



DIOCESE OF PENSACOLA-TALLAHASSEE

OFFICE OF BISHOP

September 26, 2007

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

Since 1998 our Diocese has been proactively working to do everything possible in making our parish communities safe places to worship, learn, and grow in faith. In addition to fingerprinting, background screening, and abuse prevent workshops, the Diocese has put together safety education programs in our schools, religious education programs, pre-schools, and youth programs. Some of our parishes and schools have had safety programs in use for years. Today these programs should be in place in every school, parish, and church related institution.

It is imperative that we all work together to make safety a priority in all of our parishes. With this in mind, I officially promulgate for use in our Catholic communities and associated organizations the curriculum established by the Diocesan Department of Christian Formation, Diocesan Schools Office, and Diocesan Youth Office. This promulgation places even greater emphasis and importance on the process of providing our young people with the necessary information to protect themselves from any form of abuse and particularly sexual abuse. Statistics tell us that over 46% of young victims had no idea what their abuser was doing to them as they were being violated. It is vital for us to give our young people enough information so that they will not become one of those statistics. There are things they need to know that we can teach them that will help them to recognize and respond to someone who wishes them harm.

With this letter of promulgation, it is mandatory that our Diocesan Safe Environment Programs be available and taught to all our children and youth. You have received this letter because of your leadership role in your parish and community. I ask that you share this letter with all those involved in educating children and youth in your parish.

Sincerely yours in the Lord,

Most Reverend John H. Ricard, SSJ
Bishop of Pensacola-Tallahassee