

H O M I L Y H E L P S

Talking Points

- Throughout the Gospel, Christ calls upon His followers to care for the most vulnerable among us, especially children.
- Our faith also calls for us to uphold the value of human life and the dignity of the human person. The protection of children is the responsibility of the entire Church, including the faithful. The protection of children and youth from abuse and other harm is a respect life issue, and we must all do our part to uphold this ideal.
- During Child Abuse Prevention Month, we are reminded of the call to be instruments of justice, working for the common good of all, which includes the protection of children. As Jesus entrusts to Peter the care of the flock, we are reminded that this responsibility belongs to everyone as a matter of charity and justice.
- Child Abuse Prevention Month should lead to heightened awareness of the need to be vigilant about providing a safe environment for all within the Church and for our communities.
- Recent statistics tell us one out of every four girls, and one out of every six boys, are sexually abused before they turn 18. If those statistics are correct, on every Sunday in our congregation are people who have been abused and may continue to experience the pain of that abuse. Reaching out to all victims/survivors of abuse is critical in bringing hope and the love of Christ to them. Our diocese is here to provide anyone suffering from abuse with steps towards healing.
- We are all part of a larger culture of protection and healing within the Church. As members of this culture, we value the prevention of abuse and the support of those who have been abused. Each one of us can play an important role in strengthening this culture. For example, we can better prevent abuse by ensuring that the signs of abuse are identified and reported. Noticing these warning signs, taking them seriously, and reporting them could prevent abuse in the future. Even when we witness inappropriate behavior or something that just doesn't seem quite right, we must report our concerns through the appropriate channels.
- We can also play a role in victim outreach by offering support, compassion, and prayers to those close to us who have been abused. The importance we place on carrying out these acts of charity will go a long way in creating a culture within our Church where children are safe, and victim/survivors find healing.

SAMPLE PETITIONS

- We pray for all victims of abuse around the world, within the church and beyond, that the healing Spirit of God move among them and within them. And that the Church – the People of God – be filled with the same healing spirit, we pray to the Lord...
- For the global Church, as we all strive to implement the teachings of the Holy Father in Vos Estis Lux Mundi to protect the most vulnerable among us from harm, we pray to the Lord...
- We the church pray for its leaders, that they would practice new leadership by recognizing and repenting of sin and its consequences within the church, especially those sins which cause innocent children, families, the vulnerable and communities to suffer unjustly, we pray to the Lord...
- For civic leaders entrusted with upholding the common good and justice for all that they may act in ways that show their commitment to the protection of all, especially children and young people, we pray to the Lord...
- For parents, mentors, teachers, coaches and all who work with children and young people, that they may look after them with the watchful eye of the shepherd, we pray to the Lord...
- For families who are the first to show God's love, that they may have the necessary support to provide safe and nurturing environments for children and young people, we pray to the Lord...
- For those who have suffered abuse, that they may experience God's profound love for them and God's healing powers, we pray to the Lord...
- For those who provide help for the abused: counselors, therapists, and advocates that they may act with wisdom and compassion in their healing ministry, we pray to the Lord...
- For those affected by abuse in anyway, that they may have the courage to tell their story, to reach for healing, we pray to the Lord...
- For any child who may be suffering from abuse, that they may find the courage to tell a trusted adult so the abuse can be stopped, and so they can begin the journey toward healing, we pray to the Lord...