. It was confirmed that all quarterly reports had been signed by the Delegate for Ministerial Conduct and a representative of the AG's office and that there had been no discrepancies.

Furthermore, it was confirmed that the Director of the Office for Healing and Pastoral Care had been informed of all quarterly reconciliation of reports of sexual abuse made to the Diocese.

V. Documentation

It was determined that records related to all incidents of sexual abuse of minors are difficult to access with some duplication of sections of the records. It was reported that there was a lack of confidence that the entire record is accessible and that working documents are frequently fragmented.

However, a copy of the Delegate Database Log for the period of January 1, 2009 to December 31, 2009 was reviewed and compared to the quarterly reports presented to the Board. There were no differences.

Lastly, staff of the Office for Ministerial Conduct was interviewed and it was confirmed that all records related to all site re-visits and/or reconciliations were prepared in accordance with the record retention policy.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The Office of Ministerial Conduct remains reliably compliant with the mandates of the Diocese of Manchester's *Promise to Protect, Pledge to Heal, Policy for the Protection of Children and Young People (Policy)*. However, it is recommended that staff review the policies and protocols regarding access to records, in particular the appropriate personnel from whom to request records. Although it is recognized that there is a need to protect the confidentiality of diocesan staff, policies have been developed and maintained that allow for the DRB audit team to view all pertinent records. The DRB investigated, discussed over multiple meetings, and unanimously concluded on September 23, 2010, that the unique circumstances preventing the audit team from accessing the Priest personnel files were a function of individuals being new in their assigned roles. Further, the DRB unanimously agrees there is no need for further audit.