



Respondent was Rector, (the Parish Youth Group Coordinator, who was the Respondent's brother, John W. Bennison ("John")) was engaged in a sexual relationship with a female member of the Youth Group who was fourteen (14) years old when the relationship began. Such a sexual relationship constituted sexual abuse. The Respondent failed, among other actions, to: investigate the sexual abuse; immediately separate John from the Minor; protect the Minor; protect other members of the Youth Group; report the conduct to secular authorities; report the conduct to the Minor's parents; report the conduct to the Church; extend pastoral care to the Minor, her family, the parish, and others affected by this conduct, and; intervene to stop or postpone the subsequent ordinations of John to the Diaconate and the Priesthood, and John's 1979 restoration to the Priesthood. In the second Offense, the Respondent was found to have engaged in a course of conduct over a period of more than twenty-five (25) years of failing to disclose and acknowledge his knowledge of John's conduct and his own actions, or failure to act, after he discovered the abusive relationship, and failing to minister the people injured by such conduct.

In the face of these Offenses, the Court is charged to Adjudge one of three possible sentences: Admonition, Suspension or Deposition. Canon IV.12.1.

The Court finds that the Respondent should no longer serve as a Member of the Clergy of the Church. The conduct which supports the Offenses represents very significant failures to fulfill his responsibilities as a Member of the Clergy and a fundamental lack of professional awareness. The damage caused by the Respondent's Offenses is severe, and made more so over the time period of the Second Offense. The damage extends to the Minor and her family, to other individual victims, to the Parish,

and to the body of Church and all who believe the Church must provide a safe and supportive environment for its Members. From his testimony at trial and subsequent submissions to the Court, the Court finds that even today Respondent has not shown that he comprehends the nature, significance and effect of his conduct and has not accepted responsibility and repented for his conduct and the substantial negative effects of that conduct. The Court believes that deposition is the appropriate sentence in recognition of the nature of the offense and because the Respondent has failed to demonstrate that he comprehends and takes responsibility for the harm that he has caused.

WHEREFORE, in accordance with Canon IV.5.29, and all other provisions of the Canons, this Court does Adjudge the following Sentence:

The Right Reverend Charles E. Bennison, III shall be DEPOSED as a Member of the Clergy of the Church.

Entered on this 30th day of September, 2008.

*+ Andrew A. Smith*  
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*George W. ...*

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*Marjorie A. Menaul*

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*Karen B. Montano*

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*Janet Freeman*  
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*+ Catherine M. Naynick*  
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*† Gordon P. Scruton*

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