

INTRODUCTION OF REVIEW BOARD CHAIRPERSON

JUDGE MICHAEL TALBOT

by Adam Cardinal Maida
Cardinal Mooney Room | SHMS
Thursday, 19 September 2002

In response to the U-S bishops' Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People, with a design to restructure and strengthen the panel we already had in place here in Detroit, I have appointed seven people to our newly constituted Archdiocesan Review Board. I have asked Judge Michael Talbot to serve a chairperson. The details on how the board will carry out its work will be provided to you here in just a moment by Judge Talbot and by my priest-delegate to the board, Msgr. Walter Hurley. But I will say this as clearly and firmly possible: I... the board... and I believe I can say on their behalf, all the priests and people of the archdiocese... are committed to the safety of children, the well-being of our community, and the integrity of our Church. Through this board we intend to go the extra mile, to extend our hands and hearts to the victims of sexual abuse by members of the clergy. We will be current, putting new programs in place as needed, tightening up existing procedures where necessary.

As I think many of you know, one of the issues and concerns foremost on my agenda here in the Archdiocese of Detroit is children— their health and welfare, their education, their moral compass. Not long after I came to Detroit, I saw the need to create an advisory board for our Catholic Schools and our archdiocesan Department of Education. When I asked around for suggested members, one name came to me from several different sources—

Judge Michael Talbot. He had served on parish councils and on numerous Catholic boards and committees. He would be the right person for the job.

As he came to serve in that capacity, I learned more about Judge Talbot. He was someone who took such assignments seriously. He was a collaborator and a contributor. He could see the big picture, but at the same time, never lose sight of our most valued resource— our school children and their parents. He was— and remains— an effective advocate for those who depend on, and those who support, our Catholic schools.

Working on behalf of others is what Judge Talbot is all about. Here was veteran Detroit judge who assisted in the writing of the first Victim’s Rights Law for the State of Michigan and who was responsible for implementing that law in the courts and in our communities. Here was— and is— a judge selected by our state leaders and by the voters to serve on the Michigan Court of Appeals. What better person to call on for the job at hand.

With Judge Talbot at the helm, our “team” is now in place, but it can be expanded and developed as needs arise. I am most impressed with the credentials of all of our board members. I am confident their advice will be invaluable to me and that they will serve the Church and our community well in this important task we’re undertaking.

What I wanted and needed for a chairperson of this Review Board was an experienced leader... someone secure in his faith... someone with deep conviction and proven integrity. Once again, it’s about our children. And once again, with Judge Talbot on board, we have the right person for the job.

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