

**REVEREND TED TUMICKI TESTIMONY
RAISED BILL 5473
PUBLIC HEARING
MARCH 17, 2010**

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee:

I am Father Ted Tumicki, the Bishop's delegate for Safe Environments for the Diocese of Norwich. With me are two directors of Safe Environments, Erin Neil from the Diocese of Bridgeport and Dee Skovich from the Archdiocese of Hartford.

In 2007, members of this Committee, voiced their interest in what the Catholic Church was doing to prevent child sexual abuse and stated that, if the Church was doing more to prevent abuse, the Legislature would not have to revisit the statute of limitations issue. We are here to give you an update.

The Catholic Church in the United States has responded in a positive way that is unmatched by any governmental or educational institution.

Since first becoming aware of the problem on a national level in the mid 1980s, the Church has responded. By 1990 many Roman Catholic Dioceses including all three Roman Catholic Dioceses in Connecticut had sexual misconduct policies in place. In 2002, these efforts were ramped up to a state of extreme vigilance, awareness and prevention education.

Evidence collected by the John Jay College of Criminal Justice indicates that by 1992 the number of priests and deacons abusing minors was under 50. In 2008, the number was 10, out of a total church membership of approximately 70 million. By way of comparison, the Associated Press reported in 2007 that between 2001 and 2005 an average of 514 public school teachers per year had abused children and teenagers.

Ten nationally versus 514. In light of such stark facts, I cannot help but wonder why members of this committee and others keep focusing on Catholic clergy abuse while largely ignoring the problem that exists elsewhere on a statewide level, but my wonder will have to wait as I now turn the microphone over to Erin Neil from the Diocese of Bridgeport.