



Annual Letter to Diocese on Ongoing Commitment to Safeguarding Children and Young People

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ Jesus:

Each year since 2002, I have written to the faithful of the Diocese to report on how we as a Diocese continue to fulfill our obligations and responsibilities to safeguard children and young people from the danger of sexual abuse by clerics and others within the Church. This is a solemn moral obligation I accepted when the bishops of the United States adopted the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People in Dallas in 2002. The Diocese of Rockville Centre takes seriously every allegation of sexual abuse and exploitation. We are committed to protecting children and adults from harm.

Since the release of standards by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops in 2002, the Diocese of Rockville Centre has been audited by an outside agency to determine our adherence to national policies. The audits are currently conducted every year. The latest results from an on-site audit were released in October 2011. In each audit so far, the Diocese of Rockville Centre has been found to be in full compliance with the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People also known as the Dallas Charter.

I invite you to read more about USCCB audits: <http://usccb.org/issues-and-action/child-and-youth-protection/audits.cfm>

I also invite you to read the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People Essential Norms and Statement of Episcopal Commitment which was revised in June 2011 by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops: <http://usccb.org/issues-and-action/child-and-youth-protection/upload/2011-Charter-booklet.pdf>

While I am pleased to report to you that there were no new incidents brought to our attention that required the removal of any priest, I want to assure you that every allegation is taken seriously, is immediately reported to the office of the appropriate District Attorney and is responded to by our Office which seeks to ascertain the facts and then reach out to any who have come to us and need therapeutic help. As a bishop, I am daily reminded that this is a horrific tragedy that has scarred our Church. I will not become complacent and I have insisted that all of us must remain conscious and vigilant that the sins and crimes of the past remain just that, sins and crimes of the past.

Back in August 2003, the Diocese of Rockville Centre, Office for the Protection of Children and Young People, published the Diocesan Child Protection Policy. This policy booklet was revised in 2005 and again in 2012. This, the third edition is a testimony of our ongoing commitment to correct the wrongs of the past and to develop the necessary policies and procedures to protect children and young people today and in the future.

I encourage you to read the revised edition of our Diocesan Child Protection Policy. We have it translated in Spanish, Korean and Polish: http://www.drvc.org/policy_procedure_forms

You have my solemn word to all that I can to continue our protection efforts using all our resources, human and spiritual. The safety and well being of children is not an option.
Yours faithfully in Christ,

Bishop of Rockville Centre