

DIOCESE OF MADISON

# Policy Regarding Sexual Abuse of Minors, Sexual Misconduct, and Sexual Harassment

Promulgated: December 1, 2008

Effective: January 1, 2009

**Most Reverend Robert C. Morlino**  
**Bishop of Madison**

## DECREE OF PROMULGATION

The **Policy Regarding Sexual Abuse of Minors, Sexual Misconduct, and Sexual Harassment** updates the 2003 Diocese of Madison **Policy**, and results from the concern that the Church utilizes competent ministers who provide effective ministry. We are convinced that the majority of those who serve in various capacities in the Diocese of Madison are competent, ethical, balanced, and mature. At the same time, we are aware that accusations have been made, and we are concerned that the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People* of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, with the accompanying *Essential Norms for Diocesan/Eparchial Policies Dealing with Allegations of Sexual Abuse of Minors by Priests or Deacons*, are upheld and maintained in the Diocese of Madison.

While this **Policy** statement is necessarily canonical in tone, it is based on the conviction that the root of the problems we face in this area is sinful behavior. Violations of the Sixth Commandment are objectively grave matters and these behaviors are contrary to the provisions of this Policy. Only when one acknowledges the personal sinfulness involved, will it be possible to freely turn to the healing mercy of our loving God. The sexual abuse of minors is a crime and is usually associated with serious psychological illness. Any response must address those two dimensions. But the third dimension, serious sin, must not be overlooked—in fact, the Church's unique competence is to deal with sin primarily, rather than crime or psychological illness—others have competence in those spheres, which may or may not create space for mercy. But in the end, only the Mercy of Christ heals human sin and sinfulness. The Church must overflow with mercy for victims of sexual abuse, and must also not deprive sexual abusers of all hope for mercy.

This Policy contains a few changes from the 2003 policy and becomes effective January 1, 2009. It applies to all priests and deacons incardinated in the Diocese of Madison; to all seminarians affiliated with the Diocese of Madison; to women and men religious; to lay men and women employed by or utilized as volunteers by the Diocese of Madison, its parishes, schools, institutions, offices, or programs; and to all priests and deacons incardinated in a Diocese other than the Diocese of Madison serving in any capacity here, and to women and men religious serving in any capacity within the Diocese of Madison.

In virtue of my authority as Bishop of the Diocese of Madison, this **Policy Regarding Sexual Abuse of Minors, Sexual Misconduct, and Sexual Harassment** is hereby promulgated. This policy is available and can be downloaded online at [www.madisonDiocese.org](http://www.madisonDiocese.org). Copies are to be made available to each priest, deacon, seminarian, and woman and man religious currently serving in the Diocese of Madison. Pastors or institution directors will distribute a copy to each employee and to all volunteers who work with children on a regular basis.

Given at Madison, Wisconsin, this 1st day of December 2008; to take effect on the 1st day of January 2009.



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Signed by: Most Reverend Robert C. Morlino, Bishop of Madison



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Witnessed by: Reverend Monsignor Daniel T. Ganshart, Vicar General