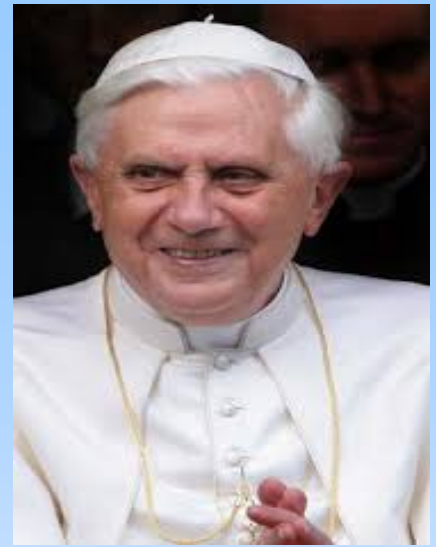


*The Congregation for the
Doctrine of the Faith*
and
*Pontifical Commission for the
Protection of Minors*

Mons. Robert W. Oliver, STD, JCD
Promotor of Justice

The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith





Mission of the CDF in “Pastor Bonus”

1. promote and safeguard doctrine on faith and morals in the whole Catholic world
2. examine offences against the faith and more serious offences in behaviour or in celebration of the sacraments

Promotor of Justice



JUSTICE is the virtue which disposes us to respect each other's rights and the firm will to give God and neighbor their due.

(Catholic Catechism, no. 1807)

Competence for “Graviora delicta”

Sacramentorum sanctitatis tutela (SST)

- against sacrament of the Eucharist
- against sacrament of Penance
- against sacrament of Holy Orders
- against sixth commandment by a cleric



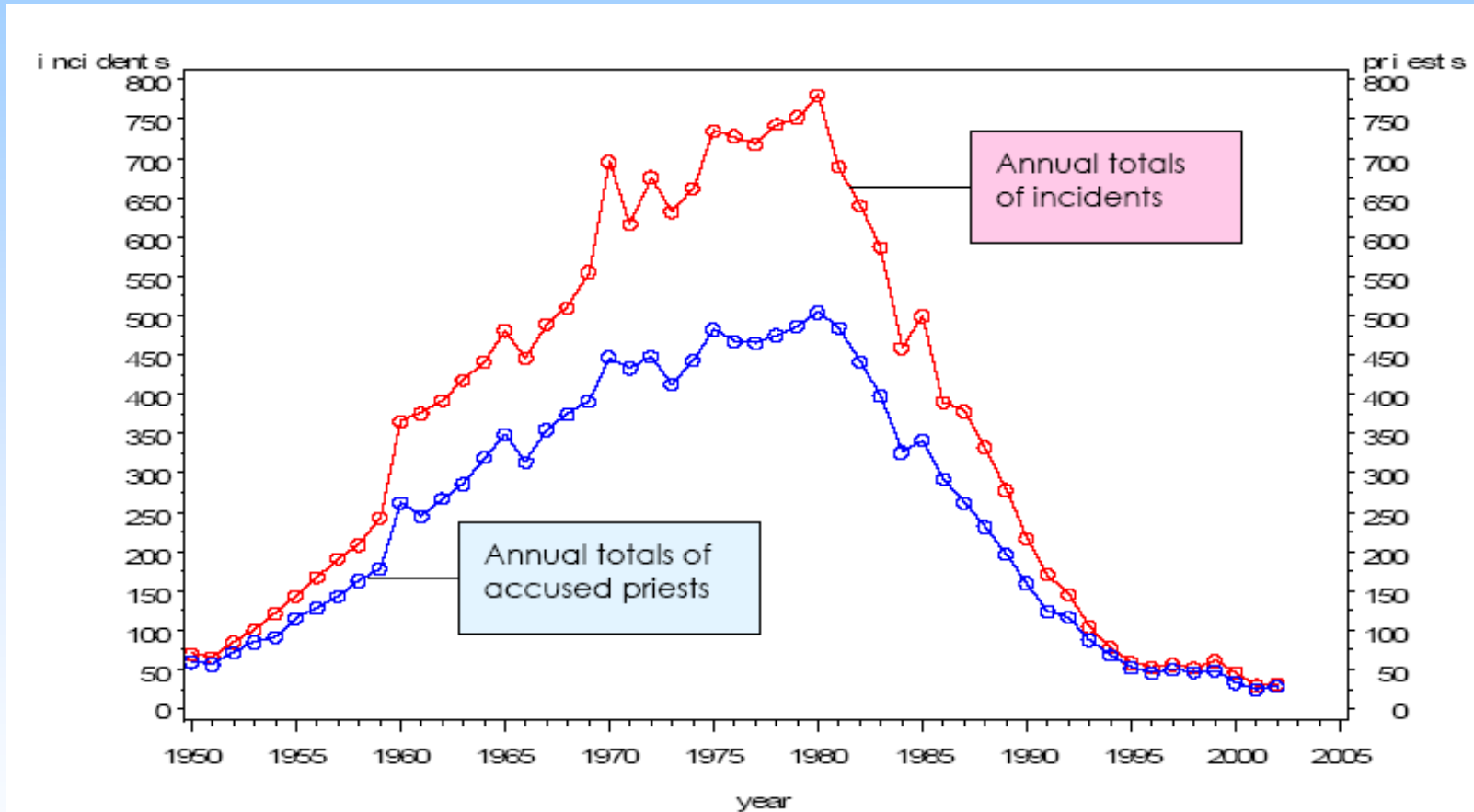
Delicts against the sixth commandment

- by a cleric
- with anyone under the age of 18
- with vulnerable adults
- acquisition, distribution of pedo-pornography

Scope and context: The abuse of our children

- in all societies
 - government of India – 52% of all children
 - studies in West – 1 of 3 girls and 1 of 4 boys
- in the Church
 - studies in USA, Germany
 - 1970s – 1980s
 - 1990s – 2000s

USA Incidents Reported and Priests Accused by Year



**THIS SLIDE MADE BY JOHN JAY UNIVERSITY
PRESENTED AT 2006 ATSA CONFERENCE**

The role of the Congregation

1. *Initial response* to an allegation in the local Church
2. *Guidelines* for the protection of children in local Churches and religious institutes

1. Initial responses to allegations

- cooperate with civil authorities, investigation
- Church investigates promptly, thoroughly
- limits on ministry placed correctly, clearly
- brief response from accused, send to CDF
- *votum* of the bishop or religious superior



Pope Francis to Gerhard Cardinal Müller:

“decisive action on behalf of our children and the young people of the whole world”

Current issues

- standard of *verisimilitude* (can. 1717)
- not a “penal process,” length of time
- due respect for rights of all, “privacy”
- provisions for appropriate care, sustenance
- accused receives information, can respond
- authority of “review boards”

Bishops and priests



“Be attentive to the spiritual and moral lives of each one of your priests... Set them an example by your own lives, be close to them, listen to their concerns, offer them encouragement.”

Pope Benedict XVI,
Letter to Ireland

2. Local Guidelines

Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith,
Circular Letter (May 2011)

“To assist Episcopal Conferences in developing
Guidelines for dealing with cases of sexual
abuse of minors perpetrated by clerics”

Circular Letter

Among the important *responsibilities* of the Diocesan Bishop

in his task of assuring the *common good* of the faithful and, especially, the *protection of children and of the young*,

is the duty he has to *give an appropriate response* to the cases of sexual abuse of minors by clerics in his diocese.

Circular Letter

Such a response entails the development of *procedures* suitable for assisting the victims of such abuse, and also for *educating* the ecclesial community concerning the protection of minors.

A response will also make provision for the implementation of the appropriate *canon law*, and, at the same time, allow for the requirements of *civil law*.

“Best practices” – continuing to learn

- failing to listen to victims/survivors
- underestimating the extent of abuse
- missing the “red flags”, warning signs
- believing abusers can be risk-free
- being manipulated by some offenders

“Perhaps the most common error made by individuals new to the field of working with perpetrators of child sexual abuse is being ‘conned’ by the denial and manipulation of the client.”

– Rev. Msgr. Stephen J. Rosetti, PhD DMin

“Best practices” – Policies and Procedures

- collaborating, partnering with experts
- intervening more rapidly, effectively
- detecting red flags and warning signs
- using a “team” approach for each case
- restricting abusers’ access to minors

Examples of policies based on data

- most perpetrators have more than 1 victim
 - only 14% 1 victim; 47% have 5 victims or more
 - 4 is modal number of victims
 - if 1 victim surfaces, there are probably more
- most victims are at boys, age of pubescence
 - 81-85% victims are boys, 15-19% are girls
 - 50.9% of all victims are 11-14 years old
 - policies for “at risk” children, situations

Is what we are doing working?

- collaborating, partnering with experts
- comprehensive prevention programs
- more potential child abusers are screened out
- quicker interventions when abuse reported
- abuse rates are dropping (USA: 4% to <1%)

Current issues

- time to complete process, *regional tribunals?*
- “mandatory reporting”
- “sentencing principles”
- “zero tolerance”
- guilty of lesser offense, but “unassignable”

CDF, *Circular Letter*

- “Guidelines are to make allowance for the legislation of the country ... regarding what pertains to the obligation of notifying civil authorities”
- “The return of a cleric to public ministry is excluded if such ministry is a danger for minors or a cause of scandal for the community”

Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Children



The Pontifical Commission

1. Beginning stages of the Commission
2. First tasks of initial members
3. “Working groups” to study topics and to make recommendations to the Holy Father

1. Beginning stages

- 8 initial members appointed by Pope Francis
- 5 lay people, 4 women
- two meetings at *Domus Santa Marta*
- continuity with efforts of Popes Francis, Benedict XVI, and St. John Paul II



“Pope Francis has made it clear that the Church must hold the protection of minors amongst her highest priorities.”

- *Fr. Federico Lombardi, SJ*



“All institutions, without exception, must be held to exacting standards in the protection of children and young people.”

Pope Benedict XVI, *Ad limina* visit
of U.S. bishops, 2011



“People need to know that there is no place in the priesthood and religious life for those who would harm the young.... So much pain, so much sorrow must lead to a holier priesthood, a holier episcopate, and a holier Church”

- *Address to the US Cardinals, 23 April 2002*

First tasks of initial members

- nominate full membership to Holy Father
- develop *Statutes* with nature, purpose, goals
- open a permanent Office in Rome
- establish working *principles*

Current members

- Cardinal Seán Patrick O'Malley, USA
- Catherine Bonnet, France
- Marie Collins, Ireland
- Sheila Hollins, United Kingdom
- Claudio Papale, Italy
- Hanna Suchocka, Poland
- Humberto Miguel Yáñez, S.J., Argentina
- Hans Zollner, S.J., Germany

Principles adopted by Commission

- children first
- collaborate with others around the world
- offer leadership, establish credibility
- honesty, transparency, accountability
- recommendations that are hopeful, realistic



“During our meetings, each of us have been able to share our *thoughts, experiences, and our aspirations* for this Commission...

Our conversations included many proposals for ways in which we might *collaborate with experts* from different areas related to safeguarding *children and vulnerable adults...*”

3. Working groups

- sharing of “best practices”
- child protection guidelines, policies, protocols in local churches, religious institutes
- canonical and legal issues
- issues raised by victims
- issues raised by those accused

Statement, 3 May 2014

“We have also shared with Pope Francis how important certain areas are to us in our future work.

We see ensuring *accountability* in the Church as especially important, including developing means for *effective and transparent protocols and processes...*

Statement, 3 May 2014

As an *advisory commission to the Holy Father*, we will propose initiatives to encourage local responsibility around the world and the mutual sharing of *best practices* for the protection of all minors,

including *programs* for training, education, formation, and responses to abuse.”

Pope Francis, 11 April 2014

“It is personal and moral damage, but carried out by men of the church. And we do not want to take one step backward in dealing with this problem and the sanctions that must be imposed.

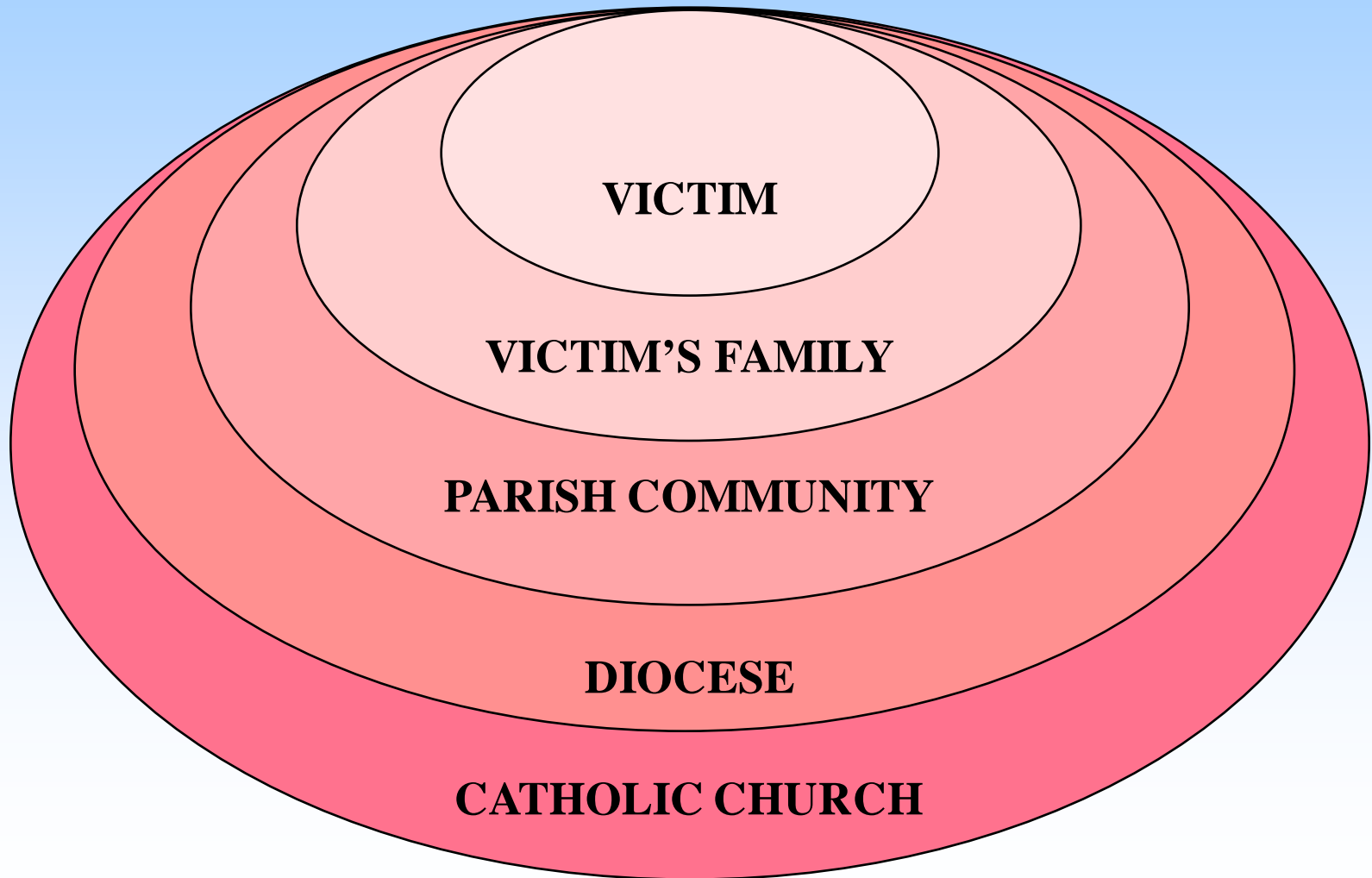
On the contrary, I believe that we have to be very firm.”

Pope Francis, 7 July 2014

“I beg your forgiveness ... for the sins of omission on the part of Church leaders who did not respond adequately to reports of abuse made by family members, as well as by abuse victims themselves.

This led to even greater suffering on the part of those who were abused and it endangered other minors who were at risk.”

Healing of the Catholic community



*Concluding Thoughts
and Discussion*