



Policies & Procedures for the Protection of Minors

Published by the Diocesan Review Committee of the
Roman Catholic Diocese of Worcester
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Catholic parents have always relied upon priests, deacons, members of institutes of consecrated life and societies of apostolic life, and dedicated laypersons employed by or volunteering for the Church to assist them in the care and nurture of their children. This is a sacred trust. Whenever that trust is broken by an abusive action by any of these people, the entire Church is betrayed. Most especially, though, the child victim of a sexually abusive act is at risk of suffering physically, emotionally, and/or spiritually. The child's parents, family members, and other caregivers are also deeply affected.

It is the pre-eminent responsibility of the Diocese of Worcester to respond to allegations of the sexual abuse of a child by any diocesan or parochial personnel in an immediate, objective, just, and pastoral way.

Therefore, the diocese not only has updated its procedures for reporting and addressing allegations of the sexual abuse of a child but also has included the response of pastoral outreach to victims and their families, to the accused, to clergy, and to parish communities. This pastoral outreach is indispensable to a policy, which seeks to be responsive to the needs of the victims and their families. It is the Church's way of assuring them that they have been heard in their suffering and that they will be assisted in their journey toward healing. It is the conviction of the Diocese that trust and confidence will be restored only by a real commitment to be with each of them in his or her recovery.

Through this pastoral outreach, the Diocese of Worcester will listen and respond to the hurt of the victims and their families. It will also listen and respond to the particular needs of the accused and of the parish communities, which may be affected. The Diocese must keep within its vision of concern the expansive breadth of those deeply harmed by the sexual abuse of minors.

Our concern is not new. Historically, in June 1994, Bishop Timothy J. Harrington established a six-member committee to address any reports of the sexual abuse of minors by diocesan personnel. In January 1996, Bishop Daniel P. Reilly expanded the role of this original committee and called it "The Pastoral Care Committee." In August 1996, he promulgated a policy and a series of

procedures to be followed in order to address complaints more effectively. More recently, Bishop Reilly broadened the role of The Pastoral Care Committee which includes professionals in the fields of child physical and mental health, child welfare, civil law, canon law, victim services, and offender treatment. It was renamed "The Diocesan Review Committee" in 2003 in keeping with the national Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People.

I. POLICY

The Gospel of Jesus Christ teaches us the sacredness of life and commands us to protect life at all stages and in all circumstances, most especially the lives of the innocent and the most vulnerable. Because the sexual abuse of minors violates the very nature and mission of the Church and the Gospel message, it is abhorrent to all believers. Any such conduct by any diocesan personnel will not be tolerated.

All members of the Church have a sacred and paramount responsibility to protect children. (See *Code of Ministerial Conduct*) Because the sexual abuse of minors affects the whole Church, the whole Church must, therefore, be involved in its prevention and treatment. Any person who has observed or is aware of any incident of abuse has the obligation to bring it to the attention of civil authorities immediately. Any abuse by diocesan personnel should also be reported to the diocesan authorities. Church authority, in turn, will respond to any allegation in an open and just manner, following the procedures described below.

Victims must be helped to heal, and the Church will offer them assistance in that process. Alleged offenders will face sanctions, including but not limited to loss of employment; volunteer status and/or any position of authority in the diocese; suspension; administrative leave and/or dismissal from the clerical state.

II. PERSONNEL AND PROCEDURES

PERSONNEL

The Diocesan Review Committee

The Diocesan Review Committee (DRC) receives and reviews allegations of the sexual abuse of minors made against any diocesan personnel. It also assists the Bishop of the Diocese of Worcester ("Bishop," herein) with the ongoing development of pastoral care guidelines. The role of the Committee includes the following responsibilities:

- 1) to hear and assess all complaints of the sexual abuse of minors made against any diocesan personnel.

- 2) to inform the Bishop and other members of The Diocesan Review Committee of any canonical or civil processes which are appropriate.
- 3) to recommend to the Bishop courses of action to be taken upon reception and assessment of reports of the sexual abuse of minors, including but not limited to whether or not the alleged offender should remain in diocesan or parochial ministry, employment, or volunteer status.
- 4) to advise the Bishop regarding the pastoral outreach to alleged victims, including but not limited to treatment for victims and/or family members.
- 5) to advise the Bishop regarding pastoral outreach to alleged offenders, including but not limited to supervision and treatment.
- 6) to inform the Bishop of recent developments in Massachusetts General Law relative to the protection of minors against sexual abuse.
- 7) to inform the Bishop of recent developments in the care of the physical and mental health of children, especially as it relates to the sexual abuse of minors.
- 8) to recommend diocesan awareness programs about abuse, most especially the sexual abuse of minors, and other available programs for the education and information of clergy, men and women religious, parochial/pastoral personnel, and all volunteers in service to the Diocese of Worcester.

The Policy Review Board

There will be an independent Policy Review Board appointed by the Bishop. This Policy Review Board will assist the Bishop in supervising and assuring the effective functioning of The Diocesan Review Committee as well as the effectiveness of *Policies & Procedures for the Protection of Minors*.

The Policy Review Board will evaluate, at least annually, the performance of The Diocesan Review Committee and its Initial review team. The Policy Review Committee will review annually *Policies & Procedures for the Protection of Minors* and recommend appropriate revisions and amendments.

The members of the Policy Review Board are persons selected by the Bishop from a diversity of backgrounds and experiences, such as victims' service providers, offender treatment providers, the judicial system, law enforcement, medical and mental health professionals, the educational community, the Department of Social Services, and the corporate community. The Chairman of The Diocesan Review Committee will act as liaison between The Diocesan Review Committee and The Policy Review Committee.

Director of the Office for Healing and Prevention

As part of its commitment to offer outreach to parishes and parish staffs and to members of other

diocesan agencies and institutions, the Diocese established the Office for Healing and Prevention. The Director's general responsibilities will also include implementation and oversight of *Policies & Procedures for the Protection of Minors*. The following describes the responsibilities of the Director, who reports to the Bishop.

Outreach

- Serve as a liaison from the Bishop's Office to parishes, parish staff and other diocesan institutions.
- Inform parish communities about diocesan initiatives to prevent abuse and address inquiries.
- Provide opportunities for listening sessions for people to express opinions and recommendations.
- Provide ongoing outreach to parishes where the community is suffering the loss of their priest and ensure continued dialogue with parishioners and parish staff.
- Conduct parish outreach with the Victim Services Coordinator.

Implementation

- Oversee the enforcement of *Policies & Procedures for the Protection of Minors*.
- Assist appropriate diocesan personnel in the development of comprehensive *Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI)* policies and procedures.
- Respond to inquiries regarding application of abuse policies and state laws.
- Review the application of the Policy in diocesan institutions in collaboration with the Catholic School Department and the Religious Education Department.
- Assist department heads, school administrators, pastors and parish staff in securing and providing training related to abuse, in collaboration with the Catholic School Department and the Religious Education Department.
- Oversee mandated reporter training on a regular basis.
- Prepare reports on behalf of the Bishop to the Diocesan Review Committee.
- Collaborate with the Victim Services Coordinator.
- Code of Conduct implementation, education and updating.

Victim Services Coordinator

As part of its outreach to victims and their families, the Diocese established the position of Victim Services Coordinator. This position reports to the Director of the Office for Healing and Prevention. The responsibilities of this position are listed as follows:

- Serve as an advocate for victims during the initial reporting process.

- Facilitate reporting of initial complaints with the Department of Social Services and the diocesan liaison with the Office of the District Attorney.
- Maintain direct communication with victims and their families.
- Coordinate outreach including counseling, spiritual assistance, support groups, and other social services agreed upon by the victim and the diocese.
- Collaborate with the director of the Office for Healing and Prevention.

Bishop's Liaison to Priests on leave due to allegations of sexual misconduct

The purpose of this position is to foster communication between the Bishop and each priest on leave to assure that appropriate care is being provided and that the priests are observing the limitations required of them in public ministry. The priest who is the liaison should always carry out his responsibilities with recognition of his fraternal role on behalf of the bishop and his brother priests.

This person reports to the Bishop of the Diocese and, as delegated by the bishop, to the Vicar for Clergy and/or the Chancellor

The responsibilities are as follows:

- 1) Have a clear understanding of the reports and other issues which precipitated each priest's leave, consulting with the Bishop and his delegates as needed, and to know the defined obligations of that leave.
- 2) Maintain regular* contact with each priest on leave, in order to:
 - determine that the priest is carrying out the obligations of his status
 - afford the priest the opportunity to express his concerns in a fraternal and confidential manner back to his bishop
 - discuss and assess the priest's ability to cope with the reality of his status and to plan realistically for the future
 - encourage the priest in his prayer life and help him to find appropriate ways to be engaged in the life of the Presbyterate as a whole
 - stay informed of the priest's living arrangements, including contact information, living conditions, health, finances and other pertinent circumstances

*Depending upon risk assessment, some of these priests may be in need of more frequent contact, (i.e., monthly and/or in person). All priests should be visited in person on at least a periodic basis.

This position will require great sensitivity as it seeks to balance the need for honest communication, based on trust and openness, and the requirement to oversee the

activities of these priests so that the legitimate concerns of the Church and the need for public safety are served.

PROCEDURE FOR MAKING AND RECEIVING A COMPLAINT OF ABUSE OF A PERSON UNDER 18 YEARS OLD AT THE TIME OF THE COMPLAINT

When a person suspects that a child is being abused or neglected, he/she should immediately telephone the Department of Social Services (DSS) Area office serving the child's residence and ask for the Protective Screening Unit. Area offices are: Leominster 978-466-1500; Whitinsville 508-234-1000; and Worcester 508-929-2000. Offices are staffed between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. weekdays. To make a report at any other time, including after 5 p.m. and on weekends and holidays, call the Child at Risk Hotline at 800-792-5200. The DSS will accept and process anonymous complaints. In the case of mandated reporters, you are required by Massachusetts Law to mail or fax a written report to DSS within 48 hours after making the oral report. The form for filing their report can be obtained from your local DSS Area Office, their parish or school, or the Office for Healing and Prevention at the Chancery. It should be noted that mandated reporters are required by law to provide DSS with their name, address and telephone number.

A person should also make a formal complaint to The Office for Healing and Prevention when it involves someone who is in the employ of the Diocese of Worcester or one of its volunteers. The main number for all calls is 508-929-4363.

The Diocese will cooperate fully with DSS and other civil authorities involved in the investigation of the allegation. Information regarding the complaint will be submitted to the Diocesan Review Committee at its next meeting. It will be the responsibility of the DRC to consider the report and to advise the Bishop with reference to the specific allegation and the recommended action to be taken. The Diocesan Review Committee, however, will not recommend action on solely an anonymous complaint.

PROCEDURE FOR MAKING AND RECEIVING AN INITIAL COMPLAINT OF PAST ABUSE OF A PERSON 18 YEARS OLD AND OLDER AT THE TIME OF THE COMPLAINT

A person who wishes to make an initial complaint of past sexual abuse inflicted upon a minor, when the minor is beyond the age of minority, should call the Office for Healing and Prevention to initiate the reporting process. The main number for all calls is **508-929-4363**.

Anonymous complaints will be considered insufficient to give reasonable cause to believe abuse has occurred.

Two members of an Initial review team will meet with the complainant, and a written report will be prepared. This team will include a member of the DRC accompanied by the Victim Services Coordinator, or another member of the Office for Healing and Prevention. In all cases, at least one member of that team will be a licensed clinical social worker or equivalent. The report will then be signed by the complainant. The report will be submitted to the Bishop, the District Attorney in whose jurisdiction the alleged incident had occurred and to the alleged offender. The Diocese will cooperate fully with civil authorities involved in the investigation of the allegation.

The information will be submitted to the Diocesan Review Committee at its next meeting. It will be the responsibility of the DRC to consider the report and to advise the Bishop with reference to the specific allegation and the recommended action to be taken.

CLERICS FROM OUTSIDE THE DIOCESE AND MEN AND WOMEN RELIGIOUS

If the alleged offender is a member of an institute of consecrated life or a society of apostolic life and is residing in the Diocese of Worcester, the Vicar for Clergy will promptly report the allegation to the individual's major superior.

If the alleged offender is a cleric incardinated into another diocese, the Vicar for Clergy will promptly notify the Bishop of the diocese of incardination.

III. OUTREACH TO VICTIMS AND THEIR FAMILIES AND TO THE ACCUSED

OUTREACH TO ALLEGED VICTIMS, VICTIMS, AND THEIR FAMILIES

The sexual abuse of a child is a criminal and immoral act. Victims and their families will need support and spiritual leadership to repair a trust that has been broken.

The Diocese of Worcester will reach out to victims and their families to assure them of the Diocese's commitment to victims and their families in their difficult days. Therefore, representatives of The Diocesan Review Committee will seek to establish and sustain an open and personal communication with victims and their families.

The Diocese of Worcester will also maintain and provide current information on victim treatment services, victim support groups, and victim advocacy groups. This information, support, and encouragement will be made available to anyone who approaches the Diocese with an allegation and a request for help.

The Diocese of Worcester will encourage the victims of abuse and their families to seek professional

counseling to assist them in their healing. The Diocese will offer them the professional resources of Catholic Charities and/or help them to identify counselors with experience in treating trauma and the effects of abuse. The Diocese of Worcester will respond to specific request for assistance to the best of its ability.

OUTREACH TO THE ACCUSED

The Bishop of the Diocese of Worcester or his Liaison will reach out to the accused, meeting with them to ascertain ways in which the Diocese would be able to assist them. Personal communication will be maintained throughout the process of rehabilitation if they choose to participate in such programs. The Diocese will provide for the accused an opportunity to be heard in an appropriate pastoral and/or canonical forum in accord with canonical norms. In addition, the accused will be referred to professional personnel for evaluation and ongoing treatment, to support groups, and to other treatment resources if such a referral is requested. The Diocese will make known to them current information on these services through Catholic Charities and other agencies. In the case of a priest, the Diocese will fulfill its temporal responsibilities of continued care and support as mandated by Canon Law.

This information, support, and encouragement will be made available to anyone who is accused of child sexual abuse and who requests help.

IV. SCREENING

All clergy, diocesan/parish employees and volunteers must complete the background checks mandated by the Diocese. The Diocese requires disclosure from all applicants or volunteers in accord with Massachusetts General Law. Refusal to grant permission for background checks and/or reference checks will bar anyone from any compensated or volunteer position in a diocesan institution.

By January 2004, no person will be permitted to minister, work or serve in a voluntary capacity in a position involving contact with children or youth under the age of 18 at any diocesan/parish institution without having submitted CORI information

Diocesan personnel will continue to be screened in the following ways:

SEMINARIANS

All applicants for the diocesan priesthood undergo a rigorous and ongoing assessment of their character and behavior. In addition to other features of the application process, all applicants for admission to the diocesan priestly formation program, which includes application for entrance to a seminary, must have

- 1) a series of interviews with the Diocesan Director of Vocations

- 2) an interview by the Bishop
- 3) psychological evaluation by a competent and licensed psychologist with profiles including but not limited to:

Clergy Applicant Screening Questionnaire
Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory-II (MMPI-2)
Sixteen Personality Factor Inventory (16PF)
State Trait Anger Inventory (STAXI)
Beck Depression Inventory (Beck)
Erickson's 8 Stages of Psychosocial Development
Measures of Psycho-Social Development (MPD)

- 4) a state CORI check
 - 5) a federal criminal background investigation
- An applicant must also receive the testimony of his pastor, employers, and colleagues.

If the candidate is accepted as a diocesan seminarian, all results are shared with the administrators of the seminary that the candidate attends.

The character and behavior of seminarians are continually monitored by the diocese as well as by seminary throughout their years in the priestly formation program.

APPLICANTS TO THE DIOCESAN DIACONATE PROGRAM

All applicants to the Diocesan Diaconate Program must undergo

- 1) a personal interview with one of the co-directors of the program
- 2) a home interview with a team from the Diocesan Diaconate Selection Committee
- 3) a Chancery interview with another team from the Selection Committee
- 4) a state CORI check
- 5) a federal criminal investigation

During the Discernment Period and before official acceptance into the program, the character, behavior, and aptitude of all applicants are evaluated by the following tools:

Holland Self-Directed Search
Nelson-Denny Reading Test, Form H
Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory-II (MMPI-2)

If an applicant is accepted into the Diaconate Program, evaluation of character and conduct continues through observation by and interaction with the co-directors and teachers in the spiritual and academic formation program.

CLERICS FROM OTHER DIOCESES

When a priest or a deacon from another diocese seeks or is formally presented for an official assignment in the Diocese of Worcester, the following procedure will be observed:

Interviews

He must first have an interview with

- a) the Vicar for Clergy

- b) the Priests' Personnel Board
- c) the Bishop

Assessment

The sending bishop must then assure the fitness of the cleric who is proposed as a candidate for assignment. This assurance will be based upon personal knowledge of the sending bishop, the review of the written record of the candidate's performance, and inquiry of those persons from the candidate's previous assignments who are best able to evaluate his conduct and character.

Transmittal of Information

Based upon the knowledge of the sources mentioned above, the sending bishop will be asked to complete the information on the *Testimonial of Suitability for Priestly/Diaconal Ministry* [in the] *Diocese of Worcester* ("Testimonial," herein). The *Testimonial* must be signed personally by the sending bishop or his official delegate and then embossed with the official seal of the diocese from which the candidate comes.

The *Testimonial* is indispensable prior to the Bishop's consideration of accepting the ministry of the candidate. Without it, the Bishop will not consider accepting a candidate from another diocese for any ministry in the Diocese of Worcester. Other testimonials of a similar nature may be offered in addition to but not as a substitute for the *Testimonial* of the Diocese of Worcester.

The *Testimonial* must assure the Bishop that the candidate is a cleric in good standing in his home diocese. Further and more specifically, the *Testimonial* must assure the Bishop that the candidate has not exhibited unacceptable behavior, such as, but not limited to, an untreated problem with substance abuse, violations of celibacy, or improprieties with minors. Lastly, it must also assure the Bishop that the candidate does not have a record of any criminal charges or is not subject to any canonical penalty. In addition, the candidate is subject to an out-of-state criminal record check.

If the cleric from another diocese seeks or is recommended for ministry toward incardination into the Diocese of Worcester, the following process will be followed after the interviews have been completed and the *Testimonial of Suitability* has been submitted by the sending bishop.

A candidate for incardination into the Diocese of Worcester will be assigned to one or more parishes for a minimum of three years. With good cause, the Bishop may terminate or extend this period of probation.

During the three-year period, the Vicar for Clergy will periodically conduct meetings with the candidate for incardination and the pastor-supervisor of the parish to which he has been assigned. In addition to these meetings, the pastor is asked to complete forms which candidly elicit an evaluation of the candidate's pastoral performance and personal conduct during his time in the parish. The candidate is asked to write a candid self-

evaluation of his pastoral performance and personal conduct. These evaluations must be signed and shared mutually between the pastor-supervisor and the candidate. The evaluations are then submitted to the Bishop and The Priests' Personnel Board.

ORDAINED RELIGIOUS

When an ordained religious is formally presented or recommended for ministry in the Diocese of Worcester, the major superior must complete, sign, and seal the *Testimonial* as described directly above. If the cleric is formally presented or recommended for ministry toward incardination into the Diocese, then the process as described above will be followed.

CATHOLIC SCHOOL EMPLOYEES AND VOLUNTEERS

The Catholic School Department of the Diocese of Worcester shall request a CORI check on all employees and volunteers in all schools under the jurisdiction of the Diocesan Superintendent of Schools.

PARISH EMPLOYEES AND VOLUNTEERS

The pastor of a parish or a person delegated by him will require a CORI authorization from each current parish employee and from each parish volunteer who works with minors as well as new employees or volunteers.

NON-PARISH EMPLOYEES AND VOLUNTEERS

The department head or the executive director of affiliated programs and agencies in the Diocese of Worcester will require a CORI report of all of its employees. Volunteers who have direct contact with minors will also be subject to a CORI report. Current employees and volunteers to whom this applies will be requested to authorize a CORI and all requests will be handled by the Office for Healing and Prevention.

V. MANDATED PREVENTION AND EDUCATION PROGRAMS

The Office for Healing and Prevention (OHP) oversees mandated prevention and education programs in parishes, schools and other diocesan institutions for preventing child abuse before it occurs and for identifying abuse once it has occurred.

OHP will maintain a list of the prevention and education programs mandated by the Bishop. After January 1, 2004, no person will be permitted to minister, work or serve in the Diocese in positions that require direct contact with children without having completed the mandated prevention and education programs. OHP will ensure that prevention and education programs are offered several times each year for clergy, diocesan employees, and volunteers who are new to the Diocese.

Personal safety programs for children will be standard, permanent elements of Catholic education in the schools and parishes religious education programs for all grade levels. These programs will include information about appropriate behavioral and physical boundaries between adults and children, and what to do if those boundaries are violated.

APPENDIX A: MEMBERS OF THE DIOCESAN REVIEW COMMITTEE

Judith Audette, MSW, Exec. Director of Pathways
 Rev. Michael Broderick, pastor
 Raymond Delisle, Diocesan Director of Communications
 John Duggan, M.D., pediatrician
 Patricia Engdahl, Director of the Office of Healing and Prevention
 Claire Freda, Leominster City Councilor
 Rose Clarisse Gadoury, SSA, faculty member and spiritual advisor, Blessed John XXIII National Seminary, Weston
Mr. David Higgins, Vice-Chairperson, retired Executive Director, Community Healthlink, Worcester
 Paula Kelleher, SSJ, Vicar for Religious, member of The National Association of Catholic Chaplains
 Bishop Harold Lohr, retired Bishop (Northwestern Minnesota Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America)
 John Madonna, Ed.D., Licensed Clinical Psychologist
 Frances Nugent, M.A., L.C.S.W. Licensed Clinical Social Worker
 Msgr. F. Stephen Pedone, Judicial Vicar and Vicar for Canonical Affairs (ex-officio)
 Rev. Rocco Piccolomini, Vicar for Clergy, Secretary to the Bishop
Mrs. Sylvia Pusateri, Esq., DRC Chairperson, practicing attorney
 Mrs. Elizabeth Reidy, M.S.W., LICSW, family and child social work consultant
 Mrs. Eileen Scannell, Department of Social Services, retired
 Msgr. Thomas J. Sullivan, Chancellor and Director of Vocations
 Msgr. Edmond T. Tinsley, Director of Fiscal Affairs and Chaplain, McAuley Nazareth Home for Boys
 Mary Lou Walsh, SND, Promoter of Justice, Diocesan Tribunal (ex-officio)

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Cleric – a deacon, priest or bishop

CORI - Criminal Offender Record Information

A diocese - a portion of the Catholic Church entrusted for pastoral care to a bishop.

Diocese of Worcester - the geographical boundaries of Worcester County constitute the Diocese of Worcester.

Diocesan (or Church) Personnel - includes bishops, priests, deacons, pastoral ministers, administrators, staff, employees and volunteers employed or engaged in ministry for the Diocese of Worcester, its parishes, Catholic schools, and institutions.

Institute of Consecrated Life - most often understood as a community officially recognized by the church whose members pronounce public vows and lead a life in common with each other.

Society of Apostolic Life - a group formally recognized by the Church, whose members, without religious vows, pursue a particular apostolate and lead a community life in common.

Religious - men or women who formally consecrate their lives to God and the service of the Church, most often through vows or promises, and are officially recognized as such by the Church.

Incardinated - the permanent attachment of a cleric to a particular diocese or religious community.

Excardinated - the permanent transfer of a cleric from one diocese or religious community to another diocese or religious community.

Minor – a person under eighteen years of age

Sexual Abuse – includes, but is not limited to, rape and abuse of a child; rape and abuse of a child with force; indecent assault and battery; posing a child under 18 in the nude; soliciting a child under 18 for sex; dissemination of information harmful to a minor; or dissemination of child pornography.

QUICK REFERENCE DIRECTORY

Director for the Office for Healing and Prevention 508-929-4362

Victim Services Coordinator 508-929-4363

District Attorney's Sexual Abuse Unit 508-792-0214

District Attorney's Office Main Tel: 508-755-8601

DSS Leominster: 978-466-1500

DSS Whitinsville 508-234-1000

DSS Worcester 508-929-2000

Appendix B follows: Testimonial of Suitability

APPENDIX B

TESTIMONIAL OF SUITABILITY
FOR PRIESTLY MINISTRY
THE DIOCESE OF WORCESTER

Most Reverend Robert J. McManus
Bishop of Worcester
49 Elm Street
Worcester, MA 01609

Dear Bishop McManus,

I ask that you grant permission to FATHER _____ or DEACON _____, a priest/deacon of the (Arch) Diocese of _____/ Religious Community, to exercise priestly/diaconal ministry in the Diocese of Worcester, Massachusetts. I have carefully reviewed his personnel files and all other records we maintain, and I have consulted with those who have served with him in the works he has been assigned under our authority. From my own personal knowledge and from the results of these inquiries, I am able to attest to all of the statements below by **writing my initials** on the line provided before each statement.

_____ He is a priest/deacon in good standing of the (Arch) Diocese of _____/
Religious Community.

_____ He has never been suspended or otherwise canonically disciplined.

_____ No criminal charges have ever been brought against him, and he has
no criminal record.

_____ He has never behaved in such a way as to indicate the he might
engage in sexual behavior inconsistent with priestly celibacy/diaconal
chastity.

_____ He has never behaved in such a way as to indicate that he might deal
with minors in an inappropriate manner.

_____ He has never behaved in such a way as to indicate that he might be
suffering from alcoholism or other forms of substance abuse.

_____ He has no moral, emotional, or physical condition that might
adversely affect his performance as a priest/deacon.

_____ He has never been involved in any incident, to my knowledge, which
might adversely affect his performance as a priest/deacon.

(Please explain on a separate sheet any item above which you have not initialed.)

Page 2- Testimonial of Suitability

Therefore, I am able to state that FATHER _____ or DEACON _____ is a priest/deacon of good moral character and reputation and is fully qualified to serve as a priest/deacon in an effective and suitable manner should he be granted faculties to exercise priestly/diaconal ministry in the Diocese of Worcester.

I request this permission for FATHER _____ or DEACON _____ to exercise priestly/diaconal ministry in the Diocese of Worcester with the understanding that such ministry is/is not undertaken for the purpose of seeking incardination into the Diocese of Worcester.

Signature: _____
Bishop/Provincial Superior

Date: _____

If completed by the Bishop's Delegate or the Provincial Superior's Delegate:

Signature of the Delegate: _____

Title: _____

Date: _____

Nota Bene: Please emboss here with the official seal of the
(Arch)Diocese of _____/Religious Community.