

ucts(https://www.predafairtrade.net) +63 047 [redacted] 63047222 [redacted]
org(mailto:info@preda.org?subject=Website%20H [redacted] sage)



(https://preda.org)



Donate Now
(https://preda.org/donate/)

o m c
/p re o m
re a /f a-
ai h r_ a-fo
nf e s u
o p h a n
d a y_ d at
af c ul n-
o u n la
n d a 3
) at io n) 0
childre n/) 9
) 2
) 3/
)

On clergy sex abuse cases: CBCP vows to cooperate.

📅 February 7, 2016

CEBU, Philippines – The Catholic Bi-shops’ Conference of the Philippines has assured “cooperation with civil authorities” in running after its members who are associated with sexual abuse, saying it has “tarnished the Church’s image around the world”.



“...the bishops are determined to make sure the Church is a safe environment for all Catholics, especially for children,” read the statement of the CBCP, which was crafted when it had its plenary assembly in Cebu recently.

The statement said that the CBCP “intends to guide the dioceses based on a global approach but in line with local criminal law.”

“Bishops will not pre-empt investigations by declaring innocence or pronouncing exoneration until after a thorough, impartial and credible evaluation of facts as established by competent evidence,” said CBCP president Archbishop Socrates Villegas.

The CBCP said that “no priest who is under investigation for child abuse or sexual harassment will be allowed to leave the diocese”.

“The bishop, rather, shall take him under his supervision in the bishop’s residence to guarantee his availability for the process of investigation,” he said.

The organization has also promised to protect the children from abuse and vowed to offer care for families of the victims.

“Child-victims of clerical abuse are to be attended to, the bishop seeing to the medical, psychological and spiritual care that they need,” Villegas said.

“Claims for financial assistance, damages or indemnity should await the proper disposition of the courts,” he added.

In the last years, the Catholic Church has been rocked by reports of its clerics sexually abusing children and even adults.

Fr. Prudencio Operiano of the St. Raphael Archangel Parish Church of Aloguinsan was alleged of molesting a 16-year-old girl, who was a member of the church choir. The incident, which was only reported to the police on June 4 last year, reportedly happened on December 24, 2014.

In 2012 Msgr. Cristobal Garcia was suspended by the Vatican for alleged abuse of children in the 1980s while he was with the Dominican Order in the United States. The suspension came almost three decades after.



Garcia, in an interview with National Geographic in 2012, allegedly revealed how to smuggle ivory icons into the US. It was from that article that the rest of the world found out that he has a string of child molestation cases in the US, which prompted him to run to the Philippines to supposedly seek rehabilitation.

Fr. Apolinario “Jing” Mejorada, O.S.A., who was rector of the Basilica del Santo Niño, was charged in October 1999 by two altar boys, who alleged that the priest assaulted them while he was still assigned in that church in the late 1990s when they were still minors.

According to www.bishopaccountability.org (<http://www.bishopaccountability.org/>), in October the following year, Mejorada and the Augustinian order settled with the complainants by paying them P120,000 each.

The San Pablo Diocese in Laguna in 2014 had listed Mejorada as its parochial vicar in the Mother of Good Counsel Parish.

Another priest, Fr. Benedicto Ejares faced seven counts for violation of Article 339 of the Revised Penal Code in relation to Article 6, Section 10 (a) of the Republic Act 7610 otherwise known as the Special Protection of Children Against Child Abuse, Exploitation and Discrimination and Republic Act 7877 or the Sexual Harassment Act of 1995 after he allegedly touched seven of the more than 20 high school participants of the Life in the Spirit Seminar at the Abellana National School in 2006.

The cases were eventually dismissed, but the Cebu Archdiocese kept his status floating for a few years before assigning him to Consolacion and then to Barili.

The CBCP said that there is “no place in ministry for those who abuse minors, and there is much less no way of defending the abuse of children and the assault on vulnerable sectors in our society”.

This statement from the CBCP becomes timely with the coming release of the film “Spotlight” which features The Boston Globe’s 2001 exposé on clergy abuses.

The credits of film, which is being nominated for this year’s Academy Award for Best Film, lists Cebu as one of the places around the world where clergy abuses were investigated. — **/BRP (FREEMAN)**



Twitter

LinkedIn

Pinterest