



SAINT VINCENT ARCHABBEY

Policy:

Creating a Safe Environment for the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Persons

Instituted 1992

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TABLE OF CONTENTS:

1.01 Introduction-Purpose	4
1.02 Policy	4
1.03 General Definitions	5-7
1.04 Standards of Conduct	8-10
1.05 Screening and Selection Process	10-11
1.06 Roles and Responsibilities	12-16
1.07 Responses to Allegations/Reports	16-20
1.08 Protocol for Visiting Religious Students	20
1.09 Review-Emendation:	20-21
Notes	22

1.01 INTRODUCTION-PURPOSE:

This Policy for child protection is intended to insure a safe environment for children and vulnerable persons at Saint Vincent Archabbey and to promote the moral values and attitudes of the Catholic Church among all who live and work in this Community. The Church and the Archabbey must foster a safe environment for all, especially children and vulnerable persons.

This Policy is also adopted to affirm the obligation of all Members of Saint Vincent Archabbey to assist in identifying suspected child abuse, sexual abuse or exploitation and to establish procedures for reporting such improper behavior in compliance with the Pennsylvania Child Protective Services Law (PA. 23 C.S. ss 6301). It is also the purpose of this Policy to institute guidelines to be complied with when an allegation/report is made against any Member of the Benedictine Community of Saint Vincent Archabbey who has allegedly engaged in sexual misconduct or abuse involving a child or a vulnerable person.

This Policy is intended to complement and comply with the “Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People” as adopted by the Ad Hoc Committee on Sexual Abuse of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops at its June 2002 General Meeting and with the subsequent revisions approved during the General Meetings of the USCCB, June 16-18, 2005 and June 15-17, 2011. Revisions to this Policy are also enacted to comply with the current Accreditation Standards for the Praesidium Accreditation process accepted by Conference of Major Superiors of Men (CMSM) during their General Assembly on August 6, 2020, and includes governance of the document given “*motu proprio*” “*Vos Estis Lux Mundi*” (“You are the Light of the World”) and released by Pope Francis on May 9, 2019.

This Policy supersedes the 1992 Archabbey Policy of Intervention and Treatment and the subsequent revised Policy implemented in 2003 and further revised in 2006, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2014, 2015, and 2017.

1.02 POLICY:

It is the policy of Saint Vincent Archabbey that sexual misconduct or abuse of any type involving a child or a vulnerable person by any Member of the Benedictine Community shall not be tolerated under any circumstances. The Archabbey is committed to responding promptly to allegations / reports of abuse, reaching out to victims and families for healing and reconciliation, cooperating fully with the appropriate civil authorities, educating the monastic community, and ensuring the accountability and compliance with the guidelines and procedures established to address all allegations/reports of abuse. This Policy also ensures the protection of victims and those reporting cases of abuse.

1.03 GENERAL DEFINITIONS:

1. Member: may be any current or former, living or deceased professed religious monk of the Archabbey, or a novice, including the Major Superior (Archabbot)
2. Minor Child: Anyone under the age of eighteen (18).
3. Vulnerable Person: Any person in a state of infirmity, physical or mental deficiency, or deprivation of personal liberty that, in fact, even occasionally limits their ability to understand or want or otherwise resist the offense.
4. Allegation: A first person accusation of sexual abuse of a minor brought against a current Member, former Member, or deceased Member which is reported to the Archabbey through any form of communication, including any that are anonymous.
5. Report: A third party accusation of sexual abuse of a minor brought against a current Member, former Member, or deceased Member which is conveyed to the Archabbey through any form of communication including any that are anonymous.
6. Mandated Reporter: A person who is required by the Pa. Child Protective Services Law to make a report of suspected child abuse.
7. False Allegation/Report: an allegation or report that was proven to be untruthful and fabricated.
8. Implausible: any allegation or report that could not possibly have occurred under the given circumstances (e.g., an accusation is made against a priest who was deceased at the time of the alleged offense). Erroneous information does not necessarily make an allegation/report implausible (e.g., a monk arrived at the monastery a year after the alleged abuse, but all of the other facts of the case are credible, and the alleged victim might have mistaken the date).
9. Sexual Abuse or Exploitation: Legal Definition, PA. 23 C.S. ss 6303) Any of the following:
 - (1) The employment, use, persuasion, inducement, enticement or coercion of a child to engage in or assist another individual to engage in sexually explicit conduct, which includes, but is not limited to, the following:
 - (i) Looking at the sexual or other intimate parts of a child or another individual for the purpose of arousing or gratifying sexual desire in any individual.
 - (ii) Participating in sexually explicit conversation either in person, by telephone, by computer or by a computer-aided device for the purpose of sexual stimulation or gratification of any individual.

- (iii) Actual or stimulated sexual activity or nudity for the purpose of sexual stimulation or gratification of any individual.

This would include “vulnerable persons” subjected to sexual abuse or exploitation through intimidation and coercion by anyone in a position of authority.

10. Child Abuse: (Legal Definition, PA. 23 C.S. ss 6303 b.1) The term “child abuse” shall mean intentionally, knowingly or recklessly doing any of the following:
- (1) Causing bodily injury to a child through any recent act or failure to act.
 - (2) Fabricating, feigning or intentionally exaggerating or inducing a medical symptom or disease which results in a potentially harmful medical evaluation or treatment to the child through any recent act.
 - (3) Causing or substantially contributing to serious mental injury to a child through any act or failure to act or a series of such acts or failures to act.
 - (4) Causing sexual abuse or exploitation of a child through any act or failure to act.
 - (5) Creating a reasonable likelihood of bodily injury to a child through any recent act or failure to act.
 - (6) Creating a likelihood of sexual abuse or exploitation of a child through any recent act or failure to act.
 - (7) Causing serious physical neglect of a child.
 - (8) Engaging in any of the following recent acts:
 - (i) Kicking, biting, throwing, burning, stabbing, or cutting a child in a manner that endangers the child.
 - (ii) Unreasonably restraining or confining a child, based on consideration of the method, location or the duration of the restraint or confinement.
 - (iii) Forcefully shaking a child under one year of age.
 - (iv) Forcefully slapping or otherwise striking a child under one year of age.
 - (v) Interfering with the breathing of a child.
 - (vi) Causing a child to be present at a location while a violation of 18 Pa. C.S. ss 7508.2 (relating to operation of methamphetamine laboratory) is occurring, provided that the violation is being investigated by law enforcement.

- (vii) Leaving a child unsupervised with an individual, other than a child's parent, who the actor knows or reasonably should have known:
 - (A) Is required to register as a Tier II or Tier III sexual offender under 42 Pa. C.S. Ch.97 Subch. H (relating to registration of sexual offenders), where the victim of the sexual offense was under 18 years of age when the crime was committed.
 - (B) Has been determined to be a sexually violent predator under 42 Pa. C.S. ss 9799.24 (relating to assessments) or any of its predecessors.
 - (C) Has been determined to be a sexually violent delinquent child as defined in 42 Pa. C.S. ss 9799.12 (relating to definitions).
- (9) Causing the death of the child through any act or failure to act.
 - (c) Restatement of culpability – Conduct that causes injury or harm to a child or creates a risk of injury or harm to a child shall not be considered child abuse if there is no evidence that the person acted intentionally, knowingly or recklessly when causing the injury or harm to the child or creating a risk of injury or harm to the child.
 - (d) Child abuse exclusions – The term “child abuse” does not include any conduct for which an exclusion is provided in section 6304 (relating to exclusions from child abuse).

Pa.C.S. ss 6303(a) **CPSL Law Definitions:**

“Intentionally” – The term shall have the same meaning as provided in 18 Pa. C.S. ss 302 (relating to general requirements of culpability).

“Knowingly” – The term shall have the same meaning as provided in 18 Pa. C.S. ss 302 (relating to general requirements of culpability).

“Recklessly” – The term shall have the same meaning as provided in 18 Pa. C.S. ss 302 (relating to general requirements of culpability).

11. **Child Pornography:** Any representation of a minor, regardless of the means used, involved in explicit sexual activities, whether real or simulated, and any representation of sexual organs of minors for primarily sexual purposes. Child pornography is considered sexual abuse of a minor.

1.04 STANDARDS OF CONDUCT:

The following listed standards and guidelines are provided to assist Benedictine Community Members in making decisions involving interactions with children and vulnerable persons:

A. Prohibited Behaviors:

1. Using, possessing, or being under the influence of illegal drugs while in the presence of minors or vulnerable persons.
2. Using, possessing, or being under the influence of alcohol while supervising minors or vulnerable persons.
3. Known or suspected acquisition, possession, distribution, downloading and/or intentionally viewing of real or virtual pornographic images of minors under the age of eighteen (18), or vulnerable persons, for the purposes of sexual gratification by whatever means using whatever technology.
4. Providing or allowing minors or vulnerable persons to consume alcohol or illegal drugs.
5. Using profanity in the presence of minors or vulnerable persons.
6. Speaking to minors or vulnerable persons in a manner that could be construed by any observer as being harsh, threatening, intimidating, shaming, derogatory, demeaning, or humiliating.
7. Discussing sexual activities or topics with minors or vulnerable persons unless it is a specific assignment requirement and the Member is trained to discuss these matters.
8. Engaging in any sexually-oriented conversation with minors or vulnerable persons unless the conversations are part of a legitimate religious lesson and discussion for teenagers regarding human sexuality issues. On such occasions, the lessons will convey to youth the Church's teachings on these specific topics. If the minor or vulnerable person has any further questions not answered or addressed by their individual teachers, they should be referred to their parents or guardians for clarification or counseling. All the prohibited behaviors concerning communications with minors or vulnerable persons (Nos. 6-9) apply equally to communications through electronic means, including, but not limited to, social media, email, blogs, etc. Members must also comply with the guidelines set forth in the "Social Networking Policy for Saint Vincent Archabbey, (12/01/2020)"
9. Possessing or distributing sexually oriented or morally inappropriate printed materials (magazines, cards, videos, films, books, clothing, etc.).

10. Accepting Facebook friend requests, LinkedIn connections, or any other similar social media connection request from minors or vulnerable persons.
11. Communicating with others on internet chat rooms.
12. Sleeping in the same beds, sleeping bags, or confined spaces with minors or vulnerable persons.
13. Engaging in sexual contact with minors or vulnerable persons. For the purpose of this Policy, sexual contact is defined as any touching of the person of a minor or vulnerable person for the purpose of sexually arousing or gratifying either person.
14. Members are prohibited from transporting minors or vulnerable persons without the permission of their parent or guardian.
15. Members are prohibited from unnecessary and/or inappropriate physical contact with minors or vulnerable persons while in a vehicle.
16. Members are prohibited from having minors or vulnerable persons stay in their room or their residences.
17. Members are prohibited from using physical discipline in any way for behavior training of minors or vulnerable persons. No form of physical discipline is acceptable. This prohibition includes spanking, slapping, pinching, hitting, and any other physical force as retaliation or correction for inappropriate behaviors by minors or vulnerable persons.

B. Appropriate Behaviors:

The Church supports appropriate social interaction between Members, minors, and vulnerable persons. This is part of Church life and ministry. The following forms of affection are regarded as appropriate examples for Members in ministry roles with minors and vulnerable persons, including those who are part of a Member's family:

- Side Hugs.
- Pats on the shoulder or back.
- Hand shakes.
- “High Fives” and hand slapping.
- Verbal praise.
- Touching hands, faces, shoulders, and arms of minors.
- Arms around shoulders.

1.05 SCREENING AND SELECTION PROCESS

- Holding hands while walking with small children.
- Sitting beside small children.
- Kneeling or bending down for hugs with small children.
- Holding hands during prayer.
- Pats on the head when culturally appropriate.

C. Violations of Boundaries with Minors or Vulnerable Persons:

All members are expected to report all instances of abuse of a minor or a vulnerable person or if they witness warning signs of violations regarding boundaries with minors or vulnerable persons, such as inappropriate or improper behaviors which are not properly classified as abuse of a minor or vulnerable person, and the action in and of itself does not warrant notification of the civil authorities; the Member is still required to make proper notification to the Prior or the Delegate for Child Protection. Additionally, Members must report known or suspected acquisition, possession, distribution, downloading, and/or intentional viewing of real or virtual child pornography. It is the responsibility of the Member who has direct knowledge of the incident to report the conduct to the Prior or the Delegate. The Prior or the Delegate will document all reports, notify the Archabbot, and ensure that the proper intervention and remedial action is addressed with the accused Member.

Members must also comply with the “Social Networking Policy for Saint Vincent Archabbey.”

D. Supervision of Programs or Activities that Involve Minors or Vulnerable Persons:

1. Members who work with minors or vulnerable persons on a regular basis must participate in training that addresses their role in protecting them.
2. Extracurricular Programs or activities outside of a classroom involving minors or vulnerable persons that include Members should be supervised by at least two adults.
3. Members serving in leadership roles shall be aware of all programs for minors and vulnerable persons that are sponsored by their parish, school, or other institution of assignment. There shall always be adequate adult supervision of these programs and activities.

1.05 SCREENING AND SELECTION PROCESS:

Saint Vincent Archabbey seeks to maintain a safe and secure environment where Members may minister appropriately to the spiritual needs of all persons. In order

to preserve and maintain such an environment, it is critically necessary that thorough screening and selection procedures be conducted of all Members who would be in contact with minor children and/or vulnerable persons. The Archabbey will ensure that the appropriate criminal background record checks and child abuse history clearances are completed, as required by law, in order to carry out its obligation to create and maintain a safe environment for all persons.

As an integral part of the procedure for application for admission to the Novitiate of the Benedictine Community of Saint Vincent Archabbey, candidates will be thoroughly screened during the selection-for-formation process by the Vocations Office and the Monastic Chapter. This screening process will include the candidate's completing: the Guidance Summary form, the Autobiographical Statement, a series of personal interviews, the submission of Letters of Recommendation, submission of academic transcripts, the completion of a physical examination and medical-history form, an interview with a psychologist and psychological evaluation that includes a psycho-sexual history, a criminal history record check and child abuse history clearance, and, if appropriate, the submission of Testimonial Letters and Questionnaires. The Candidate must submit a minimum of three documented personal references, including at least one from a family member, and two professional references, for a total of five references. The Candidate will be required to provide access for a review of publically accessible content on all social media, personal blog sites, and web sites associated with their accounts. A Candidate, who has an established allegation/report of sexually abusing a minor in his past, or who has acquired or intentionally viewed child pornography, cannot be permitted to continue through the selection process.

Assessments of Candidates from different cultural backgrounds will include an evaluation of the individual's ability to adapt to cultural requirements of ministry in the United States.

To assure the Saint Vincent Archabbey's ability to demonstrate that it has taken all reasonable actions to assure that appropriate persons conduct ministry, complete accounts must be recorded of all activities constituting criminal background record checks and clearances. If a background check is not possible due to "international limitations," documentation of the effort must be maintained in the Candidate's file. The Archabbey shall maintain such records indefinitely.

Background record checks and clearances shall be reviewed for each new assignment and updated in accordance with the Pa. Child Protective Services Law (CPSL).

Additionally, Members of the Benedictine Community will participate in annual safe-environment training programs (e.g. *VIRTUS*, *ARMATUS*) for working with and teaching minor children and/or vulnerable persons. A record of this annual training will be maintained by the Delegate for Child Protection. At the discretion of the Archabbot, a Member may be excused from the training if that member has physical or medical difficulties and will not be involved in public ministry.

1.06 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

A. Archabbot:

As the Major Superior, the Archabbot is responsible for many of the decisions that are required to create and maintain a safe environment for members and those who are served by Saint Vincent Archabbey.

Allegations/reports of sexual misconduct or abuse may come from a variety of sources, including alleged victims or their family members, diocesan officials, members of the community, a colleague in the workplace, or from an alleged perpetrator. In a specific case where a Member of the Benedictine Community is accused of sexually abusive behavior toward a minor child or a vulnerable person, the Archabbot will exercise the following responsibilities:

1. The Archabbot will ensure that all reported allegations/reports are brought to the attention of the proper civil authorities, and when required by the guidelines set forth by the Pa. Department of Human Services; notification will be made to the 24 hour “Childline” child abuse hotline (1-800-932-0313) and/or by submission of an on-line report to www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis.
2. If appropriate, the Archabbot will also ensure that a written report is made within 48 hours of the telephone report on DHS form CY-47 and sent to the Child Protective Services Agency in the county in which the suspected abuse occurred.
3. The Archabbot will begin to conduct or assign his Delegate to conduct a complete and thorough investigation of the allegation/report, to the extent possible, based upon the information provided.
4. Based upon the final outcome of the investigation, the Archabbot will take appropriate action, which may include:
 - a. The offer of appropriate pastoral care, spiritual care, and psychological care to the person making the complaint for as long as reasonably necessary
 - b. Intervention with the accused Member, including complete removal from ministry/assignment or supervision of activities.
 - c. Further notification of the proper civil authority (e.g., District Attorney, the appropriate police agency or Child Protective Service Agency.
 - d. Notification to the leadership of any organization or ministry in which a Member has admitted to, or is suspected of, having sexually abused a minor, to the extent possible.

- e. Issuance of a public statement concerning the allegation/report, when appropriate.
- f. Submission of all pertinent documents and votum to the CDF for the final determination that a sexual abuse allegation is “substantiated”, when necessary.

B. Archabbot’s Delegate:

The Delegate is appointed by the Archabbot and oversees the investigation of alleged sexual misconduct and subsequent interventions. The Delegate will:

1. In the absence of the Archabbot, ensure that all reported allegations/reports are brought to the attention of the proper civil authorities, and when required by the guidelines set forth by the Pa. Department of Human Services, notification will be made to the 24 hour “Childline” child abuse hotline (1-800-932-0313) or by submission of an on-line report to www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis.
2. In the absence of the Archabbot, if appropriate, also ensure that a written report is made within 48 hours of the telephone report on DHS form CY-47 and sent to the Child Protective Services Agency in the county in which the suspected abuse occurred. The Delegate will also advise and encourage the Complainant-victim to report the accusation directly to the appropriate civil authority.
3. Will provide the Complainant-victim with written information explaining the process that the Archabbey follows in responding to allegations of abuse.
4. Conduct a complete and thorough investigation of any and all allegations/reports of sexual abuse or misconduct by any Member of the Benedictine Community, to the extent possible, based upon the information provided. The Delegate will offer to meet in person with any individual who reports sexual abuse of a minor or vulnerable person by a Member to promote the healing process and to understand how the sexual abuse has affected the individual. If the Complainant-victim is represented by legal counsel, the Delegate will offer to meet with the individual through their legal counsel. If this is declined, the Delegate will document this to the file.
5. Prepare an investigative report and collect any pertinent materials or evidence relating to the allegation/report for presentation to the Archabbot and to the Saint Vincent Archabbey Review Board.
6. Recommend to the Archabbot the names(s) of anyone who could assist the Delegate in conducting the investigation.
7. Provide the Archabbot a post-investigation recommendation and the recommendation to the Review Board.

1.06 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

In addition, the Delegate will work in conjunction with:

- a. the appropriate civil authorities to satisfy the legal reporting requirements for the benefit of the community and the public.
- b. diocesan or parish representatives if the accused monk is assigned through the diocese when an allegation/report is received.
- c. the Archabbot to draft a public statement concerning the allegation/report, if appropriate.

C. Members: – MANDATED REPORTERS

Members of the Saint Vincent Archabbey community, in their varying roles as clergy, teachers, social service workers, school administrators, health care professionals, chaplains, parish and school administrators, youth ministers, and in any assignment which involves contact with children or vulnerable persons in the course of their work or professional practice, are defined as **MANDATED REPORTERS** of child abuse or student abuse. As such, Members are required to **personally** and **immediately** file a report of all instances of child abuse or suspected child abuse that come to their attention by calling the “Childline” child abuse hotline (800-932-0313) or by submission of an on-line report to www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis In addition, members must file a follow-up written report on DHS form (CY-47) and submit the report to the Child Protective Services Agency in the county where the suspected abuse occurred. A copy of the CY-47 report must be forwarded to the Prior and the Delegate for Child Protection.

Duty to Report:

1. The reporting mandate applies to those children with whom the Member comes into contact through work or through the church or school with which the Member is associated. The mandate to report applies to all suspected child abuse, not just abuse that has been perpetrated by Church/School personnel. Possible abusers could include parents, relatives, other siblings, neighbors, youth group leaders, sports coaches, family friends, and other children. The reporting mandate also applies to second-hand reports of abuse if the Member has ‘reasonable cause to suspect’ that child abuse has occurred.
2. The Pennsylvania Child Protective Services Law specifically grants legal immunity to any individual who, in good faith, makes a report of suspected child abuse.
3. Members of the clergy are not permitted by Church law and are not required by state law to report information received privately during sacramental confession or during the Manifestation of Conscience.

4. Members in assignments away from the Archabbey should thoroughly review and follow the reporting mandates applicable to their assigned parish, school or diocese.
5. Members assigned at the Archabbey are required to report all instances of suspected abuse to the Prior or the Archabbot's Delegate for Child Protection, who will subsequently document all incidents and inform the Archabbot. The Delegate will ensure that the proper procedures are followed to report any suspected child abuse to "Childline" and to the Child Protective Services Agency in the county where the suspected abuse occurred

D. The Review Board:

The Review Board serves as a reviewing body for the investigative report and recommendations of the Delegate in cases of alleged sexual misconduct or abuse. A request for review of an allegation/or report by the Review Board shall be commenced only by the Archabbot or by one specifically appointed by the Archabbot. The Board will be notified within 30 days when a credible allegation is received and when the investigation is completed. The Board will ratify or reject the findings of the investigation and recommendations it receives and/or offer its own judgments and recommendations to the Archabbot, including the need for additional investigation or any additional action that needs to be taken concerning a particular allegation/report. Should the Board determine that the investigated and presented allegation/report appears to be credible, the normal policy in regard to inappropriate behavior of Members of the Benedictine Community will be followed. In particular cases, the Review Board will also make recommendations relative to the fitness for ministry or any other assignment of a monk. The Review Board will review each written individualized supervision plan for Members who are required to be on a plan. The Board will review the specific supervision plans at least annually and offer recommendations to the Archabbot. The Board will also advise and present recommendations regarding the appropriate pastoral response to a person who made an allegation and a plan for the possibly affected parish or school. The Board's role and purpose are strictly advisory to the Archabbot, and it has no independent power or authority.

The Archabbot will appoint five (5) members to the Board for a term of five (5) years with the option to extend the appointment. Membership on the Board will include clergy and lay men and women from the community who possess experience and professional expertise to properly review presented allegations, evaluate the investigative findings, and offer advice and recommendations to the Archabbot.

A document entitled "Saint Vincent Archabbey Allegation Review Board", Purpose and Essential Elements; Procedures and Rules, was adopted on January 20, 2003. (Revised on 12/01/2020). Its name and guidelines comply with

1.07 RESPONSES TO ALLEGATIONS/REPORTS

the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People* and *The Essential Norms* adopted by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) on June 14, 2002 and with the approved revisions of their June 2005 and June 2011 Meetings. The document also complies with the 2020 Praesidium Standards for Accreditation. This document will be utilized as a guide and procedural instructions for appointed members of the Review Board.

E. Pastoral Response to the Alleged Victim:

The appropriate pastoral response for any alleged victim of sexual abuse by a Member of the Benedictine Community will be coordinated by the Archabbot on an “as needed basis.” The Archabbot will contact a pre-arranged group of clerical or lay mental health professionals to offer their expertise and guidance to harmed individuals, families, parishes or other church related institutions affected by public allegations of sexual misconduct. The intention of the pastoral response is to provide appropriate spiritual and psychological help to anyone affected by the alleged misconduct. In those cases where the Archabbot bears no legal liability for an offense, the Archabbot, if appropriate, may also offer alleged victims of abuse and their families appropriate pastoral care, spiritual care, or psychological care.

F. Support and Assistance to Members:

The Archabbot will offer to provide support and assistance to any Member who discloses concerns about his own attraction to minors or potential boundary violations with minors or vulnerable adults. Every effort will be extended to offer compassionate support and appropriate resources to restore his health, including but not limited to evaluation and/or treatment. This includes Members who are living outside the typical systems of support and accountability away from the monastery.

1.07 RESPONSES TO ALLEGATIONS/REPORTS:

The Archabbot or his Delegate will review the specific policies and procedures for making an allegation/report against a member of the Benedictine Community on assignment or in residence in a given Diocese.

Level 1 Response:

When an allegation or report of sexual misconduct is made against a Member of the Benedictine Community, the Prior and/or the Delegate must be notified immediately, and he/they will implement the steps previously presented in this policy. The Delegate will be assigned to interview, if possible, those person(s) making the allegation/report. The Delegate will notify the appropriate civil authorities. The Delegate will also interview the accused.

In cases when the Archabbot directly receives an allegation from an alleged victim, the Archabbot will attempt to initiate an interview, not only to listen to the alleged victim's complaint, but also to evaluate the needs of the person. This may not always be appropriate due to the facts of the allegation/report or in instances where a young child is the alleged victim. The Archabbot will ensure that the proper civil authority notification is made.

The Member will be advised of his civil and canonical rights, including the right to have an advisor or attorney present for the interview. If the Member is not represented by an advisor or attorney, the Archabbot will request that the Member choose one other person, usually another Member of the Benedictine Community, to be his support person. The substance and source of the allegation/report will be shared with the accused Member. It should be especially noted that the steps presented in this policy should not be construed as a presumption of guilt of the accused Member. Every effort will be taken to safeguard the right to privacy and good reputation of all parties associated with the incident(s) under investigation, especially of the accuser and the accused.

The Delegate will conduct investigative interviews and will write a summary of the investigation. The Delegate, after conducting initial interviews with the alleged victim and the accused Member, will discern the credibility of the allegation/report. The Delegate will present to the Review Board or the Archabbot his recommendation to pursue or not to pursue the matter further. The Review Board will review the recommendations of the Delegate and make an independent recommendation of whether or not to pursue the matter. The findings of both the Delegate and the Review Board are submitted to the Archabbot for his decision on the disposition of the case. If the Archabbot's decision is not to pursue the case, then all parties will be informed of the decision and the matter will not be pursued further. Appropriate steps will be taken to repair any damage to the Member's reputation.

Level 2 Response:

If the Archabbot decides there are reasonable warrants for the credibility of the allegation/report, the investigation will proceed. At this time of the investigation, the following steps will be taken:

1. The Archabbot or the Delegate, after appropriate consultation, will notify the pastoral care group to provide appropriate spiritual and psychological help to the alleged victim, the families and the accused.
 - a. The Archabbot will recommend that the alleged victim contact an advocate for victims of sexual abuse and/or sexual exploitation to assist the victim in evaluating his or her individual needs.
 - b. The Archabbot will offer the alleged victim the assistance of counseling. The Archabbot will periodically review with the alleged victim the continued need for counseling.

1.07 RESPONSES TO ALLEGATIONS/REPORTS

2. The Delegate and the Archabbot will meet to discuss the formulation of a statement or letter from the Archabbot to the various constituencies of Saint Vincent. If the Member is or has served in a parish, a prepared statement may be read at the Sunday masses, with the approval of the Diocese in which the parish is located.
3. At this level of the process the Member is placed on administrative leave of absence, being suspended from all of his ministerial duties. He is again further advised of his civil and canonical rights.
4. As soon as possible, the Member is required to undergo a complete psychological evaluation at a facility selected by the Archabbot. The Member is to grant permission that the results of this evaluation be shared by the treatment facility with the Archabbot. The Archabbot will also confidentially provide the therapist with any pertinent information in his possession pertaining to the accused Member.
5. The Delegate will present a full and complete report of the investigation, including the reported results of the psychological evaluation, and any further pertinent information to the Review Board. The Review Board will offer its own independent recommendation for the disposition of the case to the Archabbot.

Level 3 Response:

If the allegation/report has been substantiated, the following parties will be appropriately addressed to attempt to overcome the effects of the misconduct and to ensure there are no future incidents of such behavior.

1. Victim – Any person who has been affected by the misconduct of a Member will be offered appropriate support by the Archabbot or the Delegate, including assistance for counseling and spiritual help. (This support will be in accordance with previously outlined Section 1.06 Roles and Responsibilities, Subsection (D), Pastoral Response to the Alleged Victim; and 1.07 Responses to Allegations/Reports, Level 2 Response (1)).
2. The Affected Parish or Institution – If the Member is assigned to parish ministry, the Delegate will offer, in collaboration with the Diocese, an outreach program to the parish or community that is directly affected by the Member's misconduct through the help of the Pastoral Care group constituted for this purpose by the Archabbot.
3. Member – If and after an allegation/report is substantiated, a decision will be made (with all considerations of Due Process under Canon Law) concerning the Member's future by the Archabbot. The decision ordinarily would not permit the Member to return to public ministry. The Archabbot's decision will include, but is not limited to:

- a. Suspension of all duties assigned to the Member.
 - b. Further review of the Member's psychological evaluation. If the evaluation recommends treatment or other specific action, the Archabbot will follow this recommendation unless circumstances warrant otherwise.
 - c. If the member receives psychological treatment, the Archabbot will take the following precautions:
 1. Have the Member live at the monastery.
 2. Find appropriate work or vocational retraining.
 3. Establish specific limitations on involvement with children, students or employees. The member will not be permitted to work in any assignment which allows access to minors, or in any ecclesiastical ministry.
 - d. After treatment, the Archabbot and the Member, in consultation with the Member's treatment professional and other advocates, will establish an aftercare program.
 - e. If the Member completes the recommended treatment and the aftercare program and receives a positive evaluation, the Archabbot, after the appropriate consultation, will consider giving the Member a permanent assignment with appropriate and specific safeguards, including the Member's cooperation and participation in a written individualized supervision plan.
 - f. If at any time the Archabbot, with appropriate consultation, determines that Member cannot continue in monastic life, the Archabbot will seek to have the Member leave the monastery voluntarily. If the Member does not leave voluntarily, the Archabbot may initiate appropriate canonical actions.
4. Civil Authorities – All allegations/reports of sexual misconduct or abuse committed by a Member shall be reported in a timely manner to the civil authorities in the jurisdiction in which the alleged incident occurred. Saint Vincent Archabbey will comply with the reporting requirements of Pennsylvania Law (Title 23, Pa. C.S. ss 6301, Child Protective Services Law) and recognizes the right of an individual to report to civil authorities any allegation/report of sexual misconduct unlawful according to State and Federal law. The allegation/report will be reported regardless of whether the person making the accusation is a minor or an adult at the time the allegation/report is received; regardless of whether the accused Member is living or dead, or whether he is a current or former member of the Archabbey; regardless of whether the alleged victim's identity is known; and regardless of whether the allegation/report is believed to be credible at the time it is received.

- a. If the alleged victim is a minor at the time the allegation/report is received, his or her identity will be provided to the civil authorities. If the alleged victim is an adult at the time the allegation/report is received and consents, his or her identity will be provided to the civil authorities. If the alleged victim is an adult at the time the allegation/report is received and does not consent to having his or her identity revealed, the alleged victim's identity will not be disclosed.
- b. An allegation/report will be documented at the time it is received and will contain information about how the allegation/report was handled.
- c. The Archabbey will cooperate fully with all investigations by the civil authorities.

1.08 PROTOCOL FOR VISITING RELIGIOUS STUDENTS:

1. This Policy will also serve as a guide to Members of other religious institutes and Societies of Apostolic Life regarding visiting religious to Saint Vincent Archabbey if they intend to reside at the Archabbey for more than 60 days.
 - a. The visiting religious must have written permission from their proper Major Superior. The permission must note that the visitor is in good standing in his own institute and has no allegations or reports of sexual abuse of minors, and include the duration of the residency.
 - b. The visitor will be provided a copy of the Saint Vincent Archabbey Policy: *Creating a Safe Environment for the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Persons*.
 - c. The visitor will be provided with an orientation of the Archabbey's Policy, as well as other pertinent information concerning criminal background checks, child abuse history clearances, and child abuse awareness education.
 - d. The visitor will be asked to sign an acknowledgement and compliance statement verifying that he has read and understands the Archabbey Policy. A copy of the statement will be maintained by the Archabbot's Delegate.
 - e. If the visitor resides at the Archabbey for more than one year, he is required to fulfill the child abuse awareness educational training program expected of all Community Members.

1.09 REVIEW-EMENDATION:

As Archabbot, I will ensure this policy is periodically reviewed, evaluated, and revised to meet the needs of the Benedictine Community and all whom we serve.

I will convene the Allegation Review Board, at least annually, to review the entire Policy and its implementation. The Review Board will then recommend any specific revisions to me for my review, approval and promulgation.

This policy supersedes all other policies established for the protection of minors and vulnerable persons at Saint Vincent Archabbey at the time of promulgation; it is not intended to supersede canon law or civil law.

As Archabbot of Saint Vincent Archabbey, I retain the right at all times to address matters pertaining to this policy brought to my attention on a case-by-case basis in order to respond to specific situations and issues which may require an alternate response, with due respect for canon law and the criminal and civil statutes of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the goals of this Policy for child protection.

I approve and promulgate as policy for Saint Vincent Archabbey, this 1st day of December 2020.



Archabbot Martin R. Bartel, O.S.B.
Saint Vincent Archabbey



SAINT VINCENT ARCHABBEEY
300 Fraser Purchase Road
Latrobe, PA, 15650