

# **Keeping the Faith: A Call for Collaboration Between the Faith And Child Protection Communities**

**Victor I. Vieth<sup>1</sup>**

*“If I am my brother’s keeper, it’s not enough for me to learn about or even pray about his troubles. I’m called upon to act on his behalf, even when that requires fighting injustice and tyranny.”*

*President Jimmy Carter<sup>2</sup>*

## **Introduction**

The child protection and faith-based communities are often at odds with one another. Although both professions are charged with the protection of children, members of the faith community often see themselves as keeping families together and believe the child protection community breaks families apart. The child protection community, having had a negative experience with some members of the faith community, assumes all members of the faith community are problematic. At the core of the dilemma is that both groups know far too little about the work of the other. The sad consequence of this distrust is that children are more likely to fall through the cracks in our faith and child protection communities. The sources of this conflict, the consequences of the conflict, and suggestions for crossing the bridge that now divides these communities are fully explored in the following text.

## **The conflict**

There are numerous factors contributing to conflict between faith and child protection professionals. No factor is necessarily more important than another and many of these factors overlap.

*First, members of the faith-based community often show up as character witnesses for the accused.* In speaking at a child abuse conference, I asked the prosecutors in the room who had cross-examined a clergy-person appearing as a character witness for the accused to raise their hands. All hands went in the air. When asked how many had ever used a clergy-person as a witness for the victim, all hands dropped. To illustrate the frustration some prosecutors have with members of the faith community, consider the following scenario. In a case where the defendant was found guilty of raping a minor, a minister testified that the defendant had a good reputation in the community and that he was a truthful person.<sup>3</sup> In making this claim, the minister was compelled to admit that the defendant’s previous guilty plea to two counts of sexual battery, “did not in any way affect [his] opinion of the defendant.”<sup>4</sup> Such testimony leaves prosecutors and

jurors alike skeptical about the ability of clergy to empathize with, much less protect child victims of abuse.

To the extent this inability exists, it may simply reflect the lack of understanding many clergy persons have about sexual abuse and how easily manipulated they are. A member of the clergy once told my colleague that he knew the defendant was innocent because he “had looked him in the eye and he told me he didn’t do it.” Perhaps this is not surprising. Many clergy receive little or no training about the dynamics of child physical or sexual abuse.<sup>5</sup> Even with training, clergy may be ill equipped to deal with child abusers who are extremely manipulative. As described by one expert, sex offenders “cannot deal openly and honestly with who they are or what they have done. This is not surprising. With something to hide, they have become practiced at hiding it, often (in part) from themselves as well as others.”<sup>6</sup>

The allegiance of some clergy to perpetrators may not result from being outwitted by the offender. Instead, this allegiance to sex offenders may be mandated by church rules and statutory law. This results when penitent privilege statutes gag the clergy-person from testifying regarding inculpatory statements made by criminals, such as confessions to child abuse or domestic violence. These statutes require the consent of the penitent in order for the clergy-person to testify on matters disclosed to him in the course of his religious duties.<sup>7</sup>

*Second, members of the clergy fail to understand, much less report abuse.* The pastoral care department of the Children’s Hospital Medical Center of Akron, Ohio surveyed 143 clergy of numerous faiths and found that 29% believed that actual evidence of abuse, as opposed to suspicion was necessary before a report could be made. The same study found that only 22% of the respondents were required by their denomination/faith group to receive child abuse training. This study also documented an under-reporting of suspected abuse cases with the most prevalent reason being “lack of trust in Children’s Services Bureaus.”<sup>8</sup> The 143 clergy responding to this survey impact, at some level, the lives of 23,841 children.<sup>9</sup>

*Third, some churches are perceived as “hiding” clergy accused of abusing children.* Catholic Cardinal Bernard F. Law said he was “profoundly sorry” for sending a pedophile priest to a new assignment rather than turning him over to the authorities.<sup>10</sup> In 2002, the Vatican issued “new rules for Roman Catholic churches around the world to deal with pedophile priests, saying they should stand trial in secret ecclesiastical courts.”<sup>11</sup> The notion of secret courts compounds a long-standing criticism that the Catholic Church is protecting child abusers. In 1992, Catholic priest and novelist Andrew M. Greeley wrote “Bishops have in what seems like programmed consistency tried to hide, cover up, bribe, stonewall; often they have sent back into parishes men whom they knew to be a danger to the faithful.”<sup>12</sup> Dealing secretly with church child molesters is not a recent phenomenon nor is it limited to Roman Catholicism. For example, Horatio Alger was a Unitarian minister who, when accused of molesting children, was not turned over to the police but was quietly dismissed from his pastoral duties.<sup>13</sup>

*Fourth, many congregations rally around the perpetrator and, in some cases, even blame the victim or victim's parents.* In one case in Minnesota, the pastor concluded that half the congregation believed “the girl seduced the perpetrator.”<sup>14</sup> A Lutheran minister once confided to me that he was shocked when an older boy in his congregation sexually abused his daughter. The minister was even more alarmed that the church council was critical of the pastor's decision to report the incident to the police. In the mind of many the juvenile's sexual conduct was simply a case of misplaced hormones that could be handled exclusively within the church.<sup>15</sup>

Even when guilt is unequivocal, some prominent members of the faith community blame the victims not the offenders. In response to a \$119 million verdict against the Dallas diocese for the serial molestation of altar boys by a priest, the former vicar general, Msgr. Robert Rehkemper, stated, “[n]o one ever says anything about what the role of the parents was in all this.” Msgr. Rehkemper also insisted that the child victims, “knew what was right and what was wrong. Anybody who reaches the age of reason shares responsibility for what they do.”<sup>16</sup>

The phenomenon of supporting perpetrators over victims may reflect a long-standing, deeply ingrained belief that God has placed children under the province of parents or other caretakers and no one, certainly not the government, should interfere. In reference to his rural boyhood in Georgia during the depression era, former President Jimmy Carter writes: “the role of our three churches was gently but carefully circumscribed. Whether Baptist, Methodist, or Lutheran, our families did not expect the pastor, deacons, stewards or other congregation leaders to interfere in private or personal affairs...”<sup>17</sup>

The aversion to government may reflect a view that lawyers and courts are people and places the faithful should avoid. John Calvin believed a Christian could never go to court out of anger or vengeance but only out of love. Specifically, Calvin said “(a) lawsuit, however just, can never be rightly prosecuted by any man, unless he treats his adversary with the same love and good will as if the business under controversy were already amicably settled and composed.”<sup>18</sup> Martin Luther echoed these sentiments claiming “that all those who go to law and wrangle in the courts over their property and honor are nothing but heathen masquerading under the name of Christians.”<sup>19</sup> Even today, Christians openly question whether they can serve as lawyers or otherwise participate in the legal system.<sup>20</sup>

*Fifth, in cases of child and domestic abuse, some members of the faith community counsel victims to forgive their abusers without accountability under the criminal law and suggest the doctrine of submission requires endurance of the abuse.* In permitting ongoing sexual abuse by clergy, one author comments that “the concepts of mercy, redemption and humility come into play.”<sup>21</sup> The concept of “he without sin, cast the first stone,” works to forgive a surface repentant without requiring true reform in behavior.<sup>22</sup> One survey of protestant clergy found that 71% of clergy would not advise a battered woman to leave a spouse immediately because of abuse and 92% would not advise divorce as an option.<sup>23</sup> The need to forgive and to preserve the marriage was so

pronounced that 45% of the surveyed pastors said the violence of the husband should not be “overemphasized and used as ‘a justification’ for breaking the marriage commitment.”<sup>24</sup>

Sometimes, a member of the faith community may not actively counsel or condone abuse but nonetheless fail to speak out. Silence in the face of evil is tantamount to harboring the sin. Even so, the pressure to be quiet is both great and deeply ingrained in our culture. Jewish Rabbi Julie Spitzer writes of the silence surrounding family violence in the Jewish community and laments that she grew “tired of being one voice among so many who refused to listen.”<sup>25</sup>

*Sixth, members of the faith-based community often claim scriptural authorization for corporal punishment.* When this happens, a clash between church and state may occur if the latter deems the discipline to be excessive. Case law is replete with examples of the government prosecuting church members who use the Bible for justification of their violence. In a North Carolina case, five Christian day care providers used hands and paddles to spank children “pursuant to the policy of the church.”<sup>26</sup> A North Carolina Baptist Church administered corporal punishment to an infant less than one year old.<sup>27</sup> Christian psychologist Dr. James Dobson advocates hitting children and, as scriptural support cites the following verse: “Withhold not correction from the child; for if thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die.”<sup>28</sup> Commenting on this verse, Dobson opines “Certainly if the ‘rod’ is a measuring stick, you now know what to do with it!”<sup>29</sup>

Many theologians, however, disagree with this interpretation of the verse in proverbs. According to this view, “rod” is a shepherd’s staff used to guide and not strike sheep. To these theologians, the proverb “seems to imply that parents who love their children are careful to discipline them, and those parents that don’t provide guidance aren’t adequately caring for their children.”<sup>30</sup>

It is not, however, the place of a front line social worker or other child protection professional to debate scripture with a parent that may have used excessive force. Indeed, nearly every state permits parents to use “reasonable” force on their children.<sup>31</sup> Even if such debate were permissible, it is unlikely that one group or the other will be converted to adopt a different interpretation of scripture. The social worker can, of course, argue that corporal punishment is not an effective means of discipline and can support this argument with research.<sup>32</sup> An intellectual argument such as this, however, is also unlikely to be effective with a parent who believes God is commanding him or her to use physical discipline.

*Seventh, many remedial measures taken by the church, such as treatment centers and policies, have proven to be relatively ineffective and may actually result in sending offenders back to their victims.* For the most part, the Catholic Church uses two treatment centers for pedophile priests: St. Luke Institute in Maryland and the facility operated by the Servants of the Paraclete in Jemez Springs, New Mexico. An interview with officials at St. Luke reveals the center is openly used to help priests avoid prosecution for sexual abuse of children and that the staff promotes keeping pedophilic priests in the ministry,

albeit closely monitored.<sup>33</sup> St. Luke staff agreed offending priests should not be put in settings placing future children at risk, but reject the proposal that molesting priests be automatically barred from the priesthood or church posts.<sup>34</sup> Likewise, the New Mexico facility has been referred to as a “dumping ground for pedophile priests.” “The church had them say prayers & rosaries, then they released them for sexual sabbaticals with young boys,” commented victim’s attorney, Bruce Pasternack.<sup>35</sup> Further, although 130 people have accused former priest Father John Geoghan of molesting and raping them as children throughout the course of his thirty-six year career, he has been described as a “veteran of institutions that treat sexually abusive priests.”<sup>36</sup> Finally, Rudy Kos, a former priest, who faces a life sentence for serial molestation of altar boys, regularly telephoned one of his victims while under treatment at the Servants of the Paraclete.<sup>37</sup>

Certain churches and dioceses have instituted their own “child safety policies,” which address child sexual abuse.<sup>38</sup> Cardinal Law announced a “zero tolerance” policy against child sexual abuse and agreed to hand over the church’s records to the authorities in response to findings of child sexual abuse within the Dallas diocese.<sup>39</sup> Nevertheless, enforcement of such policies has been met with cynicism and cases against clergymen continue to emerge. A leading victims’ attorney said of Law’s new policies and the Catholic Church’s decade-old “quiet” policy of excluding homosexuals from the seminary, “I don’t want to hear about another new policy until someone says to me that someone other than the fox guarding the henhouse has examined the files.”<sup>40</sup>

Cleric sex offenders pose every bit the danger to children and society as do non-cleric offenders. Cleric sex offenders share many characteristics with non-cleric offenders,<sup>41</sup> although cleric offending may be related more to psychosexual adjustment and development issues and less to severe mental disorder.<sup>42</sup>

It can even be argued that cleric sex offenders are more skilled than their less-educated counterparts and thus may be particularly adept at selecting their victims and avoiding detection. In one study, researchers found that a “substantial number of complainants were children and adolescents, and therefore did not complain to authorities until years later. Thus, there may be some selection of susceptible victims who were confused and less likely to report the clerics’ inappropriate behavior.”<sup>43</sup> The same study found that “significantly more” clerics used force than non-cleric offenders.<sup>44</sup> In terms of treating cleric sex offenders, researchers have found “they appear to suffer from the same problems as sex offenders in general and they should be assessed in the same fashion.”<sup>45</sup> To do this, however, the church must report abuse and the child protection and criminal justice systems must respond with equal vigor to a case of sexual abuse at the hands of a cleric as at the hands of any other molester.

*Eighth, the child protection community often assumes the hostility of the faith based community and fails to involve them.* Child protection professionals often fail to solicit clergy for membership on our multi-disciplinary teams. We also fail in keeping clergy informed of services such as Parents Anonymous that could be accessed to help parents on edge. We fail to attempt education of the faith-based community on issues surrounding cases of child abuse. When we fail to reach out and educate the clergy, we

perpetuate myths that may be harmful to children. Once, while I was teaching a class to clergy, an older pastor commented to me “I suppose you’re going to tell me that if I give a child a hug, that’s sexual abuse.” Obviously, this pastor bought into the idea that child protection professionals are zealots looking to fill the prisons by misinterpreting innocent behavior. I was able to correct this perception by commenting to the effect “no, an abused child who wants or needs a hug should not be denied that comfort. It is not a crime to hug a child. It is a crime to touch a child’s genitals for your own sexual gratification or to cause a child to manipulate your genitals. That’s what we’re going to talk about.”

### **The cost**

When faith-based and child protection professionals clash, there are at least four consequences. *First, children are lost in the church.* I had a case where the pastor and church elders showed up at the trial as a show of support for the member of their congregation accused of sexually abusing his developmentally delayed daughter. The pastor even testified as a character witness for the accused. All of this was no doubt troubling to the victim, herself a member of the congregation, who may very well have wondered if this meant God did not believe her. She certainly understood that her church did not believe her.

*Second, victims of domestic violence are lost in the church.* One study of victims of spouse abuse found that 71% of the victims reported a “dissatisfactory” contact with clergy or a “very unsatisfactory” relationship with a religious leader. Those victims who had a positive experience received “validation” and “approval” from their religious leader.<sup>46</sup>

*Third, perpetrators are lost in the church.* A perpetrator receiving quick, or cheap forgiveness, may assume the sin was not great and may re-offend. After all, if forgiveness is this easy, the offender can get it any time. Over sixty years ago, German theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer called this phenomenon “cheap grace.” According to Bonhoeffer, “(c)heap grace means grace sold on the market like cheapjacks’ wares. The sacraments, the forgiveness of sin, and the consolations of religion are thrown away at cut prices.”<sup>47</sup>

Cheap grace often, if not always, poisons a perpetrator’s chance to shed the sin of sexual abuse. As one commentator notes from his study of incest perpetrators, these offenders “stated that ‘Hail Mary’s’ and ‘kneel therapy’ are not enough. Most offenders want clergy to be informed, sensitive, and understanding, but agree that sexual abuse treatment is best left to the experts. They emphasize the need to coordinate and cooperate. Many services are required for the incestuous family. Law enforcement, treatment, and spiritual recovery need to be combined as a joint effort to ensure total care for all family members.”<sup>48</sup>

*Fourth, the faith needs of children are lost in the system.* Faith issues often come up in cases of child abuse. I’ve had cases, for example, where a victim asked if she was

“still a virgin in God’s eyes?” I had one case where a victim told me she couldn’t report her abuse because she knew that sex outside of marriage was a sin and did not want to be condemned by the church or her parents. These are both faith and mental health issues that are often ignored by multi-disciplinary teams.

### **Crossing the Bridge that Divides**

The cost of continued conflict between the faith and child protection communities is simply too high a price to pay. Crossing the bridge dividing these important disciplines may include the following steps.

*First, prosecutors and other child abuse professionals should recognize the key role that clergy play in communities.* Oftentimes, the most respected leaders in communities do not occupy a position on the school or township board. Instead, they preach from a pulpit. Moreover, families in crisis typically do not call social services; these families may call their pastor, priest, rabbi or iman. Accordingly, prosecutors and other members of the child protection community need to reach out to local ministerial associations. The outreach can be as simple as offering to give a presentation on local efforts to combat child abuse.

*Second, conduct a mandated reporter training for clergy.* It is appropriate to conduct separate mandated reporter training for members of the clergy. In part, a separate training is warranted because mandated reporting laws for clergy may differ from those for other professionals.<sup>49</sup> In Minnesota, for example, a member of the clergy is not required to report the possibility of abuse or neglect if the information is obtained while receiving a confession or from a person seeking “religious or spiritual advice.”<sup>50</sup>

*Third, develop and use other training materials for the faith-based community.* There are myriad resources available for such training. For example, the video *Hear Their Cries* is produced by the Center for Prevention of Sexual and Domestic Violence and is an excellent training resource.<sup>51</sup> A book containing great suggestions and helpful resources for Catholic Parrish and school staff is entitled *Creating Safe and Sacred Places*.<sup>52</sup>

It will be particularly helpful to train members of the faith community about the games pedophiles use in obtaining access to children in churches and other faith centers. As noted by one imprisoned pedophile:

I considered church people easy to fool...they have a trust that comes from being Christians...They tend to be better folks all around. And they seem to want to believe in the good that exists in all people...I think they want to believe in people. And because of that, you can easily convince, with or without convincing words.<sup>53</sup>

Upon his release from prison, one pedophile asked an unsuspecting minister if he believed in forgiveness. When the minister said his church forgave all the truly penitent,

the pedophile falsely told the minister that he had just been released from prison for passing bad checks. In reality, the offender had been in prison for sexually abusing children. The pedophile gave this sob story to the minister:

While I was there (in prison), I found the Lord, and there was this hymn I dearly loved. And I knew it would be a sign from God, whatever church was playing that hymn, that was the church for me. And Father, when I walked by your church this morning, you were playing that hymn.<sup>54</sup>

Moved by this lie, and without determining the pedophile's true criminal history, the minister permitted the offender to be in charge of the church's children's choir. When the authorities caught up with this offender, they found he was actually operating in *two* churches.<sup>55</sup>

In educating the faith community about these types of manipulations by offenders, it may be possible to limit the access pedophiles presently have to a number of children in the faith community.

*Fourth, receive training from members of the leading faiths in your community.* It is difficult, if not impossible, to effectively work with or respect the culture of the victims child protection professionals will work with unless these workers have as full an understanding as possible of the victims' belief systems. This may be as simple as attending various worship services and asking families about religious practices or beliefs.

*Fifth, invite members of the faith based community to be part of multi-disciplinary teams.* Once clergy see the inner workings of a local child protection system, they will be in a position to rebut myths by their fellow clergy regarding the system. For example, clergy on an MDT can educate their brethren that rigid legal standards are in place to prevent the taking of a child into protective custody on a mere whim and that even if a given social worker or police officer went too far, a judge must review and approve the decision within a matter of hours. More importantly, a faith-based member of the MDT can help other members of the team recognize and respond to faith issues raised by various victims.

*Sixth, involve members of the faith-based community in your prevention programs.* In the county where I prosecuted, we had a committee established to address child abuse at the front end through various prevention efforts. One year, for example, we identified a need for and then developed a Parent's Anonymous program. By involving clergy in such efforts, the members of the faith-based community will be aware of and hopefully refer parishioners to these local resources. Because clergy work with so many families in crisis, these professionals can also help identify programs most needed in a given community.

Think of creative ways to involve the faith community in your child protection efforts. When, for example, local training of child protection professionals is conducted, consider asking local churches, temples, and synagogues to donate space for the training or otherwise involve members of the faith community in the training. Using the church for such a training sends a subtle message to all members of that congregation that the church is opposed to child abuse and is supporting local efforts to combat this sin.

*Seventh, teach parishioners how to respond to cases of child abuse and how to protect their children.* Topics can include child personal safety as well as Internet safety. I have attached as Appendix “A” several simple but concrete steps parents and others can take to protect children in their homes and congregations.

*Eighth, when dealing with an aspect of child abuse involving a family of faith, take the time to learn their religion and culture and, if possible, work within it.* For example, I had a child protection case of excessive corporal punishment. The mother/offender, with the support of her pastor, insisted that corporal punishment is necessary and is sanctioned by God. There is a recurring strain in some segments of Christianity that children must be disciplined sternly in order to avoid a path that may lead to condemnation. Martin Luther once said there “is no greater tragedy in Christendom than spoiling children.”<sup>56</sup>

In the case mentioned above, the mother’s source for her belief was the book *Dare to Discipline* by Dr. James Dobson. Our child protection workers read the book and found references to avoiding excessive discipline,<sup>57</sup> not disciplining a child for involuntary acts such as bed-wetting,<sup>58</sup> and an acknowledgment that not all children need to be hit.<sup>59</sup> We asked the mother if she agreed with these parts of the book as well and if we could teach her to use less aversive forms of discipline. The mother agreed and learned to use other forms of discipline effectively.

*Ninth, realize that, at times, a clash is unavoidable.* The policy of the National District Attorney’s Association, for example, is to oppose religious exemptions from child abuse laws and, if possible, to prosecute those who withhold medical care from children based on religious grounds.<sup>60</sup> In instances such as this, then, there will be a conflict. When this occurs, the best a prosecutor can do is be respectful of someone’s faith but be unflinching in the protection of the child.

*Tenth, help the faith-based community establish a system that responds appropriately to the needs of child abuse victims.* I have attached as Appendix “B” a five-step plan for use by congregations desiring to do all they can to protect the children in their midst.

*Eleventh, help the faith-based community establish a system that responds appropriately to the needs of domestic violence victims.* When teaching congregations about protecting victims of domestic terror, I offer seven suggestions. These suggestions are contained in an article attached as Appendix “C.”

*Twelve, consider religion throughout the case.* If a child asks, “am I still a virgin in God’s eyes?” the MDT must deal with this issue as part of therapy and should involve a religious leader that shares the child’s faith to ease his or her anguish about God’s reaction to the victimization. Hopefully, a caring clergy can explain the difference between sinning and being the victim of someone else’s sin.

*Thirteenth, include religion as part of victim assistance services.* Ask a non-offending parent, for example, if the child has religious questions about the abuse such as “why didn’t God protect me?” If so, perhaps the MDT can help the family access religious services that will help the child cope with this crises of faith.

## **Conclusion**

The National Cemetery Administration authorizes 32 different religious symbols to be used on headstones in the 120 national cemeteries it oversees.<sup>61</sup> Tour any of these cemeteries and you will find the Latin cross, Star of David, Muslim Crescent and Star, and the Angel Moroni.<sup>62</sup> The members of these divergent faiths shared in life and death a common purpose in defending their nation. In the same vein, the members of our country’s divergent faiths must band together not for the purpose of intermingling or in any way altering our faith traditions but to protect from abuse the children God has placed in our care. To this end, it becomes necessary to cooperate not only with other faiths but also with a secular government whose assistance is essential if we are to protect children. By the same token, child protection authorities cannot minimize and must never ignore the role of the faith community in detecting abuse and assisting families to heal. In crossing the bridge that divides, the faith and child protection communities offer the victims of abuse the best hope for a better life.

## **Appendix A**

### **Teaching the Faith Based Community to Teach Themselves and their Children Personal Safety**

I have been blessed on several occasions to teach pastors and parishioners alike to, in turn, teach children in their homes and congregations about personal safety. Unless and until we empower children to report abuse, we can expect widespread silence to remain the norm. Many congregations have misgivings about personal safety that is based on a misunderstanding of what it is we need to teach our children. In teaching the seven points below, though, I have found practitioners of both conservative and liberal faiths accepting of these simple truths and expressing a willingness to follow this advise.

#### *Teaching Congregations and Children Personal Safety: Seven Steps*

**First, create an atmosphere in which children feel comfortable talking to you about difficult subjects.** Many children suffer silently, afraid to tell a parent of the evil taking place in their own home or the home of a neighbor, relative, or friend.

Teach your children the difference between a good touch and an uncomfortable touch. Let them know that if the unthinkable occurs, you will not be angry but will support and protect your child as best you can. Teachers and parents routinely speak to children about fire safety. While it is appropriate to teach a youngster to stop, drop, and roll, children are far more likely to encounter child abuse than they are a fire. Therefore, it is equally and perhaps more important to teach a child personal safety. Though a parent may feel uncomfortable speaking to a child about abuse, failure to do so lessens the chance your child will approach you in the event abuse occurs.

Many parents confuse a good touch/bad touch curriculum with sex education. The instruction is not the same. When speaking to a child about touches, simply instruct that while hugs and kisses are generally good, private parts of the body are off limits. If the child is unsure of the location, tell her a private part of the body is that covered by a bathing suit. Tell your child that while a doctor may have occasional need to examine genitalia, and a parent may need to clean intimate parts, these body parts should not otherwise be touched by others. Most importantly, give your child a game plan of what to do if inappropriate touching occurs. The game plan can be as simple as reporting any such touching to you.

If your school has a good touch/bad touch curriculum, do not assume this guarantees your child will talk to you if abused. Tell your child you are aware of the curriculum, approve of it, and that you would like your son or daughter to tell you if anyone makes them feel uncomfortable.

Some parents mistakenly assume it is enough to teach a child to avoid strangers. This assumption is mistaken because the child may be harmed by someone who is not a

stranger. Moreover, children being children, kids often violate the rule against speaking to or going with a stranger. Tell your child you understand mistakes happen and that if he forgets and has contact with a stranger he can tell you about the contact without fear of reprisal.

**Second, listen to your children.** A child revealing abuse may begin with a tentative, ambiguous disclosure. The child may be testing the water in an effort to determine whether it is safe to reveal more. A child may say “I don’t like it when Uncle Bobby hugs me.” Not understanding the significance of the comment, a parent may smile and say something like “do his whiskers tickle?” Even worse, a parent may admonish the child, telling him that he only sees the uncle sporadically and the least he can do is share a hug. A parent responding along these lines may close off communication with his child and fail to learn why Uncle Bobby’s hugs are disturbing.

Rather than dismiss the child’s statement, explore with him why the uncle’s hugs are viewed unfavorably. Praise the child for sharing his feelings and ask him if there is anything else the uncle does which makes him feel uncomfortable.

**Third, assure a child revealing abuse that he did nothing wrong and that your love for him is unending.** Many parents are understandably shocked at the revelation and ask the child why he did not reveal the abuse sooner. Parents posing such a question unwittingly place blame on the child.

**Fourth, speak to both a pediatrician and a child psychologist about the specifics of the abuse so that you can be sure your child’s physical and mental health needs are being addressed.** Your child may or may not need counseling, medical care or other services. By consulting with trustworthy professionals experienced in handling cases of child abuse, you are better equipped to address your child’s needs.

**Fifth, be prepared to respond to the spiritual damage inflicted on your child.** Many child abusers twist and pervert scripture as a means of keeping the child quiet. The perpetrator may tell a young girl that her “seductive” behavior caused the abuse. Pointing to the Biblical condemnation of sex outside of marriage, the perpetrator may tell a child that if she speaks of abuse, the church will condemn *her*. In response, a parent may tell a child victim that God condemns child abusers, not victims. Point out the difference between sinning and being the victim of someone else’s sin. Tell your child she does not need God’s forgiveness as a result of the abuse, the perpetrator does.

At some point, your child may ask you difficult, heartbreaking questions. Why didn’t God answer my prayers when I asked him to stop Uncle Bobby from hurting me? If God loves me, why didn’t he help me sooner? There is no simple answer to questions such as these. Perhaps the best parents can do is to acknowledge we don’t have all the answers. If I am teaching in a Christian congregation, I may suggest the parents can point to Christ’s unjust suffering and express the belief that God has a sympathetic ear.

**Sixth, make sure that, in addition to yourself, your church is also prepared to address the needs of a child abuse victim.** In assessing your church's readiness, ask the following questions. Have the pastors and teachers in your church received any training on child abuse issues? Do your pastors and teachers know the police officers, social workers and prosecutors who handle child abuse cases in your community? Are your pastors and teachers familiar with mandated reporting laws and the procedures to be followed if abuse must be reported? Does your church library have materials to assist a child or family victimized by abuse? Does your church school have a good touch/bad touch curriculum? Do your church workers know where to refer a child abuse victim in need of professional help? By answering these questions now, your congregation will not only be better prepared to help a child abuse victim, you will create an environment in which children can reveal abuse.

**Finally, report the abuse to the police.** Well-meaning parents often choose not to report the abuse out of a sincere desire to protect their child from having to re-live the ordeal in court. This decision all but guarantees that the perpetrator will re-offend.

Few, if any, perpetrators offend only once or offend against only one child. According to one study, men who molest girls average 19.8 victims and men who molest boys average 150.2 victims. In a study of 561 sex offenders, these offenders accounted for the abuse of an astonishing 195,407 victims.<sup>63</sup> Confidently relying on the silence of their victims, most child abusers escape justice. Indeed, a child molester's chance of getting caught is calculated to be as low as 3%.

Reporting abuse to the police does not necessarily mean your child will have to testify at trial. Not all cases result in the filing of charges. Most cases that do result in charges end in a plea of guilty. If your child does have to testify, the process is often more stressful for the parent than the child. More than one study finds that most abused children view the court process positively. Many children feel empowered by having confronted their abuser in court.

Obviously, no one can guarantee your child will have a positive experience with the legal system. By coming forward, though, you send the unmistakable message that it was wrong for the perpetrator to violate your child's body and injure her spirit. Evil flourishes when good people remain silent.

Indeed, it is not parents alone who are responsible for protecting our children. Anyone with knowledge of abuse has a moral responsibility to speak for those too frail to help themselves. It never ceases to amaze me that when a child is dead, there is so often a flood of relatives and neighbors proclaiming a lack of surprise at the child's fate. These bystanders then relate scenes when the child was struck, cursed and otherwise mistreated. Unfortunately for the deceased, the moral outrage of neighbors seldom translates into a phone call to social services.

Child abuse is appropriately described as a footprint on the heart. May we never lose our resolve to spare children from this sin. In the event abuse finds them, let us support our children with all the love they deserve.

## **Appendix B**

### **Making Congregations Safe for Child Abuse Victims<sup>64</sup>**

As a prosecutor, my most difficult cases are those involving allegations of child abuse. I do not recall the name of each child victim I have worked with, but I remember each face. I recall the courage of more than one child forced to confront his abuser, a jury filled with strangers, and a legal system that is not childproof. With every case, my heart breaks.

The abuse of children is intolerable in our faith communities. Unfortunately, the faith community is not immune from this sin and we often unwittingly permit this sin to flourish in God's houses. I have seen it happen.

In my experience, children are safe in congregations that adopt the following approach to an allegation of child abuse:

**First, abused children are safe in congregations that understand child abuse can happen anywhere.** We cannot live under the false assumption that child abuse cannot happen in conservative congregations filled with respected members of our faith. The sin of child abuse does not check itself at the door of our Churches, Synagogues and Temples.

Child abusers are rich and poor, male and female, college professors and high school dropouts, and they are found in every racial and religious class. Even social workers, police officers and prosecutors assigned to the protection of children have been convicted of abuse.

Studies indicate that as many as 38 percent of women and 16 percent of men have been sexually abused as children. Each year, our nations subjects seven million children to caretaker violence, and as many as 2,000 of these children die as a result. Moreover, some studies conclude that child abuse is more prevalent in rural than in urban communities.<sup>65</sup>

If these studies are accurate, on any given Sunday, the pews of your congregation will likely hold at least one child abuser and one victim. Realizing this, we will not blind ourselves when the signs of abuse become obvious.

**Second, children are safe in congregations where child abuse is not covered up.** On more than one occasion, child abuse victims have been told to forgive their abusers and to remain silent about the abuse. Similarly congregations have told abusers to ask God's forgiveness and to "sin no more." This is not enough.

Abused children need to be able to speak about abuse as a means of healing. Abused children told to keep the secret pay a terrible price. I have known several who chose suicide rather than silence.

Abusers need forgiveness but they also need to deal with their sin and its consequences. Typically, this includes professional counseling and some level of punishment. A congregation would never tell a parishioner with a heart disease to say a prayer but ignore the need to see a doctor. In the same vein, a parishioner confessing the sin of child abuse, particularly the sin of child sexual abuse, needs professional psychiatric or psychological care to address his abnormal behavior. Moreover, the parishioner should recognize his criminal behavior and turn himself over to the authorities. If you would urge a confessed burglar to turn himself in to the police, why would you not urge a confessed child abuser to also reconcile himself with the law?

**Third, abused children are safe in congregations that recognize them as victims and not as sinners.** A child abuse victim once told me she could not tell a pastor, teacher or church elder about a sexual relationship with a parent because she knew that sex outside of marriage is a sin and she was afraid of being condemned. Children need to know the difference between sinning and being the victim of someone else's sin. Children need to know that adults also understand this difference.

**Fourth, children are safe when congregations do not ostracize children who reveal abuse.** A child who reveals abuse is often isolated. The non-offending parent and other siblings rally around the perpetrator and, for all practical purposes, disown the victim. Typically, the victim—not the perpetrator—is removed from the home. The child's friends may tease and abandon the victim. A boy revealing a sexual relationship with his father may be labeled homosexual. The combined effect of this treatment is to compel the child to minimize the abuse and, in some cases, to recant the allegation altogether.

The victim's isolation is compounded when a congregation stands behind the perpetrators and implicitly condemns the child making the accusation. Tragically, this is often without a full knowledge of the accusation or the evidence.

In one case, a pastor testified to the good character of an accused molester. Months later, the pastor confided to me that if he had known additional facts, his testimony would have been different.

In another case, a pastor and other community members wrote a letter professing the innocence of an accused molester and condemning the children for bringing their accusation years after the fact. Presumably, these parishioners did not realize that the accused molester had testified under oath that he had in fact molested six children. Apparently, the molester had not been forthright with the members of his church.

This is not to say that while an investigation is pending, a congregation must assume the guilt of an accused. Although children rarely lie about abuse, some adults have been

falsely accused. When the veracity of an allegation is unclear, the congregation can support the accused and the accuser by praying that the truth be known.

**Fifth, children are safer in congregations where abusers receive tough love.**

Forgiveness is an important aspect of most faiths. Certainly Christians will claim that Christ died for the sins of child abusers as much as anyone else. Although our faith traditions can and should offer God's forgiveness, we must also insist on true repentance and changed behavior. We must recognize that child abuse rarely happens only once and that most abusers wrap themselves in a blanket of denial. We can support child abusers by letting them know we won't abandon them for telling the truth and we won't support them in continued lying or minimizing of their conduct.

In the words of Erik Erikson, "someday, maybe, there will exist a well informed, well considered, and yet fervent public conviction that the most deadly of all possible sins is the mutilation of a child's spirit." May we pray that the faith community never contributes to this mutilation.

## Appendix C

### Seven Suggestions to Make Congregations Safe for Victims of Domestic Violence<sup>66</sup>

In my career as a prosecutor I have worked with hundreds of victims of domestic violence. I have seen the toll that domestic violence takes on the bodies, spirits and children of these women. Sadly, more than one mother has removed herself from the faith community when she perceived the community's indifference to her need to survive.

Domestic violence is nothing less than a direct attack by the devil on our families and our faith. As members of the faith community, we must dedicate ourselves to understanding the dynamics of violence and ensure that we do not take any action that contributes to the cycle of abuse.

In my experience, congregations adhering to the following guidelines are the best prepared and the most effective in combating the sin of domestic violence.

**First, our clergy and our congregations need to ensure the safety of domestic violence victims.** The goal of family preservation cannot be achieved by returning a victim home to endure additional poundings. All too often, such advice leads to the serious injury or death to our mothers, the imprisonment of our fathers, and the foster care placement of our children.

Each year, 4,000 women in the United States are killed by their spouses. The United States Surgeon General cites domestic violence as the leading cause of bodily injury to American women. Much of this violence could have been avoided, and many families saved, if we had not insisted on continuing a dangerous living arrangement.

In many cases, family preservation is possible only after the victim and perpetrator are living apart, and the perpetrator accesses spiritual and professional help. Domestic abusers are so dedicated to the use of power to maintain their relationships that these complex dynamics cannot be addressed until there is a separation.

In conservative Christian congregations, there is often expressed the scriptural belief the couple must stay together no matter what. When, however, an abusive husband fails to love his wife as Christ loved the church, he has abandoned her and this abandonment is a scriptural basis for divorce. (1 Corinthians 7:15).

**Second, we need to care for the spiritual needs of women victimized by violence.** Some victims of violence are confused by the abuse and believe that if God chose their husband, God wills the violence. The faith community must in no uncertain terms remind these women that violence is inconsistent with God's will for their marriages.

**Third, our congregations need to tend to the spiritual and physical needs of children growing up in violent homes.** Children raised in such homes have higher rates of truancy, drug and alcohol problems, and suicide. Many of these children choose a life of crime. Ninety percent of the men in Minnesota prisons grew up in homes where violence was the norm.

When children turn to crime, drugs, and suicide, it is a clarion call to recognize and address their spiritual needs. When church-going dad beats church-going mom, and congregation looks the other way, it is understandable why many children abandon their faith and look elsewhere for comfort. It's not always easy to reach out to children of violent homes but, if the faith community does not act, the devil and his agents are eager to fill the void.

**Fourth, we must insist that domestic abusers be accountable for their sin.** In the book of Genesis we are told that Adam was the first man to blame his wife for his sin (Genesis 3:12). Domestic abusers are adept at continuing this tradition.

As a prosecutor, it is disheartening to view the photographs of bruised and bloodied women and then read the statements of abusers who blame the beating on the victim. I know domestic abusers who blame their violence on the alleged nagging, obesity, cooking deficits, and sexual shortcomings of their wives. Abusers use such excuses as a blatant attempt to whitewash their sin.

In the Genesis account, God did not allow Adam to blame his sin on Eve. In the same vein, the faith community today must be vigilant in reminding domestic abusers that they alone are responsible for their sin, and they alone must answer to God.

**Fifth, we should encourage domestic abusers to make themselves right with the law.** After decades of avoidance, police and prosecutors at long last have begun to take seriously the crime of domestic violence.

Unfortunately, many abusers blame the victim when a police officer arrests or a prosecutor seeks jail or other sanctions against an abuser. Some abusers hire unscrupulous defense attorneys or otherwise seek to use the legal system to further intimidate or manipulate the victim. Such conduct may be legal, but it is sinful and should be condemned by the faith community.

**Sixth, the faith community must resist the temptation to be silent about the sin of domestic violence.** Preachers must preach and teachers must teach that husbands who love their wives do not beat them. The faith community must call to repentance those who do abuse and forgive those who heed this call by taking the steps necessary to forever reform their behavior. Abusers who do not heed this call should be disciplined pursuant to the tenets of our nation's various faiths.

**Seventh, the faith community must pray that God will guide our efforts to the end the assault of our spouses and the emotional torture of our children.** May God speed

the day when our families are safe in heaven, and the violence we knew on earth is only a memory.

---

<sup>1</sup> Director, APRI's National Center for Prosecution of Child Abuse. The author thanks contract attorney Ali Neuffer for her immeasurable assistance in providing research and editing assistance.

<sup>2</sup> JIMMY CARTER, SOURCES OF STRENGTH 126 (1997).

<sup>3</sup> See *Tennessee v. Stewart*, No. 01-C-01-9301-CR-00007, 1993 Crim. App. LEXIS 845, at \*9-10 (Tenn. Crim. App. Dec. 16, 1993).

<sup>4</sup> See *id.*, at \*10.

<sup>5</sup> For example, the following seminary catalogs listed no courses covering the subject of child sexual abuse or pedophilia: Asbury Theology Seminary, Bethel Seminary, Christian Theological Seminary, Colorado Theological Seminary, Eastern Mennonite Seminary, Fuller Theological Seminary, The King's Seminary, St. Patrick's Seminary, Trinity Theological Seminary, Valley International Christian Seminary, Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, The Woolston-Steen Theological Seminary.

<sup>6</sup> ERIC LEBERG, UNDERSTANDING CHILD MOLESTERS 91 (1997).

<sup>7</sup> The following is an example of this type of state privilege statute:

A clergyman, priest, minister, rabbi or practitioner of any religious denomination accredited by the religious body to which he belongs who is settled in the work of the ministry shall not disclose confidential communications made to him in his professional capacity in any civil or criminal case or proceedings preliminary thereto, or in any legislative or administrative proceeding, unless the person making the confidential communication waives such privilege herein provided.

CONN. GEN. STAT. ANN. § 52-146b (West 2001); see also ARIZ. REV. STAT. § 13-4062(3) (2001); D.C. CODE ANN. § 14-309 (2001); IOWA CODE § 622.10 (2002); MASS. GEN. LAWS ANN. ch. 233 § 20A (2001); MINN. STAT. § 595.02 (2000); MONT. CODE ANN. § 26-1-804 (2001); NEV. REV. STAT. § 49.255 (2000); N.H. REV. STAT. ANN. § 516:35 (2000); OR. REV. STAT. § 40.260 (1999); 42 PA. CONS. STAT. § 5943 (2001); R.I. GEN. LAWS § 9-17-23 (2001); TENN. CODE ANN. § 24-1-206 (2001); WASH. REV. CODE ANN. § 5.60.060(3) (2001); W. VA. CODE § 57-3-9 (2001).

<sup>8</sup> Daniel H. Grosseohme, *Child Abuse Reporting: Clergy Perceptions*, 7 CHILD ABUSE & NEGLECT 743-747 (1998).

<sup>9</sup> *Id.*

<sup>10</sup> Walter F. Robinson & Michael Paulson, *A 'Grieving' Law Apologizes for Assignment of Geoghan*, BOSTON GLOBE 1/10/02.

<sup>11</sup> Reuters News Service, 1/8/02 found at <http://news.findlaw.com/international/s20020108/popepedophiliadc.html>

<sup>12</sup> Andrew M. Greeley, *Foreword* in JASON BERRY, LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION: CATHOLIC PRIESTS AND THE SEXUAL ABUSE OF CHILDREN (1992)

<sup>13</sup> RICHARD POLLENBERG, THE WORLD OF BENJAMIN CARDOZO, PERSONAL VALUES AND THE JUDICIAL PROCESS 19-21 (1997)

<sup>14</sup> David W. Delaplane, *Stand by Me: The Role of the Clergy and Congregation in Assisting the Family Once it is Involved in the Legal and Treatment Process*, in ANNE L. HORTON & JUDITH A. WILLIAMSON, EDS, ABUSE AND RELIGION: WHEN PRAYING ISN'T ENOUGH 179 (1988)

<sup>15</sup> The problem of taking juvenile sex offenses seriously is a significant problem in assisting young offenders. See Victor I. Vieth, *When the Child Abuser is a Child: Investigating, Prosecuting and Treating Juvenile Sex Offenders in the New Millennium*, 25 HAMLINE LAW REVIEW 48, 54-56 (2001)

<sup>16</sup> Rod Dreher, *Sins of the Fathers, Pedophile Priests and the Challenge to the American Church*, NATIONAL REVIEW, February 11, 2002, at 27, 28.

<sup>17</sup> JIMMY CARTER, CHRISTMAS IN PLAINS 39 (2001)

<sup>18</sup> JOSEPH G. ALLEGRETTI, THE LAWYER'S CALLING 87 (1996).

<sup>19</sup> MARTIN LUTHER, SELECTIONS FROM HIS WRITINGS 380 (JOHN DILLENBERGER, ED) (1962).

<sup>20</sup> See generally, Michael P. Schutt, *What's a Nice Christian Like You Doing in a Place Like This?*, 11 REGENT UNIVERSITY L. REV 137 (1998-99).

- 
- <sup>21</sup> Rod Dreher, *Sins of the Fathers*, NATIONAL REVIEW, February 11, 2002, at p. 29.
- <sup>22</sup> *Id.*
- <sup>23</sup> James M. Alsdurf & Phyllis Alsdurf, *A Pastoral Response*, in HORTON AND WILLIAMSON, ABUSE AND RELIGION: WHEN PRAYING ISN'T ENOUGH 165, 168 (1988)
- <sup>24</sup> *Id.*
- <sup>25</sup> Julie R. Spitzer, *Without Justice, There Can be No Healing*, 1 JOURNAL OF RELIGION AND ABUSE 7, 8 (1999).
- <sup>26</sup> For references to these cases and a fuller discussion of religion and corporal punishment, see Victor I. Vieth, *Corporal Punishment in the United States: A Call for a New Approach to the Prosecution of Disciplinarians*, 15 JOURNAL OF JUVENILE LAW 22, 27-30 (1994).
- <sup>27</sup> *Id.*
- <sup>28</sup> Proverbs 23:13, 14. Modern translations do not use the word “beat” but do acknowledge using the rod to “punish” the child. See New International Version of the same verse.
- <sup>29</sup> DR. JAMES DOBSON, DARE TO DISCIPLINE 197 (1970)
- <sup>30</sup> Timothy A. Carey, *Spare the Rod and Spoil the Child, Is This a Sensible Justification for the Use of Punishment in Child Rearing?*, 18 CHILD ABUSE & NEGLECT 1005, 1006 (1994).
- <sup>31</sup> See Vieth, *supra* note 26 at 36-45.
- <sup>32</sup> See generally, Carey, *supra* note 30.
- <sup>33</sup> NEW YORK TIMES, Oct. 12, 1992, WASHINGTON POST, Jan. 2, 1993.
- <sup>34</sup> *Id.*
- <sup>35</sup> ROCKY MOUNTAIN NEWS, Jan. 16, 1992, BOSTON GLOBE, Dec. 21, 1992; BOSTON GLOBE, Jan. 8, 1993.
- <sup>36</sup> See *supra*, n. 13, at 27. On February 21, 2002, Father Geoghan was sentenced the maximum sentence of nine to ten years in prison for fondling a 10-year-old in a swimming pool in 1991. In addition, the Catholic Church has paid \$10 million to settle fifty civil suits, while eighty-four civil suits and two criminal trials are still pending against Father Geoghan. See Pam Belluck, *Ex-Priest in Child Abuse Case Sentenced to 9 to 10 Years*, THE NEW YORK TIMES, February 22, 2002.
- <sup>37</sup> *Showdown in Dallas*, The Kos Files, available at <http://www.thelinkup.com/kos.html> (Feb. 25, 2002).
- <sup>38</sup> Among the policies that outline child sexual abuse as prohibited conduct are:
- West Olive Christian Reformed Church, *Abuse Prevention and Child Protection Policy* (West Olive, Michigan, May 1997)
  - Greater Tulsa Christian Church, *Policy and Guidelines of Greater Tulsa Christian Church To Ensure the Safety and Well-Being of Our Children* (Tulsa, Oklahoma)
  - North Shore Congregational Church, *Child Safety* (Fox Point, Wisconsin)
  - Epworth United Methodist Church, *Personal Safety Policy* (Gaithersburg, Maryland, August 29, 2001)
  - *Child Abuse Policy of the Diocese of Tucson*, available at <http://www.diocesetucson.org/restore2.html> (last visited February 25, 2002).
  - Episcopal Diocese of Albany, New York, *Sexual Misconduct Manual, Policy Statements*, available at <http://www.albanyepiscopaldioecese.org/documents/sxmisconduct/policy.html>.
- <sup>39</sup> Matthew Engel, *Sex Abuse Cover-up Rocks Boston's Catholic Church*, THE GUARDIAN, Feb. 23, 2002.
- <sup>40</sup> See *id.* at 30.
- <sup>41</sup> See Thomas Haywood, Howard Kravitz, Orest Waysliw, Jack Goldberg, & James Cavanaugh, *Cycle of Abuse and Psychopathology in Cleric and Noncleric Molesters of Children and Adolescents*, 20 CHILD ABUSE & NEGLECT 1233 (1996); R. Langevin, S. Curnoe, & J. Bain, *A Study of Clerics Who Commit Sexual Offenses: Are they Different from Other Sex Offenders?*, 24 CHILD ABUSE & NEGLECT 535 (2000).
- <sup>42</sup> See Haywood, et al, *supra* note 41 at 1241.
- <sup>43</sup> See Langevin, et al, *supra* note 41 at 544.
- <sup>44</sup> *Id.* at 539.
- <sup>45</sup> *Id.* at 544.
- <sup>46</sup> Horton, Wilkins & Wright, *Women Who Ended Abuse: What Religious Leaders and Religion did for These Victims* in ANNE L. HORTON & JUDITH A. WILLIAMSON, EDs, ABUSE AND RELIGION: WHEN PRAYING ISN'T ENOUGH 242 (1988)
- <sup>47</sup> DIETRICH BONHOEFFER, THE COST OF DISCIPLESHIP 43 (1959).

---

<sup>48</sup> Anne L. Horton & Doran Williams, *What Incest Perpetrators Need (But Are Not Getting) from the Clergy and Treatment Community*, in ANNE L. HORTON & JUDITH A. WILLIAMSON, ABUSE AND RELIGION: WHEN PRAYING ISN'T ENOUGH 242 (1988).

<sup>49</sup> For an overview of the mandated reporting statutes for all 50 states, see NATIONAL CLEARINGHOUSE ON CHILD ABUSE & NEGLECT, U.S. DEP'T OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES SERIES NO. 1, CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT STATUTES, REPORTING LAWS: DEFINITIONS OF CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT.

<sup>50</sup> *Id.*; MINN. STAT. SECTION 626.556, SUBD. 3(2).

<sup>51</sup> For information, contact the Center at 1914 North 34<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 105, Seattle, WA 98103 (206) 634-1903.

<sup>52</sup> GERARD J. MCGLONE & MARY SHRADER, CREATING SAFE AND SACRED PLACES (2003).

<sup>53</sup> ANNA C. SALTER, PH.D, PREDATORS 29 (2003).

<sup>54</sup> *Id.* at 45.

<sup>55</sup> *Id.* at 44-45.

<sup>56</sup> BARBARA OWEN, ED. DAILY READINGS FROM LUTHER'S WRITINGS 295 (1993).

<sup>57</sup> Dr. Dobson writes that one of his greatest fears is that his recommendation of corporal punishment will lead some parents to "apply the thrashings too frequently or too severely." DR. JAMES DOBSON, DARE TO DISCIPLINE 45 (1970).

<sup>58</sup> *Id.* at 42-43.

<sup>59</sup> *Id.* at 43-44 (acknowledging the uniqueness of each child and that some can be crushed by "nothing more than a stern look.")

<sup>60</sup> The position of the National District Attorney's Association is as follows: "WHEREAS, all children are entitled to equal access to all available health care, and WHEREAS, all parents shall be held to the same standard of care in providing for their children, and that all parents shall enjoy both equal protection and equal responsibilities under law, regardless of their religious beliefs, BE IT RESOLVED that the National District Attorneys Association shall join with other child advocacy organizations to support legislation to repeal exemptions from prosecution for child abuse and neglect." *NDAA Position Paper on Religious Exemptions*, NATIONAL CENTER FOR PROSECUTION OF CHILD ABUSE UPDATE (American Prosecutors Research Inst., Alexandria, VA) Sept 1991, at 1. For a more complete discussion of this issue, see S.M. Sasser & R. Swan, *Deaths from Religion-motivated Neglect*, 101(4) PEDIATRICS 625 (1998).

<sup>61</sup> Karen Youso, *Religious Symbols Intermingle in Nation's Cemeteries*, published May 27, 2002 at [www.startribune.com/stories/389/28555937.html](http://www.startribune.com/stories/389/28555937.html)

<sup>62</sup> *Id.*

<sup>63</sup> Gene G. Abel, Judith V. Becker, Mary Mittelman, Jerry Cunningham-Rathner, Joanne L. Rouleau, and William D. Murphy, *Self Reported Sex Crimes of Nonincarcerated Paraphiliacs*, 2 JOURNAL OF INTERPERSONAL VIOLENCE 3, 17-19 (1987).

<sup>64</sup> This article is adapted from an article I wrote entitled *Drying their Tears*. The article was published in the October, 1994 edition of the Northwestern Lutheran. The article later received the Associated Church Press Award of excellence and was reprinted in other forums.

<sup>65</sup> See Victor I. Vieth, *In My Neighbor's House: A Proposal to Address Child Abuse in Rural America*, 22 HAMLIN L. REV 143 (1998) (citations omitted). See also, ANNA C. SALTER, PREDATORS 10-14 (2003) (citing and discussing a number of studies on the prevalence of child sexual abuse including some studies suggesting the sexual abuse of girls may be as high as 37% and the abuse of boys as high as 30%).

<sup>66</sup> This article is adapted in large measure from an article I wrote entitled *When Dad Hits Mom*. The article was originally published in the October 1996 issue of the Northwestern Lutheran.