

Dioceses respond to audit

LAWMAKERS MAY BE DENIED COMMUNION

LA CROSSE, Wis. (CNS) — Archbishop Raymond L. Burke has formally notified Catholic lawmakers in the La Crosse Diocese that they cannot receive Communion if they continue to support procured abortion or euthanasia.

The four-paragraph canonical notification, published in the Jan. 8 edition of *The Catholic Times*, the La Crosse diocesan newspaper, called upon Catholic legislators in the diocese "to uphold the natural and divine law regarding the inviolable dignity of all human life." It said, "To fail to do so is a grave public sin and gives scandal to all the faithful."

BAN ON RELIGIOUS SYMBOLS QUESTIONED

WARSAW, Poland (CNS) — German church leaders are cautioning against calls to ban religious symbols from public schools following a similar move in neighboring France.

"Twentieth-century history shows what tragic consequences threaten the world when God becomes a private matter," said Cardinal Joachim Meisner of Cologne.

The German states Bavaria and Baden-Wuerttemberg have introduced legislation to ban Muslim veils, but not Christian or Jewish symbols, from state schools after accepting claims that the head scarf is used politically. German President Johannes Rau called for legislators to extend a proposed ban of Muslim veils to Christian crosses and Jewish skullcaps.

THIS WEEK'S READINGS

Sun., Jan. 18: Isaiah 62:1-5; Psalms 96:1-3, 7-10; 1 Corinthians 12:4-11; John 2:1-11.

Mon., Jan. 19: 1 Samuel 15:16-23; Psalms 50:8-9, 16-17, 21, 23; Mark 2:18-22.

Tue., Jan. 20: 1 Samuel 16:1-13; Psalms 89:20-22, 27-28; Mark 2:23-28.

Wed., Jan. 21: 1 Samuel 17:32-33, 37, 40-51; Psalms 144:1-2, 9-10; Mark 3:1-6.

Thu., Jan. 22: 1 Samuel 18:6-9, 19:1-7; Psalms 56:2-3, 9-14; Mark 3:7-12.

Fri., Jan. 23: 1 Samuel 24:3-21; Psalms 57:2-4, 6, 11; Mark 3:13-19.

Sat., Jan. 24: 2 Samuel 1:1-4, 11-12, 19, 23-27; Psalms 80:2-3, 5-7; Mark 3:20-21.

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Several dioceses not in compliance with aspects of the U.S. bishops' sex-abuse policies and practices said they are working to implement them.

A report on the audits of 191 U.S. dioceses and eparchies — Eastern Catholic dioceses — was released in Washington Jan. 6 and listed 20 jurisdictions as not in full compliance. Another 14 had not yet implemented recommendations for improvement, but were considered in compliance.

After the report was issued, the Diocese of La Crosse, Wis., appealed and was judged to have come into compliance. The summary of that diocese's audit findings was revised Jan. 9 to move it into the compliance category, reducing the number of noncompliant dioceses to 19.

The audits were done by the Gavin Group, a private organization contracted by the bishops.

An advocacy group of victims of clergy sex abuse said the audits were "fundamentally flawed" as "the bishops are judging themselves."

A statement from the Diocese of Lincoln, Neb., said that while it was in compliance with most of the areas that auditors focused on it had "serious pastoral reasons" for not participating in a national study being conducted by the John Jay College of Criminal Justice to determine the "nature and scope" of the clergy sex-abuse problem.

The diocese said "that study has been found, in the opinion of diocesan officials and others, to contain inherent flaws that make it an inaccurate instrument, and thus is harmful, not helpful, to the proper dealing with the problem of sexual misconduct."

The national study, commissioned by the U.S. bishops, is scheduled for release Feb. 27.

The Lincoln diocesan statement noted that the bishops' charter is "an advisory document" and "the diocese has voluntarily incorporated, or is in the process of incorporating, many of the elements of the non-binding charter," it said.

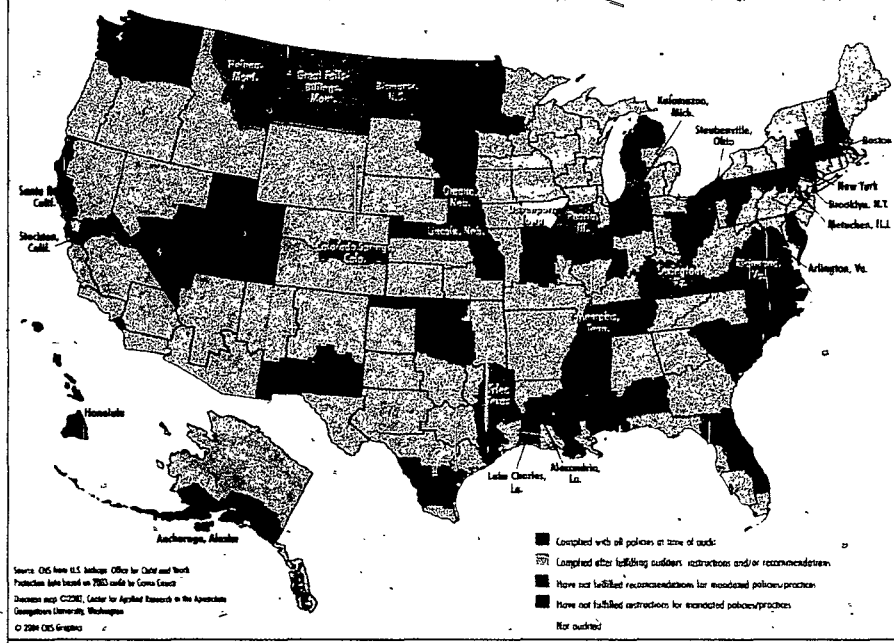
Several dioceses were cited for not having safe-environment programs providing training for church employees, parents and children to prevent sex abuse of children.

The New York Archdiocese said it "expects to have the implementation substantially completed by the end of the school year" and has contracted a company specializing in such programs to advise it.

The Diocese of Arlington, Va., said it has reviewed several safe-environment programs but has not chosen one yet.

National Review of Child Protection

Dioceses in blue have in place policies and practices mandated by the U.S. bishops to better protect children and youths against sexual abuse by clergy and church employees.



Eastern-rite and Other Dioceses		
Philadelphia (Ukrainian)	Our Lady of Lebanon, Los Angeles (Maronite)	St. Thomas, Chicago (Syro-Malabar)
Pittsburgh (Byzantine)		Newton, Mass. (Melkite)
Von Marys, Calif. (Ruthenian)	St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands	Our Lady of Deliverance, Umsoe City, N.J. (Syriac)
Stamford, Conn. (Ukrainian)	Armenian Catholic Eparchy, U.S.A. and Canada	Passaic, N.J. (Byzantine)
Military, Washington	St. Peter the Apostle, San Diego (Chaldean)	St. Mirron, Brooklyn, N.Y. (Maronite)
Parma, Ohio (Byzantine)		St. Nicholas, Chicago (Ukrainian)
St. George, Conaco, Ohio (Romanian)		St. Thomas the Apostle, Southfield, Mich. (Chaldean)
		St. Joseph, Parma Ohio (Ukrainian)

Dioceses included here are those that overlap Latin-rite dioceses as well as the U.S. Virgin Islands

Arlington was also told to implement criminal background checks on church personnel and volunteers coming into regular contact with children. The diocese said that, since September, "criminal history background checks have been conducted on priests of the diocese."

The Honolulu Diocese was cited for lacking a code of conduct for clergy, a safe-environment program and background checks. The diocese said it recently developed a training program and a code of conduct and is working to develop a background-check program.

The Diocese of Richmond, Va., was cited for not having diocesan-wide safe-environment programs.

Father Pat Apuzzo, diocesan communications director, said such programs were in place in schools, but not in parishes.

"We are now trying to get a program that would work in parishes and have been looking at different programs," said Father Apuzzo.

The Archdiocese of Omaha, Neb., found not in compliance on some aspects of the charter, is now in compliance, said Father Michael Gutsell, archdiocesan moderator of the curia, at a Jan. 6 news conference.

He said that since the audit report was printed the archdiocese has revised policies and made accessible the public codes of conduct covering personnel involved in regular con-

tact with children.

"An audit is like a snapshot. That information is an old snapshot," he said of the information released in Washington Jan. 6. "You're getting a fresh snapshot that we now stand in compliance with the recommendations and instructions that were provided through the audit experience."

A victims' group known as SNAP, The Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests, called the audits "a small step forward" but said auditors should have interviewed a greater cross-section of victims.

A SNAP statement said the audits produced some good because "some bishops were prodded to do more than they would have done otherwise," but feared that bishops who were praised for compliance "will relax their efforts."

In the Archdiocese of Boston, listed in the report as compliant but having two recommendations pending, Archbishop Sean P. O'Malley said archdiocesan efforts demonstrated "how seriously the church of Boston is committed to erasing the scourge of child abuse."

Archbishop O'Malley said that, despite "great strides," efforts must continue to protect children from abuse in the church and society.

Cardinal Roger M. Mahony of Los Angeles praised the audit for showing the archdiocese is in full compliance and for "making sure that our policies are effective and up-to-date."

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