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## **U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops Issues Compliance Audit**

The third annual *Report on the Implementation of the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People* has been issued by the Office of Child and Youth Protection of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) in Washington, D.C. The Archdiocese of Detroit is among the 191 Catholic dioceses or eparchies (dioceses of the Eastern Catholic Church) audited during 2005 for compliance with the charter, sometimes referred to as the *Dallas Charter*.

The *Report* is based on an independent compliance audit conducted by the Gavin Group, Inc., Winthrop, Massachusetts, headed by Mr. William Gavin, a former FBI official. The *Dallas Charter* is organized into 17 articles, covering areas such as victim assistance, reporting to civil authorities, and the removal from ministry of those credibly accused. The Detroit archdiocese is in full compliance with 16 of the 17 articles, and is working towards compliance on one element of Article 12 which involves “child-safe environment” training of staff and volunteers.

According to Msgr. Ricardo Bass, Cardinal’s Maida’s Delegate for Clergy Matters, the matter in question involves the schedule of training sessions in the Detroit archdiocese. “Our first round of training will be completed by the end of this year,” Msgr. Bass said. “Those who have participated will tell you our program is very well organized and delivered,” Msgr. Bass added. “But, in an archdiocese as large as ours, spread across six counties, logistics is a huge challenge.”

Since May 2003, the archdiocese has conducted 394 workshops for 21,920 parish and school volunteers. By November of this year, 45 more workshops will have trained an additional 6,330, making the archdiocese in full compliance on this particular requirement of the *Dallas Charter*.

Michigan Court of Appeals Judge Michael Talbot, chairman of the Archdiocesan Review Board, said he and his fellow board members have been fully informed on this matter and understand—and support—the approach of completing the training on an extended schedule. “Promoting child-safe environments is one our highest priorities,” Judge Talbot said. “We want our training done on a timely basis, but more importantly, we want it done right. We believe that it is.”

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