



Voice of the Faithful of Long Island



Show Time

In the October 15 edition of Newsday, it was reported that the Diocese of Rockville Centre is in total compliance with the Bishops' Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People. The charter was implemented by the US Conference of Catholic Bishops after the clergy sex abuse scandal broke in 2002, and each diocese in the US is audited annually. Last year, the diocese failed in one part of the 13-part audit. This year, they have passed.

Is this the time to cheer and move on to other issues? The diocese thinks so. You decide.

According to the article, Tim Echausse, Long Island coordinator of SNAP (Survivors' Network of those Abused by Priests) isn't applauding. He said, "When the bishops make up their own policies and procedures, there seems little to brag about when they have met 'their standards.' Perhaps if Bishop Murphy would finally meet with all the victims of clergy abuse, we could help him write better 'policies'."

Tom Myles, chair of the LI VOTF Compliance Committee, has also noted the following:

- The Charter does not address the issue that was the principal reason for the sexual abuse crisis, i.e., the church hierarchy's decision to hide the acts of abuse from the public. The Charter is a smokescreen.
- The Charter does not address any reports of abuse that preceded it.
- The Charter puts the focus on the laity. **WRONG!**
- Dioceses have claimed that tens of thousands of church staff and volunteers have undergone background checks. However, they have not told us who passed the test.
- The Charter established a Diocesan Review Board. Here is the problem. The appointees are made by the bishop and its only function is to report to the bishop. The Diocesan Review Board does not report to the laity.
- 2 of the 17 articles of the Charter call for widely publicized Standards of Conduct in each parish. Can anyone tell me if they have ever seen the Standards of Conduct?
- There are no established penalties for violations of the Standard of Conduct. This is very important. Most violations of the Standards are not criminal acts, such as fraternizing alone with a youth. Sexual predators groom their prospective victims. If there are no penalties, why have the standards?

There are thousands of anonymous victims of childhood sexual abuse. Perhaps 95 out of 100 victims never report the crime.

LI VOTF believes we all should hold our applause.

Those abused by clergy, their families and supporters, are writing the next act as you read this.

Its title?

The Child Victims Act

(NYS Assembly Bill A2596/Senate Bill S5893)

Support legislation that protects children and provides justice to the abused!