

Office of Communications

Tel. 585-328-3228

Contacts:

Michael Tedesco (ext. 1284)

Doug Mandelaro (ext. 1247)



For Immediate Release

18 March 2005

KEY POINTS

Some of the key points Bishop Clark wanted to share today are:

- That he has initiated a thorough review of the process involved in monitoring Father Volino to see where the system failed. He also announced his intent to form a new plan related to the oversight of recommendations emerging from evaluations undergone by members of the clergy. Bishop Clark plans to retain a highly qualified professional from the mental health field to work with individuals who undergo future mental, emotional and physical evaluations. This work will not be limited to issues related to sexual dysfunction, but also a variety of issues common to the general population as well, including anxiety and depression. The diocese will ask the Review Board, competent to advise the Bishop on all aspects of its actions related to the protection of children and young people, to develop this plan.
- That he is deeply saddened and sorry that a lack of proper oversight caused so much anguish for so many. He emphasized that the diocese has made wonderful progress in ensuring a safe environment for all over the last three years and expressed hope that situations like this do not diminish the hard work put forth to date.
- That the diocese did initiate an evaluation of Father Volino at St. Luke's Institute because of concerns about maturity issues, which were not related to sexual abuse or child pornography.
- One of the recommendations forwarded by St. Luke's in its evaluation report was that Father Volino be restricted in his contact with children. The diocese interpreted this recommendation as one intended for the therapeutic value it provided Father Volino, and did not interpret the report as indicating that Father Volino posed a threat to young people.
- In regard to subsequent, private counseling sessions in which Father Volino engaged, the diocese was never aware of the nature of his discussions with his counselor. The first indication of Father Volino's alleged interest in child pornography was at the time his computer was serviced in early February. As part of its commitment to the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People, the diocese immediately reported the findings to the proper authorities.

Victims of abuse always have a right to report to the civil authorities. To report a case of possible sexual abuse and to receive help and guidance from the Diocese of Rochester, victims are encouraged to contact the victims' assistance coordinators appointed by Bishop Clark: Barbara Pedeville: 585/328-3228, ext. 1215, or 800/388-7177, ext. 1215; or Father Robert Ring, 315/730-0882.