

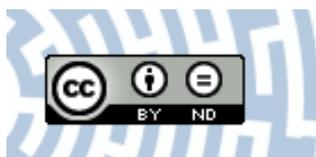


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## **Actions of the American Catholic Bishops for the benefit of victims of sexual abuse by clergy Guidelines of the Committee for the Protection of Children and Young People**

### **Introduction**

Pope Francis, in his apostolic letter *motu proprio Vos estis lux mundi*, writes that “The crimes of sexual abuse offend Our Lord, cause physical, psychological and spiritual damage to the victims and harm the community of the faithful. In order that these phenomena in all their forms, never happen again, a continuous and profound conversion of hearts is needed, attested by concrete and effective actions that involve everyone in the Church [...] Therefore, it is good that procedures be universally adopted to prevent and combat these crimes that betray the trust of the faithful<sup>1</sup>”. In the document *The Holy Father* reminds that every member of the Church is called to bear witness to faith, while bishops, diocesan and religious clergy are particularly responsible for combating and preventing sexual offenses against underage.

For over two decades United States Conference of Catholic Bishops<sup>2</sup> has been struggling with the crisis due to the disclosure of pedophilic acts committed by ecclesiastic. These crimes caused enormous pain, anger and confusion both to the victims, their families and the entire community of the faithful.

The purpose of this article is to find out what the American Church is doing to help victims of sexual violence. For that reason, the first part of the text was devoted to the key activities of the Committee for the Protection of Chil-

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<sup>1</sup> [http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/pl/motu\\_proprio/documents/papa-francesco-motu-proprio-20190507\\_vos-estis-lux-mundi.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/pl/motu_proprio/documents/papa-francesco-motu-proprio-20190507_vos-estis-lux-mundi.html) [accessed: 03.06.2019].

<sup>2</sup> Cf. <http://www.usccb.org/> [accessed: 03.06.2019].

dren and Young People. The second part of the article presents the content of the document entitled Charter for the protection of children and young people, which sets out specific actions for people who are sexually abused by American clergy.

## **Committee for the Protection of Children and Young People**

It seems necessary to present the key goals and tasks of the Committee for the Protection of Children and Young People<sup>3</sup>, which operates at the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, before discussing activities for victims of sexual abuse by priests.

The committee not only advises bishops on general activities for children and young people, but also oversees the work plan and expenses carried out to protect minors against sexual abuse by clergy<sup>4</sup>. The main purpose is to help bishops, both in the national perspective and individually, in matters related to the protection of children and the youth. Moreover, the Committee supervises the stages of accomplishment of the programs to protect minors against sexual abuse in the individual US dioceses. The Committee members provide bishops with comprehensive support in restoring the trust on the line between priests and the faithful of the American Church, taking into account culturally diverse communities.

Above all, the key responsibility of the Committee for the Protection of Children and Young People is the ongoing cooperation with organizations, both national and governmental, acting on behalf of minors, the Holy See and other episcopal conferences<sup>5</sup>.

The executive director and the head of the Committee for the Protection of Children and Young People is deacon Bernie Nojadera<sup>6</sup>, a graduate in sociology and theology, a war veteran, a member of the San Jose Safe Environment Task Force<sup>7</sup>, involved in the fight against the internet crime against minors. Melanie Takinen, a psychologist and a director of Safe Environment Training<sup>8</sup> in the Pheonix Diocese, has been the Nojadera's deputy since 2011. Laura

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<sup>3</sup> Cf. <http://www.usccb.org/about/child-and-youth-protection/committee-for-the-protection-of-children-and-young-people.cfm> [accessed: 03.06.2019].

<sup>4</sup> The tasks of the Committee are included in Article 8 of the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People, Cf. <http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/child-and-youth-protection/upload/Charter-for-the-Protection-of-Children-and-Young-People-2018-final.pdf> [accessed: 03.06.2019].

<sup>5</sup> Cf. <http://www.usccb.org/about/child-and-youth-protection/index.cfm> [accessed: 03.06.2019].

<sup>6</sup> Cf. <https://relationshipscience.com/person/deacon-bernie-nojadera-214609388> [accessed: 03.06.2019].

<sup>7</sup> Cf. <http://www.sanjoseca.gov/index.aspx?NID=642> [accessed: 03.06.2019].

<sup>8</sup> Cf. [www.safeenvironmenttraining.org](http://www.safeenvironmenttraining.org) [accessed: 03.06.2019].

Garner, a psychologist, a therapist and Drew Dillingham, graduate in political science and theology, also work at the Committee office<sup>9</sup>. There is an advisory council within the Committee, which consists of fifteen auxiliary bishops and bishops from the following dioceses: Boston, Ogdensburg, Philadelphia, Richmond, Jackson, Cincinnati, Gary, Fargo, St. Louis, Amarillo, Los Angeles, Juneau, Pensacola-Tallahassee, Chicago<sup>10</sup>. Rev. Timothy L. Doherty<sup>11</sup> of the diocese of Lafayette, Indiana, serves as the president.

The National Review Board<sup>12</sup> coordination is another equally important task of the Committee for the Protection of Children and Young People. The Review Board itself, headed by the historian Francesco Cesario<sup>13</sup>, was established in June 2002<sup>14</sup>.

The National Review Board tasks are clearly presented on the Conference website and include mainly reporting and control activities: audit work<sup>15</sup>, consultations, consultancy, preparation of reports, assessment of conducted activities. It seems necessary to mention that the reports of the National Review Board, prepared with the extreme care, are not free from criticism of the American Catholic Bishops. For instance, the latest of the reports of the National Review Board from November 2018 says directly that the activities of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops in the face of the fight

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<sup>9</sup> Cf. <http://www.usccb.org/about/child-and-youth-protection/who-we-are.cfm> [accessed: 03.06.2019].

<sup>10</sup> Cf. [www.usccb.org/about/child-and-youth-protection/committee-for-the-protection-of-children-and-young-people.cfm](http://www.usccb.org/about/child-and-youth-protection/committee-for-the-protection-of-children-and-young-people.cfm) [accessed: 03.06.2019].

<sup>11</sup> In November 2017, Bishop Doherty became the chairman of the Committee for the Protection of Children and Young People, cf. <https://dol-in.org/bishop> [accessed: 06.04.2019].

<sup>12</sup> Cf. <http://www.usccb.org/about/child-and-youth-protection/the-national-review-board.cfm> [accessed: 03.06.2019].

<sup>13</sup> Francesco Cesario is a historian, he served as a head of the Institute of Catholic Studies at John Carroll University in Cleveland and a dean at Duquesne University in Pittsburgh. He is a member of several boards: Visitors of Worcester Academy, New England Center for Children and Adopt a Student Committee in the diocese of Worcester. In 2013, he became the head of the National Review Board, Cf. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Francesco\\_Cesario](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Francesco_Cesario) [accessed: 03.06.2019].

<sup>14</sup> The National Review Board also employs: Amanda Callanan, Garry E. Hall, Howard Healy, Suzanne Healy, Stacie LeBlanc, Dr. Christopher McManus, D. Jean Ortega-Piron, Eileen Puglisi, Theresa Simak, Jan Slattery, Ernest Stark, Donald Wheeler, Cf. <http://www.usccb.org/about/child-and-youth-protection/the-national-review-board.cfm> [accessed: 03.06.2019].

<sup>15</sup> In the period from July 2017 to June 2018, StoneBridge carried out audits in 72 dioceses and collected data from 122 others. As a result of the work, it was found that 1385 victims of sexual harassment reported 1455 allegations against clerics. Compared to the previous years, this number has increased due to the implementation of the Independent Reconciliation and Compensation program in New York. In the course of the work of auditors, 26 allegations were reported to law enforcement agencies by minors, and 12% of them were found to be justified. Dioceses provided support and assistance to almost 472 victims of sexual abuse. Past over 2.6 million candidates for ordination min. diaconate and presbytery have been verified for sexual offenses, Cf. <http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/child-and-youth-protection/audits.cfm> [accessed: 03.06.2019].

against pedophilia were incomplete, even shameful<sup>16</sup>. It is mainly about the facts presented in the report<sup>17</sup> of the State Prosecutor's Office of the State of Pennsylvania from August 2018, which shows that in six dioceses<sup>18</sup> of this state (Allentown<sup>19</sup>, Scranton<sup>20</sup>, Harrisburg<sup>21</sup>, Pittsburgh<sup>22</sup>, Greensburg<sup>23</sup> and Erie<sup>24</sup>) there were 301 Catholic priests who committed sexual harassment against more than a thousand minors (mainly boys)<sup>25</sup>, and these matters were known and suppressed by the episcopal authorities. While the punishments were imposed on the priests, the bishops avoided the consequences. According to the Audit Committee, the responsibility of bishops has never been fully resolved, and yet legal action should be taken against them for their lack of support for weaker, underage victims. In the face of the information presented in the prosecutor's report, the National Review Board, in order to maintain

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<sup>16</sup> *Special Report of the National Review Board to the Body of Bishops on the Sexual Abuse Crisis in the Church*, 13.11.2018, Cf. <http://www.usccb.org/about/child-and-youth-protection/upload/National-Review-Board-Special-Report-to-the-Body-of-Bishops-November-2018.pdf> [accessed: 03.06.2019].

<sup>17</sup> Document 40th Statewide Investigating Grand Jury Report 1 is the result of a judicial investigation in the jury in 2016-2018, which aimed to determine whether a crime was committed by the clergy of the Catholic Church. It is noteworthy that the Church conducted an internal investigation into the sexual harassment of minors, which has not been notified to state authorities, which according to the law of the state of Pennsylvania is treated as a crime, Cf. <https://cbstpittsburgh.files.wordpress.com/2018/08/interimredactedreportandresponses.pdf> [accessed: 03.06.2019].

<sup>18</sup> The investigation was conducted in six out of eight dioceses of the state of Pennsylvania: the dioceses of Altoon-Johnstown and Philadelphia were not included in the study because they were the subject of previous work.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. B. Metrick, *Allentown Diocese to release list of accused priest*, *PennLive*, 01.08.2018, on: [https://www.pennlive.com/news/2018/08/allentown\\_diocese\\_to\\_release\\_1.html](https://www.pennlive.com/news/2018/08/allentown_diocese_to_release_1.html) [accessed: 03.06.2019].

<sup>20</sup> Cf. B. O'Boyle, *Bamberra will release names once Grand Jury report is made public*, *Times Leader*, 06.08.2018, on: <https://www.timesleader.com/news/714209/bamberra-will-release-names-once-grand-jury-report-is-made-public>

<sup>21</sup> Cf. B. Kessler, A. Mahon, *Harrisburg Catholic diocese names 71 priests, clergy accused of sexual abuse*, *York Daily Record*, 14.08.2018, on: <https://eu.ydr.com/story/news/2018/08/01/pa-priest-clergy-abuse-harrisburg-catholic-diocese-makes-sweeping-changes-names-accused-sexual-abuse/876529002/> [accessed: 03.06.2019].

<sup>22</sup> Cf. D. R. Kurutz, *Bishop Zubik: Pittsburgh Diocese will name clergy accused of sex abuse*, *The Times*, 05.08.2018, on: <https://www.timesonline.com/news/20180805/bishop-zubik-pittsburgh-diocese-will-name-clergy-accused-of-sex-abuse> [accessed: 03.06.2019].

<sup>23</sup> Cf. *Greensburg Diocese stands ready help to abuse survivors 'in their healing'*, *Catholic News Service, Crux. Taking the Catholic Pulse*, 04.08.2018, on: <https://cruxnow.com/church-in-the-usa/2018/08/04/greensburg-diocese-stands-ready-help-to-abuse-survivors-in-their-healing/> [accessed: 03.06.2019].

<sup>24</sup> Cf. T. Bonner, *Diocese publishes list of priests, lay people accused of abuse*, *PennLive*, 06.08.2018, on: [https://www.pennlive.com/news/2018/04/diocese\\_publishes\\_list\\_of\\_prie.html](https://www.pennlive.com/news/2018/04/diocese_publishes_list_of_prie.html) [accessed: 03.06.2019].

<sup>25</sup> This case was widely described by the American press. L. Goodstein, S. Otterman, *Catholic Priests Abused 1,000 Children in Pennsylvania, Report Says*, *The New York Times*, 14/08/2018, on: <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/08/14/us/catholic-church-sex-abuse-pennsylvania.html> [accessed: 03.06.2019].

credibility, concluded that it was necessary to prosecute those bishops, who despite their knowledge, had abandoned any actions.

On November 13, 2018, recommendations of the actions of American bishops, in the face of the crisis, caused by pedophile scandals by clergy were presented to the public by the National Review Board<sup>26</sup>. The Committee, speaking on behalf of the secular part of the American society, asks the Episcopate to take immediate action, including the declassification of church and seminary archives, in which the names of priests accused of sexual exploitation of minors until 1950 appeared. Bishops who were complicit in negligence or allowed the further sexual abuse of minors through their passive attitude, should resign from their functions. In addition, the Audit Committee requests an independent audit in parishes in order to verify the work carried out in accordance with the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*. Bishops, in view of the National Review Board members, should encourage the faithful to all kinds of activities related to the protection of children and the youth. To this end, diocesan ordinaries should cooperate with independent companies specializing in effective communication, develop a media plan, and all to create a positive PR. In each diocese, at the initiative of the Committee, there should be created a database of priests who had been removed from the parish due to sexual abuse of minors and seminarians who had performed similar acts.

It seems necessary to mention that the Committee for the Protection of Children and Young People recommends that the legal situation of priests (the list of unacceptable offenses disqualifying from work or volunteering with minors) should be verified periodically every 3-5 years, although it is the ordinary of individual dioceses who should make individual decisions in this issues<sup>27</sup>.

## **Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People**

During the annual meeting of members of the American Bishops Conference in 2002 in Dallas, the document to address the problem of sexual abuse of minors in the American Catholic Church was developed. The material pre-

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<sup>26</sup> Cf. *Recommendations from the National Review Board Addressing the Current Crisis specific to Restoring the Trust of the Faithful*, 13.11.2018, on: <http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/child-and-youth-protection/upload/NRB-Recommendations-to-Bishops-Nov-2018-Final-2.pdf> [accessed: 03.06.2019].

<sup>27</sup> Cf. <http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/child-and-youth-protection/faqs.cfm> [accessed: 03.06.2019].

pared by the Secretariat of Child and Youth Protection<sup>28</sup> is called the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*<sup>29</sup>. The content of the document was updated several times by the American Episcopate: in 2005, 2011<sup>30</sup> and in 2018. It is worth mentioning that the document published in 2002 is the result of the research that in the years 1950-2002 was conducted by John Jay College of Criminal Justice<sup>31</sup> on sexual abuse of minors by Catholic clergy.

Referring to the activities for the victims of the sexual abuse of minors by clergy, it is worth quoting those indications that have been included in the latest, updated version of the Charter, which is entitled *Promise to Protect. Pledge to Heal*. These changes are the result of work of Committee for the Protection of Children and Young People, the National Review Board and The Office of General Counsel<sup>32</sup>.

The structure of the document published in 2018 is as follows: introductory word, seventeen paragraphs and the final conclusions. In the introduction of the document, the bishops emphasise that they share the conviction of Pope Francis that every effort should be made to “eradicate the plague of sexual abuse of minors from the Church and open a way of reconciliation and healing for those who have been abused<sup>33</sup>”. In the course of the work, the American ordinaries confirm their deep commitment to the fight for the safe space for children and young people in the Church, asking for forgiveness for both those who have fallen a victim of sexual harassment and for all faithful to the American Church. At the same time, the bishops thank the victims and their families for expressing their opposition to the acts committed by the Catholic clergy. The ordinaries emphasise that not only the clergy, but also the entire community of the faithful is obliged to show their concern for the health and safety of minors<sup>34</sup>.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. <http://www.usccb.org/about/offices.cfm> [accessed: 03.06.2019].

<sup>29</sup> Cf. <https://www.bishop-accountability.org/resources/resource-files/churchdocs/DallasCharter.pdf> [accessed: 03.06.2019].

<sup>30</sup> <http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/child-and-youth-protection/upload/Charter-for-the-Protection-of-Children-and-Young-People-revised-2011.pdf> [accessed: 06.06.2019].

<sup>31</sup> Cf. <http://www.jjay.cuny.edu> [accessed: 06.06.2019].

<sup>32</sup> The office is a source of legal advice for the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, supports the work of diocesan lawyers, regional and local Catholic entities by providing consistent assistance in tax and court matters, cf: <http://www.usccb.org/about/general-counsel/index.cfm> [accessed: 06.06.2019].

<sup>33</sup> <https://www.deon.pl/religia/serwis-papieski/dokumenty/listy-papieskie/art,5,papiez-wzywaw-biskupow-i-zakony-do-walki-z-wykorzystywaniem-nieletnich.html> [accessed: 06.06.2019].

<sup>34</sup> Cf. *Promise to Protect. Pledge to Heal. Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Washington DC., June 2018, p. 4-6, on: <http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/child-and-youth-protection/upload/Charter-for-the-Protection-of-Children-and-Young-People-2018-final.pdf> [accessed: 06.06.2019].

Over the past 16 years, many changes have been made, regarding the activities in favour of the victims of sexual harassment, which is discussed in the final part of the introduction. For example, the *Safe Environment Program*<sup>35</sup> was created, which aims to provide minors with safety in church communities, during religious classes, during all kinds of activities organised under the patronage of the parish. As a part of the program, there are trainings for priests and non-religious people working with children provided. The purpose of these trainings is to provide knowledge on identifying behaviors specific to victims of sexual harassment and the executioners. In addition, the program discusses personal safety issues, and the materials which are used are adapted to the age of the recipient and they take into account the Catholic values and norms<sup>36</sup>. Moreover, the position of a victims' assistance coordinator<sup>37</sup> was introduced, to whom all the people who have been injured by a priest, a deacon or other person representing the American Catholic Church should report. A list of coordinators in each diocese, along with a telephone number and email address, is posted on the website of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.

The first three paragraphs of *the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People* are included in the chapter entitled *To Promote Healing and Reconciliation with Victims/Survivors of Sexual Abuse of Minors*<sup>38</sup>. This part of the document, which is quite general, contains information which says that help for minor victims of sexual abuse is due regardless of the time that has elapsed since these shameful acts took place. Victims should receive comprehensive assistance in the civil-legal, psychological and spiritual sphere. The next four paragraphs are included in the section dedicated to guarantees of effective response to allegations of sexual abuse of minors<sup>39</sup>. In this passage, the American bishops mention that all the actions taken to combat pedophilia in the Church should take place with the victims' consent, in cooperation with law enforcement, taking into account all the consequences of both secular and church law. The American Episcopate emphasises that these procedures should

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<sup>35</sup> Contact to the diocesan coordinators of the program (e-mail address and telephone number) is presented on the Episcopate's website. <http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/child-and-youth-protection/safe-environment-program-coordinators.cfm> [accessed: 06.06.2019].

<sup>36</sup> Cf. <http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/child-and-youth-protection/safe-environment.cfm> [accessed: 05.06.2019].

<sup>37</sup> Victims' assistance coordinators, cf. <http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/child-and-youth-protection/victim-assistance-coordinators.cfm> [accessed: 03.06.2019].

<sup>38</sup> *To Promote Healing and Reconciliation with Victims/Survivors of Sexual Abuse of Minors*, cf.: *Promise to Protect. Pledge to Heal ...*, p. 8-10, on: <http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/child-and-youth...> [accessed: 06.06.2019].

<sup>39</sup> *To Guarantee an Effective Response to Allegations of Sexual Abuse of Minors*, cf.: *Promise to Protect. Pledge to Heal ...*, p. 10-12, on: <http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/child-and-youth...> [accessed: 06.06.2019].

be taken for anyone who has ever committed the act of sexual harassment of minors. The bishops require that the perpetrator – reverend, who is proven guilty should be immediately removed from the parish, and if necessary also from the clergy. Paragraphs 8 to 11<sup>40</sup> mention the activities<sup>41</sup> carried out by the Committee for the Protection of Children and Young People, which uses the already mentioned annual progress reports of individual dioceses and the so-called best practice conducted throughout the country to combat pedophilia. The last six paragraphs (from 12 to 17) are devoted to future activities. It is above all about the close cooperation between the clergy-parents-educators-faithful, and all of this is to guarantee safety in every space of life for children and young people. One of these forms is to provide the access to training and development materials for all the people undertaking the work with minors. There are not only the priests or consecrated people but also the lay employees and volunteers working with children and the youth in the parish. All the activities, as emphasised by the American bishops, should be carried out on the basis of norms established by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, which say that formation should be introduced in the ecclesial dimension, with the involvement of secular and clerical authorities.

The final conclusions, which are mentioned in *the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People* are actually four declarations made by ordinary members of the American Catholic Church. The first promise was to make every effort to protect children and young people from perpetrators of sexual harassment. For this purpose, the American bishops declare to provide material and personal resources, necessary to achieve their goals. The episcopate ensures that only those clergy who will comply with both civil and church law will be allowed to work with children and young people. Finally, there is some information that the bishops will work to heal the American Church and will make every effort to obtain forgiveness from the victims of sexual abuse by clergy.

It seems necessary to mention that an integral part of the document is a list of rules how to behave which is called: *Essential Norms for Diocesan/Eparchial Policies Dealing with Allegations of Sexual Abuse of Minors by Priests or Deacons*<sup>42</sup>. These standards, like the entire *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*, are subject to successive updating. The document contains 13 points, each of them was established by the Conference of the American Catholic Bishops and approved by the Holy See.

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<sup>40</sup> *To Ensure the Accountability of Our Procedures*, cf.: *Promise to Protect. Pledge to Heal ...*, p. 12-14, on: <http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/child-and-youth...> [accessed: 06.06.2019].

<sup>41</sup> *To Protect the Faithful in the Future*, cf.: *Promise to Protect. Pledge to Heal ...*, p. 14-16, on: <http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/child-and-youth...> [accessed: 06.06.2019].

<sup>42</sup> Cf. <http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/child-and-youth...> [accessed: 06.06.2019].

The adopted rules of conduct apply to each diocese of individual states of America. For that reason, the Audit Committee will be established in each diocese, which will support bishops dealing with allegations of sexual harassment in their diocese. The Commission's goal will be also to review activities aimed at eliminating cases of pedophilia in the Church. The Audit Committee will consist of a minimum five lay people with good reputation and at least one priest who receives credit among the faithful from his parish. The members of the Audit Committee will be elected for a term of five years with the assumption that the individual activists' term will be extended.

When an ecclesiastic is accused of pedophile acts, the diocesan ordinaries are obliged to inform immediately the law enforcement authorities. The alleged offender should undergo a medical and psychological diagnosis to verify their psychophysical condition. It is the bishops who are responsible for removing a priest suspected of pedophile acts from the parish, provided that the alleged perpetrator cannot be sent to a foreign mission or transferred to another parish. In case of the workplace change, a new superior should receive confidential information about the past priest's pedophile acts.

The American bishops care not only for the victims of sexual harassment, but also for priests who have been wrongfully accused of such charges. In the event that the accusations are found unfounded by law, the authorities and faithful of the American Church should make every effort to restore the good name of the accused.

Finally, it is worth mentioning that the Committee for the Protection of Children and Young People prepares an annual report on the progress of work in implementing and maintaining the standards set out in *the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*. The latest report on the subject *Report on the Implementation of the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*<sup>43</sup> was released in June 2019 and it is the result of audit research conducted in 2018 in the American Catholic Church. This report presents figures from individual dioceses about how many cases of sexual abuse have been proven, who usually informs church authorities about pedophile acts<sup>44</sup> and how preventive actions are carried out in the American divinity schools<sup>45</sup>. Statistical material presented in the document also shows a „profile of a minor

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<sup>43</sup> Cf. *Report on the Implementation of the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*, Secretariat of Child and Youth Protection, National Review Board, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Washington DC, May 2019, on: [http://www.usccb.org/\\_cs\\_upload/issues-and-action/child-and-youth-protection/child-abuse-prevention/282759\\_2.pdf](http://www.usccb.org/_cs_upload/issues-and-action/child-and-youth-protection/child-abuse-prevention/282759_2.pdf) [accessed: 03.06.2019].

<sup>44</sup> Cf. *Report on the Implementation...* p. 25, cf. [http://www.usccb.org/\\_cs\\_upload/issues-and-action...](http://www.usccb.org/_cs_upload/issues-and-action...) [accessed: 03.06.2019].

<sup>45</sup> Cf. *Report on the Implementation...* p. 27, cf. [http://www.usccb.org/\\_cs\\_upload/issues-and-action...](http://www.usccb.org/_cs_upload/issues-and-action...) [accessed: 03.06.2019].

victim”): these are boys (82% of victims) between the ages of 10 and 14 (59% of victims), who are involved in pedophilic acts by diocesan priests (91% of perpetrators)<sup>46</sup>. The report also refers to financial issues related to assistance to victims of sexual crimes. Namely, in 2018, almost 7 million dollars was spent on compensation for people who were the victims of pedophilic acts, and the total costs related to charges against pedophile priests (a.o. counsellor ‘s salary) fluctuate around 240 million dollars<sup>47</sup>.

## Conclusion

The actions of the American bishops regarding sexual abuse are not only preventative but also include preventive measures. Undoubtedly, the fact that these activities are spectacular deserves attention. They are presented in the form of audio and audiovisual materials on a regular basis via the website of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops<sup>48</sup>. It is worth taking the example of clarity, including the financial one, of actions for victims of sexual abuse by priests. However, it is worrying that the American Church, fighting comprehensively against pedophilia for more than two decades, still has to face new scandals coming to light.

### DZIAŁANIA AMERYKAŃSKICH BISKUPÓW KATOLICKICH NA RZECZ OFIAR WYKORZYSTYWANIA SEKSUALNEGO PRZEZ DUCHOWNYCH. WYTYCZNE KOMISJI DO SPRAW OCHRONY DZIECI I MŁODZIEŻY

#### Streszczenie

Amerykański Kościół katolicki od ponad dwóch dekad boryka się z kryzysem w związku z ujawnieniem czynów pedofilskich popełnianych przez osoby duchowne. Artykuł przedstawia działania amerykańskich biskupów na rzecz ofiar wykorzystywania seksualnego przez duchownych zarówno w zakresie prewencyjnym, jak i profilaktycznym. W pierwszej jego części prezentuje sposób funkcjonowania Komisji ds.

<sup>46</sup> Cf. *Report on the Implementation...* p. 36-37, Cf. [http://www.usccb.org/\\_cs\\_upload/issues-and-action...](http://www.usccb.org/_cs_upload/issues-and-action...) [accessed: 03.06.2019].

<sup>47</sup> These costs, compared to 2017, increased by over USD 26 million. June 2018. *Report on the Implementation ...* p. 38, Cf. [http://www.usccb.org/\\_cs\\_upload/issues-and-action ...](http://www.usccb.org/_cs_upload/issues-and-action...) [accessed: 03.06.2019].

<sup>48</sup> So called podcasts, Cf. <http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/child-and-youth-protection/podcasts.cfm> [accessed: 03.06.2019].

ochrony dzieci i młodzieży, która działa przy Episkopacie, następnie omawia najważniejsze, opublikowane w ostatnim czasie dokumenty dotyczące problemu pedofilii w Kościele.

**Słowa kluczowe:** Konferencja Amerykańskich Biskupów Katolickich; pedofilia w Kościele; działania na rzecz ofiar wykorzystywania seksualnego; Komisja ds. ochrony dzieci i młodzieży

**Keywords:** United States Conference of Catholic Bishops; sexual abuse of minors in Church; actions for victims of sexual abuse; American Catholic Church; Committee for the Protection of Children and Young People

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wersytetu Śląskiego w Katowicach. W swoich zainteresowaniach naukowych zajmuje się tematyką rodziny w perspektywie społeczeństwa amerykańskiego, neokonserwatyzmem amerykańskim oraz historią teologii moralnej w Stanach Zjednoczonych.