

Statement of Policies and Practices in Response to Sexual Misconduct and Abuse

Capuchin Franciscan Province of St. Joseph (Updated May, 2010)

AS BROTHERS OF FRANCIS OF ASSISI, the friars of the Capuchin Franciscan Province of St. Joseph reverence all creatures, especially children who hold a special place in God's affection.

For this reason the province supports the United States Catholic Bishops' *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*, and has taken steps to comply with and implement its recommendations. The province's *Misconduct Policy* and its practices covering effective responses to allegations, reconciliation, accountability, and the protection of children and youth in provincial ministries have been reviewed and updated.

The province affirms the monitoring, auditing, and public reporting functions built into the USCCB Charter implementation and is grateful for the John Jay Study data released in 2005 by the National Review Board. In addition, we work with the Conference of Major Superiors of Men (CMSM) and Praesidium - a nationally recognized leader in risk reduction programs - to ensure that our policies, practices and procedures used to prevent and address sexual misconduct conform to the highest available standards. Our Province has been accredited by Praesidium since 2007.

In 2004 our province and over a dozen other religious communities in CMSM, Region V, established an office that is able to assist us in providing appropriate and compassionate pastoral responses to people who, as minors, were sexually abused. This ministry, Pathways to Hope (P.H.), is based in Chicago. More information on this ministry is available at <http://www.pathwaystohope.com>.

THERE HAVE BEEN TIMES in the past when children and youth entrusted to our care have been harmed. We acknowledge these incidents and have apologized to those who were abused. A number of those abusers are deceased, while others have left our congregation. Others remain in the Capuchin community under supervision and safety plans.

The St. Joseph province reaffirms the Gospel values of charity and respect for the dignity of every person; and we again acknowledge that those who profess a vowed life are not above the frailty and sinfulness that are part of the human condition. Therefore, we are committed to prayerfully and decisively responding to any instance in which our brothers have abused the trust that others have placed in them and us. We are committed to working hard to restore that trust as the wisdom, grace and justice of God directs us to do.