

Catholic Diocese of Fort Worth
For Immediate Release
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Statement of the Catholic Diocese of Fort Worth Regarding Settlement Agreement of a Lawsuit Against the Diocese Involving Thomas Teczar

The Catholic Diocese of Fort Worth has reached a settlement agreement through mediation of a lawsuit brought against the diocese by persons who were allegedly abused by Thomas Teczar.

At the request of the victims, the diocese will not disclose the identities of the victims, details of the settlement, nor the amount of the settlements. As part of the diocese's commitment to these victims' healing process, their request for confidentiality will be honored.

Bishop Kevin Vann, in addressing the victims of the abuse, said:

"Personally and in the name of the church, I apologize to each of you for any abuse you have encountered at the hands of Thomas Teczar. I petition the Lord for forgiveness, reparation and healing for each of you, your families and for any other victims.

"The sexual abuse of anyone, especially minors, is repulsive to me. It is a sin and a crime. That it is done by a priest is disheartening. It results in a tragic damage to your faith, your families and the public at large. As a priest, I am embarrassed, disheartened, appalled and angered by this behavior."

Bishop Vann stress the Catholic Diocese of Fort Worth will address any charge of abuse as quickly and as pastorally as possible

"I want to reiterate that I am committed to making sure the diocese's policies are adhered to prevent future tragedy such as that which has befallen the victims of Teczar," he said.

The Diocese has been in compliance with the Charter's requirements in every audit conducted since their passage in 2002. An audit by an independent

auditing firm hired by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops was done in Fall 2007. The diocese was found in compliance with the Charter requirements.

The diocese, in accordance with its policies, has actively sought victims of abuse in Eastland County parishes and other parishes where Teczar was assigned.

Teczar was convicted and sentenced to a 25-year prison term in March 2007 of sexual assault and indecency with a minor. In April 2005, the diocese reached a settlement with other victims of Teczar.

To report abuse to the civil authorities, call the Texas Department of Family Protective Services (Child Protective Services) at 1-800 252-5400. To report abuse to the Diocese of Fort Worth call Judy Locke, the Victim Assistance Coordinator, at 817 560-2452, ext. 201 or e-mail her at jlocke@fwdioc.org. Persons also can call the sexual abuse hotline, 817 560-2452, ext. 900. Or call The Catholic Center 817 560-2452, ext. 107 and ask for the Vicar General, Father Michael Olson.