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BEAUMONT DIOCESE CONTINUES COMPLIANCE WITH USCCB CHARTER

External auditors have again determined that the Diocese of Beaumont is fully in compliance with the USCCB Charter. According to an on-site audit conducted July 29-30, 2013 by Stonebridge Business Partners, an independent auditing firm based in Rochester NY, the Roman Catholic Diocese of Beaumont continues to be in full compliance with the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' ***Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People***. This was the 5th on-site audit conducted in the diocese since 2003. In each of the previous audits the diocese was found to have met and, at times, exceeded the Charter's requirements.

In a letter to Bishop Guillory, Jim Marasco, President of Stonebridge Business Partners, stated, "Based on the results of our recently performed on-site audit of the Diocese of Beaumont, the Diocese has been found compliant with all audited Articles within the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People* for the 2012-2013 audit period." During the audit, the auditors commended the Diocese for its recently implemented "Social Media Policy."

Bishop Guillory is pleased with the determination and said, "We will continue our efforts to make our children a priority and to provide a safe environment for them."

The diocese provides safe environment training for adults, children, and youth. Background checks are conducted at all locations before an applicant is hired or before a volunteer is accepted for service with children. Every seven years, these checks are re-done. The diocese continues to exercise diligence in the selection and retention of persons who will minister in the name of the Church.

In addition to the scheduled training sessions, many resources for parents and adults can be found on the diocesan website under the "Safe Environment" tab - "On-line Training for Parents". Issues addressed include: abuse & neglect of children, how to talk to one's child about these sensitive matters, recognizing predators, helping children to protect themselves, cell phone concerns, Internet safety for children/youth, bullying, personal boundaries, and cyberpredators. In addition, one issue of the *East Texas Catholic* each month contains a safe environment article to educate readers about these important matters.

Procedures for filing complaints of child sexual abuse, both to civil and church authorities, are clearly and readily available on the diocesan website under the Safe Environment link. There is also information about Victim Outreach and Assistance and about contacting our Victim Assistance Coordinator. Any person who has been sexually abused by church personnel, no matter how long ago, is encouraged to make contact.

For more information about the diocese's implementation of the USCCB Charter, go to the diocesan website (www.dioceseofbmt.org) under the "Safe Environment" tab.