

Sante Fe report urges new response to abuse

Makes no mention of Sanchez case

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. (CNS) — An independent commission has urged the church community in the Santa Fe archdiocese to reject "denial and defensiveness" in responding to charges of sexual misconduct by clergy.

The 28-page report was prepared by a four-member commission appointed in October 1992 by then-Archbishop Robert F. Sanchez of Santa Fe.

The archbishop resigned in April 1993, amid allegations that in the 1970s and '80s he had intimate relations with several young women. Pope John Paul II named Bishop Michael J. Sheehan of Lubbock, Texas, to administer the archdiocese until a successor is named.

The report made no mention of the charges against Archbishop Sanchez.

Bishop Sheehan attended the April 29 Albuquerque press conference at which the report was made public, but made no comment on the recommendations, saying he had not read the report.

"The primary focus of the Arch-

diocese of Santa Fe in dealing with clerical sexual misconduct must be the care and healing of the victims, as well as the families and the communities of the victims," the report said.

"Denial and defensiveness are the major obstacles to the healing process," it added. "An environment in which the problems can be discussed openly and with sensitivity is a first step in dealing with the crisis in which the archdiocese finds itself."

Commission members were Father Wallace Ford, executive secretary of the New Mexico Conference of Churches since 1982; Mary Molina Mescall, public information office/education coordinator for the Albuquerque Police Department; Thomas Sims, an Albuquerque psychologist; and Angela J. Jewell, special commissioner to hear domestic violence cases in the Family Division of the 2nd Judicial District Court.

The commission said sexual misconduct can be directed not only at minors but also at adults who are "psychologically or financially depen-

dent upon the priest" because of a counseling relationship or employment by the church.

The report differentiated between the two types of misconduct and recommended different approaches toward priest pedophiles — those involved in misconduct with preadolescent children — and those involved with dependent adults.

"Most pedophiles do not have good treatment outcomes and have a high rate of returning to their patterns of sexual misconduct following treatment," the commission said.

It recommended a minimum of two years of treatment and four years in a supervised after-care program, but said that "a priest who has been involved with even one instance of the sexual abuse of a minor should never be returned to ministry of any kind which would involve access to minors."

For a priest who has engaged in sexual misconduct with an adult, the minimum treatment period should be a year, followed by at least a year of a

supervised after-care program. But because "the problem appears to be one which can be more successfully treated in some cases," the priest could return to parish ministry if his therapist recommends it.

Such a return would have to be approved by a nine-member Permanent Review Board comprising a physician, a psychologist or social worker experienced in sex abuse, an attorney, three priests, a parent, a victim of clergy sexual abuse or a parent of a victim, and a parish council member.

The report also recommended the hiring of a lay professional case manager to respond to any allegations against priests of the archdiocese. After an investigation by the case manager, the board would vote on whether the allegation is credible and recommend a course of action to the archbishop.

The commission said that "several people" had asked that it recommend closing of the program for priest pedophiles run by the Servants of the Para-

Continued on page 6

YOU ARE NEEDED

I WAS SICK AND YOU VISITED ME



DOMINICAN SISTERS OF HAWTHORNE

Called to teach God's love and mercy by caring for the incurably ill.

Our Sisters come from all walks of life. Prior nursing experience not required.

CONTACT: Sr. Marie Edward
Rosary Hill Home • 600 Linda Avenue
Hawthorne, New York 10532
(914) 769-4794

HIDDEN MEADOWS

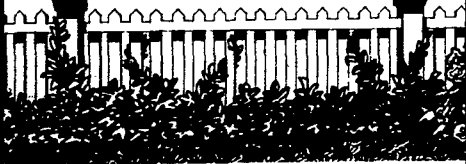
COMMUNITY

HIDDEN MEADOWS is a community designed for easy-living as you look forward to retirement. Located away from the crowds, Hidden Meadows is nestled in a quiet country setting. People here are young at heart and enjoy the conveniences and location opportunities that Hidden Meadows offers.

This community affords the pleasure of comfortable living on wooded private roads. Conveniences such as lawn care, a club house for community activities and the security of living in a community with individuals of your own age.

OPEN FOR INSPECTION
SUNDAYS 1:00-4:00PM. OR
SHOWN BY APPOINTMENT
CALL: 494-1424

7289 LAKE RD. BERGEN, NY 14416
1 Mile South of Rt. 33 & 19



HIDDEN MEADOWS...
It's where your friends are!



Feel good again and again and again.

It always feels good to know that United Way is the best way to help all those in need throughout our community.

Some have needs so special only a United Way agency can make a difference. At Many thousands of others...from families and children to the homeless and elderly... are counting on you for the hope and help they urgently need.

By giving, and giving more—even 50¢ a week more—you'll be there when our 250 agencies are there for them—answering over a million calls for help in the year ahead.

What could make you feel better than that?

