

Resolution 05.17.02

On Mandatory Reporting by Clergy of Suspected Abuse

Whereas, approximately three million children are reported as abused and/or neglected in this country each year;

Whereas, the sexual victimization of children represents the betrayal of trust and the abuse of power and authority that adversely impacts the health and well-being of children;

Whereas, child abuse is a community problem and finding solutions depends on the involvement of people throughout the community; and

Whereas, the U.S. Catholic Church as well as other religious institutions should assume oversight, responsibility, and accountability for assuring the safety and protection of children within those institutions.

Therefore, no state should exempt clergy from laws that mandate the reporting of suspected child abuse except in the case of the clergy/penitent relationship as may be allowed by state law.