



## Creating a SAFE ENVIRONMENT for Children and Young People

### THE CHARTER FOR THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

The *Charter* is a comprehensive set of procedures established by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops in June 2002 for addressing allegations of sexual abuse of minors by Catholic clergy. The *Charter* also includes guidelines for reconciliation, healing, accountability and prevention of future acts of abuse.

#### ARTICLE 12

“Dioceses will establish ‘safe environment’ programs. They will cooperate with parents, civil authorities, educators and community organizations to provide education and training for children, youth, parents, ministers, educators and others about ways to make and maintain a safe environment for children. Dioceses will make clear to clergy and members of the community the standards of conduct for clergy and other persons in positions of trust with regard to sexual abuse.”

#### ARTICLE 13

“Dioceses are to evaluate the background of all incardinated and non-incardinated priests and deacons who are engaged in ecclesiastical ministry in the diocese and of all diocesan and parish/school or other paid personnel and volunteers.”\*

\*Volunteers are defined as those individuals who have regular contact with children and young people.

### SAFEGUARDING ALL OF GOD’S FAMILY



### CREATING A SAFE ENVIRONMENT IN THE ARCHDIOCESE OF MILWAUKEE

All efforts and programs in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee that relate to protecting God’s children come under the umbrella of Safeguarding All of God’s Family. As a faith-filled people, we respect and value each and every individual, as we are created in the image and likeness of God. The Archdiocese of Milwaukee is committed to creating an environment of healthy and responsible relationships where all of God’s family will be able to work, live and play.

### MAINTAINING COMPLIANCE WITH THE CHARTER

#### FOR CHILDREN

All children and youth in grades K4 through 12, both in day school and religious education, are required to receive safe environment education. This is NOT sex education. Because of the value and dignity of human life, it is important that we teach children and youth about personal safety, awareness and boundaries. As God’s children, we deserve love and respect.

#### FOR ADULTS

The following requirements must be met prior to employment or volunteer service:

- Safe environment education for all clergy and religious (men and women), paid personnel and volunteers.
- State and national background checks for all clergy and religious, paid personnel and volunteers, repeated at least every five years.

- All clergy and religious, paid personnel and volunteers must read and sign a form acknowledging they have received and read the Code of Ethical Standards for Church Leaders.
- All clergy and religious, paid personnel and volunteers must receive and read a copy of the Mandatory Reporting Responsibilities.



## KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE FROM SEXUAL ABUSE POLICIES AND PRACTICES OF THE ARCHDIOCESE OF MILWAUKEE

The Archdiocese of Milwaukee makes children's safety a priority. The Church is different today because of the courage of victims/survivors who have come forward, told their painful stories and worked diligently to implement initiatives designed to protect children today.

### INITIATIVES AND ACTIONS IMPLEMENTED BY THE ARCHDIOCESE SINCE 2002

- No priest with a substantiated allegation of sexual abuse of a minor can serve in public ministry, in any way, in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee.
- All archdiocesan and parish personnel are bound by the mandatory reporting laws of the State of Wisconsin. The Archdiocese of Milwaukee requires all adults to exercise reporting responsibilities for suspected abuse or neglect of a minor, whether or not they are designated mandatory reporters under Wisconsin law.
- Sexual abuse prevention training and safe environment education is required by the Archdiocese of Milwaukee for all archdiocesan and parish employees as well as volunteers who have regular contact with minors. More than 40,000 adults and 100,000 children have participated in the initiative.
- In 2010, Archbishop Jerome ListECKI approved a policy on the responsible use of social media by Church staff and volunteers to protect children and youth.
- State and national criminal background checks are required for all adults, including priests and bishops, staff and volunteers who have regular interaction with minors in a Church setting.
- All individuals must sign The Code of Ethical Standards that clearly outlines expected and acceptable behavior.
- The Archdiocese of Milwaukee participates in a yearly on-site audit of its safe environment practices and procedures. Every year, the archdiocese has been found to be in full compliance.
- Religious order priests are subject to the same standards upheld in the *Charter*. When a religious order priest requests faculties to minister publicly within the Archdiocese of Milwaukee, that priest's superior is required to provide a statement verifying his suitability for ministry, including assurance that he has not been credibly accused of abuse of a minor, has undergone a criminal background check and has completed safe environment training.
- There is a whistleblower policy in place to protect anyone who makes a sexual abuse report from suffering consequences related to making the report.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Learn more about Safeguarding All of God's Children in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee by visiting our Web site: [www.archmil.org/offices/safeguarding](http://www.archmil.org/offices/safeguarding).
- Obtain a full copy of the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People from the USCCB's Web site: [www.usccb.org/ocyp/charter.pdf](http://www.usccb.org/ocyp/charter.pdf).