



October 5, 2004

My Dear Friends in Christ:

It is with tremendous gratitude that I share with Catholics of the Archdiocese and the community of Western Washington, the final report of the archdiocesan Case Review Board. Now that the Case Review Board has completed the work for which it was commissioned, I want to take this opportunity to thank its members for their dedication and service, and the intensity with which they undertook this very significant task.

The Case Review Board is one of two boards in our Archdiocese that addresses the mandate of the Charter and Norms promulgated in November, 2002 by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) regarding sexual abuse of minors by clergy. The second board, the Policy Review Board, is charged with assisting me in the development and oversight of effective policies to ensure the safety of our children and the accountability of our clergy in this regard. This Board's work is ongoing.

In establishing the Case Review Board, I gave the Board a clear mandate to review cases involving thirteen diocesan priests who had been accused of sexual abuse of minors. It should be noted here that no priest against whom an allegation of sexual abuse of a minor was deemed credible is currently engaged in active pastoral ministry.

The cases that went before the Case Review Board involved allegations of abuse that occurred during the time of Archbishop Thomas A. Connolly, the earliest dating from the mid-1950s. The last alleged incident occurred in 1986 when Raymond G. Hunthausen served as Archbishop. It was in late 1985 that Archbishop Hunthausen first became aware of the seriousness of this problem and the inability of professional therapeutic interventions to correct it. By the late 1980's, with the assistance of experts in the fields of pastoral care, law, counseling and medicine, he had established policies and procedures to address the problem and prevent future occurrences.

Since that time, the Archdiocese has taken the lead in establishing policies, protocols and procedures that have received national recognition as recently as the report from last year's audit by the National Review Board. I look forward to another such audit of our Archdiocese this November. While I have worked with steadfast resolve to build on and improve these policies, I remain committed to continuing to improve our systems in order to ensure the safety of all our children.

In addition to its findings regarding the substantiation of the allegations against the thirteen priests and its recommendations to me regarding the disposition of those cases, the Case Review Board has also made eleven recommendations, some of which fall

within the purview of the Policy Review Board. I have enclosed my response to their report, and will forward the recommendations with policy implications to the Policy Review Board for its deliberation and final recommendations to me.

Although the allegations examined by the Case Review Board and its recommendations represent reflections on cases most of which are more than forty years old (dating from the mid-1950s to 1986), it is helpful to remind ourselves never to be complacent, and of the need for constant vigilance and care in following proper procedures and reaching out in unique and special ways to victims and also according due process to the accused.

The Case Review Board has taken its delegation as a consultative body in the Archdiocese of Seattle most seriously and I am grateful for that. Our dialogue has been characterized by frankness, an earnest conversation about how best to live out the values of the USCCB Charter and Norms within the context of civil and canon law, but always with a common and singular vision: the protection of our youth from the horrible tragedy of sexual abuse. It is my hope that what we have learned can not only serve the Catholic Church but all sectors of society, many of which continue to face this scourge even today.

Finally, I wish to say once again to those who have been the victims of child sexual abuse by priests that I humbly and sincerely apologize to you and ask for your forgiveness on behalf of the Church. For those victims who have not yet come forward, I ask that you consider doing so to promote your own healing and the healing of the Church.

I express my appreciation to the members of the Case Review Board as they conclude their service to the Archdiocese. It is my deepest hope and belief that no new cases will be forthcoming. I will be asking the Policy Review Board to examine whether it is timely to establish a single Archdiocesan Review Board to address specific cases, should they ever occur, and archdiocesan policy; that is, a board similar to what is called for under the USCCB Charter and Norms and as expressed in most dioceses throughout the country.

Please be assured of my commitment and resolve in these matters, and my prayers for all that have been impacted by this crisis in the life of our Church.

Sincerely Yours in Christ,  
Most Rev. Alex J. Brunett  
Archbishop of Seattle

**Archdiocesan Case Review Board Final Report Recommendations**  
**Archbishop Brunett's Response**  
**September 30, 2004**

In addition to fulfilling their mandate to review specific allegations of child sexual abuse of a minor by clergy, the Case Review Board has made recommendations to Archbishop Brunett in this area. The Archbishop's response to the recommendations follows.

- 1. In those cases where molestation allegations have been made against priests who have left the archdiocese but not the priesthood, a review of those files should be promptly conducted and, where appropriate, laicization should be pursued.**

The Archbishop supports this recommendation since it is consistent with current diocesan practice. The Archbishop has been in the process of addressing this very issue over the last several months. To date, those men who are no longer acting as priests, but have not been permanently dismissed from the clerical state, have been identified. These men have deserted priestly life and ministry and cannot function as priests because they do not have a bishop's consent. The Archbishop is currently in the process of seeking dismissal from the clerical state through a canonical process for these men. This process will be completed by the end of November 2004.

- 2. The Archbishop should require all religious orders, as a condition of practicing in this Archdiocese, to refer all allegations of sexual abuse of minors to this Board or an equivalent within the order. The religious order will agree to remove a member of the order from the ministry when an accusation is made and will agree to keep the Archbishop informed of any further action on that religious member's case. Board findings will be forwarded to the appropriate official within the order for further action, including discipline. The order would agree to abide by the Archbishop's decision as to when a member of a religious order, against whom an accusation has been made, can return to ministry in the archdiocese and under what conditions he deems appropriate. Further, the procedures for publication of the names of members of a religious order against whom accusations have been made will be the same as for diocesan clergy.**

The Archbishop supports this recommendation since it is consistent with current diocesan practice, and most elements are already in place. All archdiocesan policies and procedures have been applied to any Religious Order priests who have served in an archdiocesan assignment and against whom an allegation of child sexual abuse has been made. Should an accusation be made against a religious order priest in a current archdiocesan assignment, he would immediately be removed from the ministry in the Archdiocese, the civil authorities would be

notified, the alleged victim would be offered counseling, and an investigation would be conducted. The religious superior would be notified and the Order's cooperation sought. If necessary, the Archbishop would enter into dialogue with the superior to ensure cooperation.

National protocols have been established to ensure that no instance of previous child sexual abuse by a Religious Order priest is concealed from a diocesan bishop. National networks are now in place throughout the United States that report Religious Order priests who have offended.

However, there are Religious Order priests who serve in the Archdiocese not by virtue of an archdiocesan assignment, but in an institution overseen by the religious order (colleges, high schools, hospitals, etc.). All religious orders in the United States have been working with the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) Office for the Protection of Youth and Young Adults to establish policies and protocols similar to the USCCB Charter and Norms.

The Archbishop continues in dialogue with the Superiors of Religious Orders who have institutions operating in the Archdiocese to ensure their compliance with these national norms and that their policies are consistent with the Case Review Board's recommendation.

**3. We recommend that there be conducted a review of Priest Personnel Department policies and procedures by medical and personnel experts, and canon and civil lawyers to set up protocols for file creation and preservation.**

The Archbishop supports this recommendation since it is consistent with current diocesan practice. The files are kept in accord with legal and canonical requirements and standards. The Archbishop will forward the policies and procedures regarding priest personnel files to the Policy Review Board for review.

**4. It should be an established policy that investigations of allegations of abuse will not rely on mental health professional's opinions and use only qualified mental health professionals to provide assessment, diagnosis and treatment of mental health recommendations / treatment.**

The Archbishop supports this recommendation since it is consistent with current diocesan practice. The Archbishop will share a list of current providers with the Policy Review Board or its designated subcommittee to ensure all of those providers are qualified.

For the last two years, the Archdiocese has not relied on mental health professionals for investigations of allegations but has utilized the services of a private investigator whose credentials and work have been recognized and praised by the Case Review Board.

- 5. Review seminary training to include explicit attention to human sexuality, methods for addressing sexual desire, and signs of risk for breaking vows of celibacy or engaging in sexual misconduct. “Fitness for duty” types of mental health evaluations should also be considered.**

The Archbishop supports this recommendation since it is consistent with current diocesan practice. In 1984, a comprehensive national study of seminaries was conducted by the USCCB which addressed these issues. In addition, a new study will commence in 2005. The Seminarian Office together with the Seminarian Review Committee utilizes several instruments to screen potential seminarians in accordance with the USCCB study.

- 6. Complaints of parishioners should receive more consideration and appropriate mediative services provided that could serve to prevent further, more serious, problems from developing as well as provide the parishioners with an assurance that they will be heard.**

The Archbishop supports this recommendation since it is consistent with current diocesan practice. On July 1, 2004, the Archbishop announced a restructuring that included the commitment of significantly increased financial and personnel resources in the Office of the Vicar for Clergy. A primary goal for the restructuring is to provide enhanced training and support for pastors and other parish leadership. Since the restructuring, several committees have been formed and have proactively responded to a variety of concerns expressed by parishioners. This office works with outside professionals to assure the provision of mediation services when needed.

- 7. Develop a more formal process to address sexual abuse of adults by priests.**

The Archbishop supports this recommendation since it is consistent with current archdiocesan practice. The existing policy regarding sexual misconduct and harassment is being followed currently. The Policy Review Board’s agenda includes addressing this issue.

- 8. Release the names of all priests found to have sexually abused minors.**

The Archbishop has agreed to release the names of the ten priests against whom allegations of sexual abuse of a minor were found to be credible by the Case Review Board. While transparency is a central value to the processes established by the Archdiocese, it is critical to adhere to formal canonical processes to avoid cases being dismissed by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF) on procedural errors (including the disclosure of names prior to a final decision by the Vatican). This current policy and practice is consistent with archdiocesan

Case Review Board Protocol 15 which was adopted by the Archbishop and the Board on June 4, 2003.

The archdiocesan Case Review Board has examined the cases of thirteen priests against whom allegations of child sexual abuse have been made. The Board determined that the allegations in three cases were not credible. In the remaining ten cases, the Case Review Board found the allegations to be credible, and made specific recommendations regarding their disposition. These cases have been processed and referred to the CDF for final disposition.

In the following four cases, the CDF responded to the recommendations from the Archbishop that were consistent with the findings of the Case Review Board:

James McGreal  
Desmond McMahan  
David Linehan  
John Cornelius

Six additional cases are awaiting final disposition by the Vatican. Due process under canon law instructs us that the specific recommendations of the Case Review Board and the Archbishop in these cases will be made public upon receipt of the final disposition from the CDF. Because the allegations may be contested by these men, it is critical to adhere to the formal canonical process to avoid cases being dismissed on procedural errors. Currently, these men have been barred from any active ministry, may not represent themselves as a priest, may not wear clerical garb or referred to as “Father”, and are being monitored by a compliance officer pending the final disposition of the allegations against them.

**9. The Archbishop should meet with the victims of the accused priest after his decision. It may be helpful, at least with some victims, that a victim advocate be present for those meetings.**

The Archbishop supports this recommendation since it is consistent with current diocesan practice. Archbishop Brunett will continue to extend an invitation to each and every victim of child sexual abuse and their families to meet with him so that he might express his pastoral and personal care and concern and extend on behalf of the Church his apology. Many individuals and their families have met with the Archbishop over the last years. Prior to the public announcement of the final disposition of a priest’s case by the Vatican, every effort is made to reach out to the victims of that priest to extend pastoral care, including meeting with the Archbishop. The Archbishop has been and remains open to meeting with any victim and their families to support the healing process for both the victim and the Church.

- 10. The Archdiocese compliance program should be reviewed by a competent professional to make sure it is updated consistent with civil and canon law. The compliance program should include but not be limited to:**
- **A Code of Conduct and supporting procedures which are reasonably capable of reducing the prospect illegal behavior.**
  - **The appointment of a high level employee to have overall responsibility to supervise compliance with the Code and procedures.**
  - **Effective communication of the Code and procedures to all employees and other agents including:**
    - i. Training programs;**
    - ii. Effective, practical publication(s), and**
    - iii. Signed certificate of compliance on an annual basis.**
  - **Taking reasonable steps to achieve compliance with the standards, including:**
    - i. Creating monitoring and auditing systems;**
    - ii. Establishing a reporting system for employees and others including the use of hotlines;**
    - iii. Keeping a record of all compliance efforts.**
  - **Consistently enforcing the Code, including discipline.**

The Archbishop accepts this recommendation and will forward it to the Policy Review Board for study and future action. Most of the elements in this recommendation are currently in place or under study by the Policy Review Board.

- 11. The Board or some other comparable entity should exist to periodically review all cases of priests who have been removed from active ministry or who have been subject to investigations for sexual misconduct behavior. This Board or other entity should receive and review reports from the relapse prevention specialists or mental health professionals and make recommendations about notification of parishes, restriction on practice and any other relevant procedures intended to ensure protection of parishioners.**

The Archbishop again accepts this recommendation and together with recommendations # 7 and #10, will forward it to the Policy Review Board for their deliberation.

#### **Other Recommendations:**

The Case Review Board Final Report, while including recommendations regarding specific cases and the recommendations noted above, also included the board's personal reflections based on their experience and the cases reviewed regarding two areas: "Zero Tolerance" and a "Reflection on Why." These reflections address aspects of policy that are outside the domain of our local Archdiocese and will be forwarded to the National Review Board and the Office for the Protection of Youth and Young Adults. While these reflections represent

the discussions by this local Board based upon their experience of examining the thirteen cases remanded to them (dating from the mid 1950s to 1986), it is recommended that those interested in these subjects read the full report of the National Review Board found at [www.usccb.org/nrb/nrbstudy/nrbreport.pdf](http://www.usccb.org/nrb/nrbstudy/nrbreport.pdf) to gain the insights of the comprehensive study of these issues conducted at a national level. These findings are somewhat at variance with the Case Review Boards findings particularly in regard to the root causes of sexual abuse of minors by clergy and the role of celibacy. The National Review Board provides a more thorough and balanced exploration of the subject as well recommendations that are based upon national research.