

New review board members named

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Jerry Filteau/CNS

WASHINGTON — The president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops has appointed a new chairman and five new members on the National Review Board for the protection of children.

Bishop Wilton D. Gregory of Belleville, Ill., named Nicholas P. Cafardi, dean of the law school of Duquesne University in Pittsburgh and a charter member of the two-year-old board, as chairman. He will serve through the conclusion of his term on the board in June 2005.

The new members, all appointed to three-year terms that will end Oct. 31, 2007, are:

- Patricia O'Donnell Ewers, an educational consultant who was president of Pace University in New York from 1990 to 2000.

- Dr. Angelo P. Giardino, vice president for clinical affairs at St. Christopher's Hospital for Children in Philadelphia.

- Ralph I. Lancaster Jr., an attorney at the Pierce Atwood law firm in Portland, Maine.

- Judge Michael R. Merz, a federal magistrate of the U.S. District Court in the Southern District of

Ohio, in Dayton, Ohio.

- Joseph P. Russoniello, dean of the San Francisco Law School and senior counsel and resident in the San Francisco office of the law firm Cooley Godward LLP.

Cafardi, who has degrees in both civil law and canon law, succeeds the board's founding chairman, former Oklahoma Gov. Frank Keating, and Justice Anne M. Burke of the Illinois Court of Appeals, who served as interim chair from June 2003, when Keating left, until her departure from the board this fall.

The new members replace Keating; Burke; Robert S. Bennett, an attorney in the firm of Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher and Flom in Washington; William R. Burleigh, board chairman and former CEO of the media conglomerate E.W. Scripps Co.; and Leon E. Panetta, director of the Leon & Sylvia Panetta Institute for Public Policy in Monterey Bay, Calif., and a former White House chief of staff under President Clinton.

Bishop Gregory said the board has been "vitaly important in assisting the bishops of the United States in dealing with the crisis of the sexual abuse of minors within the church."

The all-lay board was established



Bob Roller/CNS

The president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops has named Nicholas P. Cafardi chairman of the National Review Board.


by the U.S. bishops at their landmark June 2002 meeting in Dallas to provide an independent review and critique of how well U.S. Catholic dioceses were dealing with sexually abusive priests and their victims and what policies, personnel and programs the bishops were establishing to create a safe environment for children throughout the church.

The board's formation was part of the "Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People" that the bishops adopted in Dallas in response to the crisis over the number of priests nationwide who had molested children and the number of them who had been left in ministry or returned to ministry after church officials learned of their actions.

The board has assisted in establishment of the bishops' national Office of Child and Youth Protection.

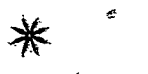
It interviewed scores of experts with a wide range of perspectives on the nature of child sexual abuse and the factors that may have contributed to priests engaging in such abuse. Last February it issued a 150-page report on its findings, sharply criticizing many past practices in the church and what it saw as continuing problems in many areas.

It also reviewed and approved the diocese-by-diocese reports of teams of outside compliance auditors who visited nearly every diocese in 2003 to conduct an independent assessment of its policies, programs and practices for child protection and for dealing with allegations of clerical sexual abuse, the priests accused and the alleged victims.



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