Tab T-2

Pastoral Response to Adults Who Are Child Sexual Abuse Victims or Child Sexual Abuse Perpetrators

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The following addresses ways to provide effective pastoral care, and ensure a safe parish, where the victims of child abuse and/or the perpetrators of sexual abuse are adult members of a parish:

I. When Clergy or a Church Worker is a Past or Current Abuser

Incidents of child abuse, and the secrecy that often surrounds them, can cause devastating harm to the parish as well as the victims. Therefore, for churches where current or past child abuse has been perpetrated by clergy, staff, or volunteers, the diocese shall provide consultation to encourage the discussion of such incidents, and to provide a means to facilitate healing within the parish. Additionally, the parish vestry may, with the Bishop's consent, elect to retain an alternative expert consultation.

II. When a Member of a Parish is a Sexual Abuser

The diocese must make every reasonable effort to protect children. Therefore, the rector of any parish where abuse, whether past or present, has become an issue shall inform his/her vestry and wardens, and the Bishop, of the incident(s). Further, the vestry and wardens, in consultation with the rector and Bishop, shall make a plan to address both the protection of children in the parish and the steps required for the healing of the congregation. If a perpetrator of child sexual abuse is known to be a participant in a parish, the Bishop shall inhibit that person from any contact with parish children. If the perpetrator is observed acting in an inappropriate manner with children or their families, the rector or wardens shall
inform the family) of a potential danger to their child/children.

The rector or wardens shall consult Child Protective Services to assure that reporting requirements have been met as to the perpetrator.

III. When an Adult Victim is a Member of the Parish Where the Abuse Occurred

If the rector becomes aware that a victim of child abuse is now an adult member of the parish in which his/her past abuse took place, the rector shall contact the victim to offer pastoral support, as appropriate. The rector or wardens also shall inform the Bishop of the situation, without disclosing the victim's identity unless so authorized by the victim.

IV. When An Adult Non-Parish Victim is Known to the Parish

Where persons believed to be victims of past abuse are not currently part of a parish, but are known through others in the parish community, the rector or wardens shall attempt to inform those victims that the parish is concerned for them and willing to support them. The rector or wardens shall inform the Bishop of these attempts.