

Holy Protection of Mary  
Byzantine Catholic Eparchy of Phoenix

# **Safe Environment Policy and Procedures Governing Sexual Misconduct**

*(Revised 8 October 2020 & 2021)*



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# HOLY PROTECTION OF MARY BYZANTINE CATHOLIC EPARCHY OF PHOENIX SAFE ENVIRONMENT POLICY AND PROCEDURES GOVERNING SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

## PREFACE

On 14 June, 2002 the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) approved a ***Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People***. The Charter expresses the commitment of the Catholic Church to address appropriately and effectively all cases of sexual misconduct by clergy, lay staff, and volunteers, particularly such misconduct involving minors and vulnerable adults, whether relatively recent or which may have occurred in the past. The Charter includes a resolution that these cases would be processed as openly as possible, but with due respect for the privacy and reputation of the individuals involved. In this way, the Church in the United States expresses clearly its commitment to the proper pastoral and spiritual care of souls, which is its foundational mission, and to the well-being and healing of those harmed or injured in any way by the sexual misconduct of Church-affiliated personnel.

To Insure that each diocese and eparchy in the United States will have the necessary procedures in place to assure a prompt and appropriate response to allegations of sexual misconduct, the USCCB has required that each diocese and eparchy develop a written policy and procedural directive which is fully compliant with its published guide for this purpose, which is entitled, ***Essential Norms for Diocesan/Eparchial Policies Dealing with Allegations of Sexual Abuse of Minors and Vulnerable Adults by Priests and Deacons***. The Policy and accompanying Procedures are to specify, in detail, the steps to be taken in implementing the requirements of Canon Law in such matters, particularly, for Holy Protection of Mary Byzantine Catholic Eparchy of Phoenix (Eparchy of Phoenix), canons 1468 through 1470 of the *1990 Code of Canons for the Eastern Church (CCEO)*. At the same time, each diocese and eparchy is to designate a competent person to coordinate immediate assistance for the person or persons who claim to have been the victim(s) of sexual misconduct, according to Norm 2 of the USCCB ***Essential Norms for Allegations of Sexual Abuse of Minors***.

In addition to establishing a written policy on sexual misconduct, there is to be appointed a Diocesan or Eparchial Review Board, such as that Board already established and functioning in the Eparchy of Phoenix. This Board, which considers all matters related to sexual misconduct in its particular diocese or eparchy, functions completely independent of any other consultative or advisory body, or any other influence, and makes its findings and recommendations directly to the canonically appointed bishop or administrator of the diocese or eparchy.

## PREVENTION AND EDUCATION

The Eparchy of Phoenix is committed to providing a safe environment for every person. In so doing, the Eparchy of Phoenix recognizes that certain measures must be adopted to ensure the prevention of sexual misconduct. These include, but may not be limited to:

- A background check, completed by a professional service specializing in such screenings of all clergy, catechists, paid staff, and volunteers affiliated with the eparchy through active assignment or volunteer work in and on behalf of the Eparchy of Phoenix;
- The provision of education and information concerning safety protocols, and personal and professional responsibility;

- The provision of training in the recognition of signs indicating the possibility of abuse, particularly of minors and vulnerable adults;
- The defining of a proper response to any signs which may indicate abuse.

All those bishops, priests, deacons, minor clerics, religious, seminarians, catechists, volunteers, youth directors, and any other staff members or personnel who regularly have contact with minors and/or vulnerable adults, whether currently or prospectively, are required, prior to their assignment or the granting of permission to so act, to:

- Authorize the completion of the above-mentioned professional background screening in the manner required by the Eparchy of Phoenix;
- Read this ***Policy and Procedures Governing Sexual Misconduct*** and fully comply with its directives in the performance of their duties and responsibilities;
- Complete annually the online VIRTUS Safe Environment formation session to which the Eparchy of Phoenix subscribes.

In addition to the foregoing, prior to the acceptance of any non-eparchial cleric for service in the Eparchy of Phoenix, such cleric must produce a current (issued within the last thirty (30) days) *Letter of Good Standing* from his Ordinary which must include, among other statements about the cleric, a clear disclosure of any knowledge his Ordinary may have in regard to actual or alleged sexual misconduct on the part of the cleric before such cleric can be considered for service in the Eparchy of Phoenix.

The Eparchy of Phoenix also receives, reviews, and keeps on file notices provided by local law enforcement of registered sex offenders newly residing in its geographic area to ensure that such individuals are not permitted access to employment or volunteer opportunities within the Eparchy of Phoenix.

## **EPARCHIAL PROCEDURE UPON RECEIPT OF AN ALLEGATION OF SEXUAL MISCONDUCT**

It is the policy of the Eparchy of Phoenix that any allegation of sexual misconduct, or any other inappropriate behavior on the part of those holding an assignment or volunteering in and on behalf of the Eparchy of Phoenix, be carefully and fully investigated by the bishop and/or his delegate(s). Such investigation will take into account not only eparchial policies, but also the requirements of, and compliance with, civil law which may apply to the allegation. In addition, the bishop will therefore:

- Report, without delay, in compliance with applicable civil law, the allegation to proper civil authorities (see the section below under the heading OBLIGATION TO REPORT for obligatory reporting requirements pertaining to other individuals);
- Provide, as appropriate, for the pastoral care of the alleged victim(s);
- Seek the advice and recommendation(s) of the Eparchial Review Board;
- Advise the eparchial legal counsel of the reported incident, allegation, or suspicion;
- Initiate, as he deems necessary, an investigation by competent and proper personnel from either within or without the Eparchy of Phoenix to determine the truth of the allegations;
- Ensure that there is careful and appropriate inquiry made about facts and circumstances regarding the allegation from credible and knowledgeable individuals;
- Approve and provide relevant canonical counsel for the accused individual(s).

## **OBLIGATION TO REPORT**

Any individual adult of the Eparchy of Phoenix who has actual knowledge of, or who has reasonable cause to suspect an incident of sexual misconduct perpetrated on any other individual or individuals by any person or persons affiliated with the Eparchy of Phoenix through active assignment, compensated or not, or through voluntary service, is to comply, without delay, with all applicable civil law reporting requirements pertaining to such incidents, violation of the priest-penitent relationship in the Sacrament of Reconciliation being the only exception to such reporting requirement.

Most states require that any incident of actual, suspected, or alleged sexual misconduct perpetrated against minors or vulnerable adults be reported to law enforcement, without delay, by the competent adult who becomes aware of the incident(s). Law enforcement is to be contacted first, prior to notification of any other eparchial personnel, including pastors of parishes, through the use of the 911 telephone reporting system, contacting the local Department of Child Safety, Child Protective Services, or the corresponding local governmental agency serving the community in such matters. In instances where a parish pastor, rector, or administrator is in authority, a verbal report of the incident(s) is to be made after the initial contact with civil authorities. This verbal report is to be followed by a written report of the incident(s) which is to be submitted to the pastor, rector, or administrator within 24 hours of the verbal report. If a verbal report cannot be made to the pastor, rector, or administrator, it is to be made directly to the Eparchy of Phoenix as soon as possible, but again, after reporting to the civil authorities has been done.

## **NOTIFICATIONS TO THE EPARCHIAL BISHOP**

When an incident, allegation, or suspicion of sexual misconduct is reported to the pastor, rector, administrator, or any other cleric on assignment or assisting in the Eparchy of Phoenix, that cleric, after ascertaining that civil authorities have been notified, is to immediately notify:

- The bishop of the eparchy
- The eparchial Safe Environment Coordinator
- The Syncellus for Administration

## **INVESTIGATION OF REPORTS**

Investigations at the eparchial level which pertain to sexual misconduct will be conducted in accord with canon law by a competent individual. Investigations will be done so as not to obstruct in any way any concurrent civil investigation, and with an appropriate level of Christian concern for the victim(s), family members of the victim(s), the individual who reported the incident, allegation, suspicion of sexual misconduct, and the alleged perpetrator, including the safeguarding of any person's good name.

## **INVESTIGATIONS INVOLVING CLERGY**

Investigations of sexual misconduct involving clergy will be made promptly and in accord with canon law. Where possible, the cleric will be interviewed by an individual designated by the eparchial bishop. As deemed necessary, precautionary measures, up to and including the cleric's immediate suspension and/or removal, will be taken to ensure that the alleged perpetrator does not pose a risk to minors or vulnerable adults.

In the event of the cleric's admission of guilt, and it is deemed appropriate by the bishop, taking into account the demands of justice and the good of all involved, the accused:

- Will have his assignment or supply availability terminated. Any presence or activity which may involve contact with parishioners, minors, and/or vulnerable adults will be forbidden except as necessary;
- May be *requested* to seek, and *voluntarily* comply with appropriate medical and psychological evaluation. (cf. *Essential Norms*, Norm 7);
- Will be removed permanently from ecclesiastical ministry, with the possibility of dismissal from the clerical state when the case so warrants when even a single act of abuse is admitted or is established after an appropriate canonical process has been conducted. (cf. *Essential Norms*, Norm 8, and can. 1453);

Additionally:

- Notification will be given to the commercial insurer(s) in accord with the terms of applicable policies in force at the time of the incident;
- If there is an admission of guilt, his representation by legal counsel becomes the responsibility of the cleric;
- When allegations are made of sexual misconduct involving parish or other eparchial personnel or volunteers, contact with the alleged victim(s) and family members should be initiated promptly by the eparchial bishop or person(s) designated by him for that purpose to assure pastoral care for them after, however, first consulting legal counsel in that regard, and with no speculative comments to be made during such contact as to the veracity of any accusation.
- Any media contact or inquiry regarding any incident or alleged sexual misconduct by eparchial personnel is to be directed to the eparchial Director of Communications, in consultation with eparchial legal counsel;
- If allegations of sexual misconduct are denied by the cleric, the cleric is to be informed of the investigation which the bishop is bound to conduct in accord with canons 1468 through 1470 of the *CCEO*. At the same time, the cleric is to be informed of his right to canonical advice and representation, and his right to a trial conducted in accord with canonical norms. The cleric will also be reminded of his right to retain civil counsel.

## **INVESTIGATIONS INVOLVING NON-CLERGY PERSONNEL**

For accusations made against non-clergy personnel of the Eparchy of Phoenix, a preliminary investigation shall be conducted by a person designated by the eparchial bishop, the results of which shall be made immediately known to the eparchial Safe Environment Coordinator and the eparchial legal counsel. In such cases where it is deemed to be in the best interest of the eparchy, the alleged victim(s), and/or perpetrators(s), and in the sole judgment of the eparchial bishop, the alleged perpetrator(s) may be relieved of all eparchy-related duties and responsibilities and, in the case of compensated personnel, be placed on administrative leave pending the outcome of any eparchial or civil investigation. The eparchial bishop will determine if such leave will be paid or unpaid. The accused will be advised to retain his/her/their own legal counsel. Any non-clergy personnel who admits to, does not contest, or is found guilty of sexual misconduct shall be terminated immediately from any eparchial employment or volunteer position.

## **ANONYMOUS ACCUSATIONS**

No allegations should be made anonymously since they cannot be justly or properly investigated. The Eparchy of Phoenix nonetheless reserves the right to contact civil authorities if it receives an anonymous notice of sexual misconduct regarding any of its affiliated personnel, and in such cases will cooperate fully with civil authorities in all aspects of the matter.

## **FALSE ACUSATIONS**

Civil, criminal and canon law each provide penalties for falsehood in which an individual or individuals become victims of false denunciation, perjury, and/or slander. The Eparchy of Phoenix and the victim(s) retain the right to pursue fully the levying of such applicable civil and canonical penalties against those perpetrators of false accusations.

## **PROTECTION OF RIGHTS AND UNFOUNDED ALLEGATIONS**

Care shall be taken to protect the rights in canon and civil law of all parties involved in matters concerning the allegation or perpetration of sexual misconduct, particularly those of the individual(s) claiming to have been sexually abused, and the individual(s) against whom the allegations of sexual misconduct have been made. If the accusation is ultimately proven to have been unfounded, every step possible will be taken by the Eparchy of Phoenix to restore the good name of the falsely accused individual(s). (cf. USCCB *Charter and Norms*, Norm 13).

If, after conducting a proper investigation and review, the eparchial bishop and the Eparchial Review Board determine that the accusation has no basis in fact, i.e., it is determined that there are no credible and substantiated allegations of sexual misconduct or violation of the eparchial Safe Environment policy, the eparchial bishop will issue a written statement to that effect. This statement will be sent to the accused individual(s) and, if the accused should request it, to the parish of the accused. Additionally, if judged appropriate by the eparchial bishop, the statement will also be provided to the media. If determined just and necessary to restore the good name of the individual(s) falsely accused, the eparchial bishop is to address the parish of the individual(s).

## **POLICY REVIEW**

This policy will be reviewed periodically by the Eparchial Review Board and recommend its revision to the eparchial bishop, in whole or in part, as from time to time deemed necessary, in the best interest of continuing to provide a comprehensive and effective Safe Environment policy for the Eparchy of Phoenix.



# MODEL CODE OF PASTORAL CONDUCT

FOR PRIESTS, DEACONS, PASTORAL MINISTERS, CATECHISTS, ADMINISTRATORS, EMPLOYEES,  
VOLUNTEERS AND MEMBERS OF RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES OR INSTITUTIONS

## PREFACE

This *Model Code of Pastoral Conduct for Priests, Deacons, Pastoral Ministers, Administrators, Catechists, Employees, Volunteers and Members of Religious Communities or Institutions* is intended for use as a risk-management tool by bishops, pastors, superiors of religious communities/institutes, and administrators. The purpose of the *Code of Pastoral Conduct* is to assist in developing and implementing uniform guidelines for appropriate behavior in situations of pastoral counseling and spiritual direction. The *Code of Pastoral Conduct* is not intended to address all situations that may arise in pastoral counseling relationships. It is intended to create a structure for addressing a variety of circumstances that, if not appropriately addressed, may create a risk of incidents, allegations, claims and/or lawsuits.

The Church must be exemplary. Clergy, staff, and volunteers should and will be held accountable for their behavior. In order to maintain the highest level of accountability, there must be a clear and unambiguous blueprint of appropriate and inappropriate behavior. The *Code of Pastoral Conduct* provides a basic structure for identifying limits. It is intended as a “continuous improvement document.” Therefore, your suggestions and recommendations for additions and revisions are encouraged.

## PREAMBLE

Priests, deacons, pastoral ministers, administrators, catechists, employees, volunteers in our parishes and members of religious communities or institutions and organizations must uphold Christian values and conduct. The *Model Code of Pastoral Conduct for Priests, Deacons, Pastoral Ministers, Administrators, Catechists, Employees, Volunteers and Members of Religious Communities or Institutions (Code of Pastoral Conduct)* provides a set of standards for conduct in certain pastoral situations.

## RESPONSIBILITY

The public and private conduct of clergy, staff and volunteers can inspire and motivate people, but it can also scandalize and undermine people’s faith. Clergy, staff, and volunteers must, at all times, be aware of the responsibilities that accompany their work. They must also know that God’s goodness and grace supports them in their ministry.

## I. PASTORAL STANDARDS

### 1. Conduct for Pastoral Counselors and Spiritual Directors\*

\* Pastoral Counselors and Spiritual Directors: Clergy, staff and volunteers who provide spiritual and/or therapeutic counseling services to individuals, families, or other groups.

***Pastoral Counselors and Spiritual Directors must respect the rights and advance the welfare of each person.***

**1.1** Pastoral Counselors and Spiritual Directors shall not step beyond their competence in counseling situations and shall refer clients to other professionals when appropriate.

**1.2** Pastoral Counselors and Spiritual Directors should carefully consider the possible consequences before entering into a counseling relationship with someone with whom they have a pre-existing relationship (i.e.: employee, professional colleague, friend, or other pre-existing relationship). *(See Section 7.2.2)*

**1.3** Pastoral Counselors and Spiritual Directors shall not audiotape or videotape sessions.

**1.4** The acquisition, possession, viewing or distribution by a cleric or staff member of pornographic images of minors under the age of 18, and of vulnerable adults of any age, for any purpose or by whatever means or using whatever technology, is intrinsically evil, and is absolutely forbidden. Discovery of such images must be immediately reported to law enforcement upon discovery or well-founded suspicion in accordance with local, state, and federal laws.

**1.5** Pastoral Counselors and Spiritual Directors must never engage in sexual intimacies with the persons they counsel. This includes consensual and nonconsensual contact, forced physical contact, and inappropriate sexual comments.

**1.6** Pastoral Counselors and Spiritual Directors shall not engage in sexual intimacies with individuals who are close to the client – such as relatives or friends of the client. Pastoral Counselors and Spiritual Directors should presume that the potential for exploitation or harm exists in such intimate relationships.

**1.7** Pastoral Counselors and Spiritual Directors assume the full burden of responsibility for establishing and maintaining clear, appropriate boundaries in all counseling and counseling-related relationships.

**1.8** Physical touching of any kind (i.e.: touching, hugging, holding) between Pastoral Counselors or Spiritual Directors and the persons they counsel can be misconstrued and should be avoided. Normal courtesies, only (i.e.: the shaking of hands) is acceptable.

**1.8.1** Sessions should be conducted in appropriate settings at appropriate times.

**1.8.2** No session shall be conducted in private living quarters.

**1.8.3** Sessions should not be held at places or times that would tend to cause confusion about the nature of the relationship for the person being counseled.

**1.9** Pastoral Counselors and Spiritual Directors shall maintain a log of the times and places of sessions with each person being counseled.

## **2. CONFIDENTIALITY**

***Information disclosed during the course of counseling or advising shall be held in the strictest confidence possible.***

**2.1** Information obtained in the course of sessions shall be confidential, except for compelling professional reasons or as required by law.

**2.1.1** If there is clear and imminent danger to the client or to others, the Pastoral Counselor or Spiritual Director, or anyone engaged in counseling may disclose only the information necessary to protect the parties affected and to prevent harm.

**2.1.2** Before disclosure is made, if feasible, the counselor should inform the person being counseled about the disclosure and potential consequences.

**2.2** The counselor should discuss the nature of confidentiality and its limitations with each person in counseling.

**2.3** The counselor should keep minimal records of the content of sessions.

**2.4** Knowledge that arises in the course of counseling may be used for teaching, writing, homilies, or other public presentations only when effective measures are taken to absolutely safeguard both the individual's identity and the confidentiality of the disclosures. It is suggested that a priest or deacon does not make references in the parish where the counselee is a member.

**2.5** While counseling a minor or vulnerable adult, if a counselor discovers there is a serious threat to the welfare of the minor or vulnerable adult and that communication of confidential information to a parent or legal guardian is essential to the child's or vulnerable adult's health and well-being, the counselor should:

- a) Attempt to secure written or verbal consent from the minor for the specific disclosure;
- b) If consent is not given, disclose only the information necessary to protect the health and well-being of the minor or vulnerable adult;
- c) Consultation with the appropriate Church supervisory personnel is required before disclosure unless otherwise required by civil law.

**2.6** These obligations are independent of the confidentiality of the Confessional or of spiritual direction. Under no circumstances whatsoever can there be any disclosure – even indirect disclosure – of information received through the Confessional.

### **3. CONDUCT WITH YOUTH AND VULNERABLE ADULTS**

***Clergy, staff, and volunteers working with teens shall maintain an open and trustworthy relationship between youth and adult supervisors.***

**3.1** Clergy, staff and volunteers must be aware of their own and others' vulnerability when working alone with youth or vulnerable adults. Use a team approach to managing youth activities.

**3.2** Physical contact with youth or vulnerable adults can be misconstrued and should occur

- a) only when completely nonsexual and otherwise appropriate;
- b) never in private.

**3.3** Clergy, staff and volunteers should refrain from the illegal possession and/or illegal use of drugs and/or alcohol at all times when working with youth. *(Refer to Appendix II.)*

**3.4** Clergy should not allow individual young people to stay overnight in the cleric's private accommodations or residence.

**3.5** Staff and volunteers should not provide shared, private, overnight accommodations for individual young people including, but not limited to, accommodations in any Church-owned facility, private residence, hotel room, or any other place where there is no other adult supervision present. *(Refer to Appendix II.)*

**3.5.6** In rare emergency situations, when accommodation is necessary for the health and well-being of youth or of vulnerable adults; the clergy, staff, or volunteer should take extra-ordinary care to protect all parties from the appearance of impropriety and from all risk of harm.

**3.5.7** Use a team approach to managing emergency situations.

## **4. SEXUAL CONDUCT**

***Clergy, staff, and volunteers must not, for sexual gain or intimacy, exploit the trust placed in them by the faith community.***

**4.1** Clergy, religious, staff, and volunteers who are committed to a celibate lifestyle are called to be an example of celibate chastity in all relationships at all times.

**4.2** Staff and volunteers who provide pastoral counseling or spiritual direction services must avoid developing inappropriate intimate relationships with minors, vulnerable adults, other staff or parishioners. Staff and volunteers must behave in a professional manner at all times.

**4.3** No clergy, staff, or volunteer may exploit another person for sexual purposes.

**4.4** All allegations of sexual misconduct should be taken seriously and reported to the Pastoral Center of the Eparchy of Phoenix, and to civil authorities if the situation involves a minor or vulnerable adult. Eparchy of Phoenix procedures will be followed to protect the rights of all involved.

**4.5** Clergy, staff, and volunteers should review and know the contents of the child abuse regulations and reporting requirements for the state or local authorities and should follow those mandates.

## **5. HARASSMENT**

***Clergy, staff, and volunteers must not engage in physical, psychological, written, or verbal harassment of staff, volunteers, or parishioners, and must not tolerate such harassment by other Church staff or volunteers.***

**5.1** Clergy, staff, and volunteers shall provide a professional work environment that is free from physical, psychological, written, or verbal intimidation or harassment.

**5.2** Harassment encompasses a broad range of psychological, physical, written, or verbal behavior, including without limitation the following:

- Physical or mental abuse;
- Racial insults

- Derogatory ethnic slurs;
- Unwelcome sexual advances or touching;
- Sexual comments or sexual jokes;
- Display of offensive materials;
- Requests for sexual favors used as a condition of employment;
- Request of sexual favors used to affect other personal decisions, such as promotion or compensation.

**5.3** Harassment can be a single severe incident or a persistent pattern of behavior where the purpose or the effect is to create a hostile, offensive, or intimidating work environment.

**5.4** Allegations of harassment should be taken seriously and reported immediately to the Pastoral Center of the Eparchy of Phoenix. The Eparchy of Phoenix procedures will be followed to protect the rights of all involved.

## **6. PARISH, RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY/INSTITUTE, AND ORGANIZATIONAL RECORDS AND INFORMATION**

***Confidentiality shall be maintained in creating, storing, accessing, transferring, and disposing of parish, religious community/institute, or organizational records.***

**6.1** Sacramental records shall be regarded as confidential. When compiling and publishing parish, religious community/institute or organizational statistical information from these records, great care must be taken to preserve the anonymity of individuals.

**6.2** Most sacramental records older than 70 years are open to the public.

**6.2.1** Information regarding adoption and legitimacy remains confidential, regardless of age.

**6.2.2** Only staff members who are authorized to access these records and supervise their use shall handle requests for more recent records.

**6.3** Parish, religious community/institute, or organization financial records are confidential unless review is required by the Eparchy of Phoenix or an appropriate government agency. Contact the Pastoral Center upon receipt of any request for release of financial records.

**6.4** Individual contribution records of the parish, religious community/institute, or organization shall be regarded as private and shall be maintained in the strictest confidence.

## **7. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

***Clergy, staff, and volunteers should avoid situations that might present a conflict of interest. Even the appearance of a conflict of interest can call integrity and professional conduct into question.***

**7.1** Clergy, staff, and volunteers should disclose all relevant factors that could potentially create a conflict of interest.

**7.2** Clergy, staff, and volunteers should inform all parties when a real or potential conflict of interest arises. Resolution of the issue must protect the person receiving the ministerial services.

**7.2.1** No clergy, staff, or volunteer should take advantage of anyone to whom they are providing ministerial services in order to further their personal, religious, political, or business interests.

**7.2.2** Pastoral counselors should not provide counseling services to anyone with whom they have a business, professional, or social relationship. When this is unavoidable, the client must be protected. The counselor must establish and maintain clear, appropriate boundaries.

**7.2.3** When pastoral counseling or spiritual direction services are provided to two or more people who have a relationship with each other, the Pastoral Counselor or Spiritual Director must:

- Clarify with all parties the nature of the relationship;
- Anticipate any conflict of interest;
- Take appropriate actions to eliminate the conflict;
- Obtain from all parties a written consent to continue services.

**7.3** Conflicts of interest may also arise when a Pastoral Counselor's or Spiritual Director's independent judgment is impaired by:

- Prior dealings;
- Becoming personally involved, or;
- Becoming an advocate for one (person) against another.

In these circumstances, the Pastoral Counselor or Spiritual Director shall advise the parties that he/she can no longer provide services and refer them to another Pastoral Counselor or Spiritual Director.

## **8. REPORTING ETHICAL OR PROFESSIONAL MISCONDUCT**

***Clergy, staff, and volunteers have a duty to report their own ethical or professional misconduct, and the misconduct of others.***

**8.1** Clergy, staff, and volunteers must hold each other accountable for maintaining the highest ethical and professional standards. When there is an indication of illegal actions by clergy, staff, or volunteers, you should notify the proper civil authorities immediately. Also notify the Pastoral Center in Phoenix, Arizona.

**8.2** When an uncertainty exists about whether a situation or course of conduct violates this *Code of Pastoral Conduct* or other religious, moral, or ethical principles, consult with peers and with others knowledgeable about ethical issues, or contact the Eparchial Pastoral Center.

**8.3** When it appears that a member of the clergy, a staff member, or a volunteer has violated this *Code of Pastoral Conduct* or other religious, moral, or ethical principles, report the issue to a supervisor or the next higher authority, or refer the matter directly to the Pastoral Center.

**8.4** The obligation of Pastoral Counselors and Spiritual Directors to report client misconduct is subject to the duty of confidentiality. However, any agreement or duty to maintain confidentiality must yield to the need to report

misconduct that threatens the safety, health, or well-being of any persons involved except as provided for in Section 2.6.

## **9. ADMINISTRATION**

***Employers and supervisors shall treat clergy, staff, and volunteers justly in the day-to-day administrative operations of their ministries.***

**9.1** Personnel and other administrative decisions made by clergy, staff, and volunteers shall meet civil and canon law obligations, and also reflect Catholic social teachings and this *Code of Pastoral Conduct*.

**9.2** No clergy, staff, or volunteer shall use his/her position to exercise unreasonable or inappropriate power and authority.

**9.3** Each volunteer providing services to children and youth must read and sign the *Code of Conduct* before providing services.

## **10. STAFF OR VOLUNTEER WELL-BEING**

***Clergy, staff, and volunteers have the duty to be responsible for their own spiritual, physical, mental, and emotional health.***

**10.1** Clergy, staff, and volunteers should be aware of warning signs that indicate potential problems with their own spiritual, physical, mental, and/or emotional health.

**10.2** Clergy, staff, and volunteers should seek help immediately whenever they notice behavioral or emotional warning signs in their own professional and/or personal lives.

**10.3** Clergy, staff, and volunteers must address their own spiritual needs. Support from a Spiritual Director is highly recommended.

**10.4** Inappropriate or illegal use of alcohol and drugs and the acquisition, possession, viewing or distribution of pornographic images of minors under the age of 18 and of vulnerable adults of any age, for any purpose, by whatever means, or using whatever technology is prohibited.



## **PROCEDURES FOR FILING A COMPLAINT OF SEXUAL ABUSE OF A MINOR OR VULNERABLE ADULT**

All clergy, staff, and volunteers must report knowledge or belief that a minor or vulnerable adult is the victim of sexual abuse.

1. All complaints or knowledge of abuse should be brought to the attention of the pastor of the parish, principle of the school, the head of a religious community, or the supervisor of the particular ministry or organization.
2. If a victim, or victim's family, is making a direct complaint on their own they will meet with the pastor of the parish, the principle of the school, the superior of the religious community, or the supervisor in charge of the activity. At all times, a victim or complainant may report directly to the Bishop.
3. The person hearing the complaint will take note of the victim's name and address, the name of the person they are accusing, the place where the incident occurred, the time that the incident took place, and a general description of the nature of the offense.
4. Upon receiving the preliminary information noted above, it is mandated that the pastor, principle, religious superior, or ministry supervisor forward the report of abuse to:
  - a. The bishop and protosyncellus of the eparchy;
  - b. The local police department of your hometown (911), and;
  - c. The Child Protection Agency or Hot Line for your area, if required.
5. The bishop and protosyncellus, upon receipt of a complaint, will contact the Victim Assistance Coordinator, the Eparchial Review Board, the syncellus, the eparchial attorney, and the eparchial insurance company. They will also verify that the report has been filed with the local police department and the appropriate Child Protection Agency if required.
6. The bishop, or his designated representative, will personally meet with all victims and their families.
7. The bishop will begin a preliminary internal investigation of the incident in accordance with Canons 1468-1470 of the Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches.
8. If there is credible evidence that sexual abuse has occurred, appropriate measures will be taken to remove the offender from ministry and place him/her on administrative leave in accordance with the provisions of Canon 1473 of the Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches.

**Eparchy of Phoenix**

8105 N. 16<sup>th</sup> St., Phoenix, AZ 85020  
(602) 861-9778 (Telephone)  
(602) 861-9796 (FAX)

**Victim Assistance Coordinator**

Dcn. Michael Hanafin  
(480) 307-5182  
vac@ephx.org

*(The Form for Filing a Complaint of Sexual Abuse of a Minor or Vulnerable Adult may be found in APPENDIX II.)*



## EPARCHIAL REVIEW BOARD

### Regarding Sexual Abuse of Minors and Vulnerable Adults

#### THE BOARD

The name of the board required by the *Policy and Procedures Concerning Sexual Abuse of Minors and Vulnerable Adults by Clergy or Church Personnel of the Byzantine Catholic Eparchy of Phoenix* will be the **Eparchial Review Board**. For purposes of brevity, it will be referred to as “The Board” in the following paragraphs. The Board is an independent advisory board that makes recommendations directly to the Eparchial Bishop concerning cases in which clerics or eparchial personnel are accused of sexual misconduct, and in other matters relating to the *Policy and Procedures Concerning Sexual Abuse of Minors and Vulnerable Adults by Clergy or Church Personnel of the Byzantine Catholic Eparchy of Phoenix*. As defined in Canon Law, a “cleric” is a priest, deacon, or bishop. The Board will consider all cases of sexual misconduct by clergy or eparchial personnel. There is to be no screening or filtering process. The cases presented to the Board will not be limited to behavior with minors.

#### BOARD MEMBERSHIP

The Board will be comprised of five members appointed by the eparchial bishop. The Board will include lay Catholics with expertise in a variety of areas and who are not employees of the eparchy. An effort will be made to have the Board membership reflect the racial, ethnic, and social diversity of the eparchy. The existence and purpose of the Board and the identity of the Board will be made public. The Board and its members will be listed in the eparchial Pastoral Handbook. As outlined in the *Policy and Procedures Concerning Sexual Abuse of Minors and Vulnerable Adults by Clergy or Church Personnel of the Byzantine Catholic Eparchy of Phoenix*, members will be appointed for a term of five years or until a successor is appointed. Initial terms will be staggered. Members can be appointed for more than one term. There should be a reasonable turnover in membership in order to provide the Board with new perspectives and expertise.

The eparchial bishop will designate a chairperson to serve for a one-year term. The term may be renewed for one, but not more than two additional terms. Board members will not receive compensation for their services, but will be reimbursed for their necessary expenses. Past and present Board members will be covered by sufficient insurance to protect them from any liability that could arise from the performance of their duties.

The eparchial Promoter of Justice will be asked to attend the meetings and to provide information to the Board, but is not a member of the Board.

#### EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

The eparchial bishop will appoint an executive secretary who will attend all meetings, but is not a member of the Board. The executive secretary is to assist the Board in the performance of its duties. This person is to be a well-qualified and experienced Catholic professional who possesses the expertise necessary to serve in this capacity, and is responsible to the Board under the direction of the chairperson.

## **FUNCTIONS OF THE BOARD**

- a) The Board will review regularly, at least annually, the eparchial policies on sexual misconduct and make recommendations for strengthening and enhancing the effectiveness of these policies in preventing and dealing with sexual misconduct.
- b) The Board will consider all complaints of sexual misconduct by clergy which occur within the pastoral boundaries of the Eparchy of Phoenix, or which involve clerics assigned to or working or living within the eparchy. This includes cases involving eparchial clerics, clerics from elsewhere who are on assignment in the eparchy, religious order clerics who are serving in the eparchy, and clerics who have been granted hospitality or permission to assist in the eparchy on a temporary basis.
  - A) The Board will receive a written report, prepared by the executive secretary, of each and every allegation of sexual misconduct lodged against a cleric. The Board will not normally receive or consider complaints involving allegations of sexual misconduct by someone other than a cleric.
  - B) In order to properly carry out the functions of the Board, the chairperson and the executive secretary will have full access to all information about the case.
  - C) The Board will verify that the eparchy has fulfilled its commitment to report the complaint to the appropriate civil authorities.
  - D) The Board will discuss each allegation, the background of the parties involved, the response of the cleric, the actions taken by the eparchial Promoter of Justice, and all other relevant information. It will have the authority and resources to obtain additional information deemed to be necessary.
  - E) The Board will recommend whether it is necessary to place the accused cleric on administrative leave if that has not already been done.
  - F) The Board will receive reports about the pastoral outreach extended to victims, and make other recommendations about further efforts to assist victims.
  - G) The Board will consider whether the parish staff or parish community has been, or should be, advised about the cleric's misconduct.
  - H) The Board will monitor each case, and once sufficient information has been obtained will make a formal report to the eparchial bishop concerning its findings and recommendations, including whether canonical steps should be taken to remove the cleric permanently from ministry. This assessment should be made in the context of eparchial policy, that a cleric will not be knowingly assigned to serve in the parishes, schools, pastoral ministries or any other assignment when it has been determined that he has engaged in sexual abuse of a minor or vulnerable adult.
  - I) If it appears there is likelihood that the cleric can be restored to ministry, the Board will make recommendations as to the steps that would be necessary for this to happen and recommend a program of ongoing support and supervision for the cleric.
  - J) The Board will periodically review the cases of clerics who have not been permanently removed from ministry. In this respect, the Board will be provided with status reports containing information obtained from the cleric's supervisor and any other helpful information, including results of psychological evaluations and treatment programs.
  - K) The eparchial bishop will seek the advice of the Board whenever he receives indications that a cleric or any Church personnel may be involved in any kind of sexual misconduct.

## **MEETINGS**

The chairperson will ordinarily convene and preside at meetings. The Board will conduct its business at meetings held as often as necessary to perform its duties. The chairperson may call special meetings when exceptional circumstances are presented which require immediate attention. Meetings will ordinarily be in person; however, special meetings can be conducted telephonically.

Three Board members constitute a quorum, and the concurrence of not less than three members is necessary to make a recommendation to the eparchial bishop.

The eparchial bishop will be invited to attend all meetings. The Board may invite others to attend all of, or part of, a meeting if necessary.

The meetings will be consultative and advisory, not adversarial nor adjudicative. The meetings are not hearings, but rather sessions at which the Board receives and considers information, deliberates, and formulates its recommendations.

The Board proceedings are confidential, and the members will not discuss the business of the Board or the information presented to the Board with persons who are not Board members or staff.

The chair of the Board and the eparchial Promoter of Justice will communicate to the eparchial bishop the matters considered by, and the recommendations of, the Board shortly after each meeting.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY OF RECORDS**

All records relating to the work of the Board are confidential. Access to these records is restricted to the eparchial bishop and his delegates, and to those persons or agencies within the eparchy who need to obtain the information in order to carry out the purposes of the ***Policy and Procedures Concerning Sexual Abuse of Minors and Vulnerable Adults by Clergy or Church Personnel of the Byzantine Catholic Eparchy of Phoenix.***

## **REVIEW OF BOARD GUIDELINES**

The Board will formally review the above ***Policy and Procedures*** and the work of the Board after one year and at least annually thereafter, and will also make any recommendations to the eparchial bishop for whatever changes it deems appropriate.

# **EPARCHIAL REVIEW BOARD**

## **EPARCHIAL REVIEW BOARD MEMBERS**

*appointed by*

Most Reverend Kurt Burnette, Apostolic Administrator  
Holy Protection of Mary Byzantine Catholic Eparchy of Phoenix

### **CHAIRPERSON**

Subdeacon Paul F. Kilroy, 8131 North 16<sup>th</sup> Street, Phoenix, AZ 85020

### **EXECUTIVE SECRETARY (acting)**

Subdeacon Paul F. Kilroy, 8131 North 16<sup>th</sup> Street, Phoenix, AZ 85020

### **MEMBERS OF THE EPARCHIAL REVIEW BOARD**

- Dr. Caroline Bonham, 47 Vallecitos Loop, Tijeras, NM 87059
- Margi Ellis, 7002 North 13<sup>th</sup> Place, Phoenix, AZ 85020-5407
- Anthony Kinyon, 854 Quinton Lane, Box Elder, SD 87719
- Msgr. Kevin McAuliffe, 8131 North 16<sup>th</sup> Street, Phoenix, AZ 85020
- Luis Sandoval, MD, 995 North West Street, Anaheim, CA 92801-4305
- Luis Santaella, 4816 East Marconi Place, Scottsdale, AZ 85254
- Lynn Sims, 19 Bruce Ave., Gilbert, AZ 85233

### **SAFE ENVIRONMENT PROGRAM COORDINATOR**

Subdeacon Paul F. Kilroy, 8131 North 16<sup>th</sup> Street, Phoenix, AZ 85020

### **VICTIM ASSISTANCE COORDINATOR**

Deacon Michael Hanafin, 2116 West Eagle Feather Road, Phoenix, AZ 85085

## Safe Environment Program Compliance Requirements Directive

\* \* \* \* \*

### **BACKGROUND SCREENINGS AND VIRTUS TRAINING FOR ADULTS**

**Safe Environment program compliance is mandatory** for all bishops, priests, deacons, members of religious houses or institutions, candidates for ordination, employees, educators, and volunteers incardinated in or on assignment within the Holy Protection of Mary Byzantine Catholic Eparchy of Phoenix (“Eparchy of Phoenix”).

**Compliance requires:** **1.** a completed and current background screening (remains viable for 5 years); **2.** completed and current VIRTUS Safe Environment Program certification training (remains viable for 3 years), and **3. Note: for all priests (only)** incardinated in or on active assignment in the Eparchy of Phoenix, attendance at the in-house Safe Environment training and update session provided at the Eparchy’s annual clergy conference.

**Background screenings and VIRTUS certification training must not be allowed to lapse.** Existing background screenings must be renewed within the month of their pending expiration. VIRTUS Online training must be renewed once every three years, and this must be done prior to the expiration date of any current training.

**It is the decision and responsibility of the competent authority** of a parish or other facility affiliated with the Eparchy of Phoenix, to hire or appoint those who serve in administrative, ministerial, educational, or any other compensated or uncompensated (voluntary) capacity, and similarly his/its responsibility to inform these persons of their individual Safe Environment compliance responsibilities and assure that they fulfill those responsibilities.

**A current list of all adults in each parish or facility for whom Safe Environment compliance is mandatory** is to be submitted to the Safe Environment Office by the pastor, rector, administrator, or governing body of a parish or other facility affiliated with the Eparchy of Phoenix. Individuals on these lists will be monitored by the eparchy’s Safe Environment Office for program compliance, and names may be added to or removed from these lists by the facility’s competent authority at any time.

**There are no “grace periods:”** All bishops, priests, deacons, members of religious houses or institutions, candidates for ordination, employees, educators, and volunteers serving in or assigned to facilities affiliated with the Eparchy of Phoenix must be in full compliance with the eparchy’s Safe Environment program before being permitted to serve in their respective area(s) or responsibility.

#### **Compliance Part 1: Background Screenings**

**New applicants for a background screening** may authorize a screening for themselves with SELECTiON.COM via the link provided for that purpose on the website of the Eparchy of Phoenix (ephx.org).

**SELECTION.COM is the only agent authorized** by the Eparchy of Phoenix to provide the eparchy's background screenings. Screenings provided by local law enforcement agencies or through other vendors or agencies providing such services will not be accepted.

**Background screenings should be electronically authorized** by the applicant directly to prevent any needless dissemination of their personal information which must be provided for the screening process. **NOTE:** Applicants submitting screening authorizations **MUST** include their Social Security number and all other information required by SELECTION.COM to complete the screening. Applicants who do not provide all the required information will not be able to obtain a background screening and will therefore not be permitted to provide any compensated or uncompensated service in any facility affiliated with the Eparchy of Phoenix.

**Screening applicants who are unable, by themselves, to complete the online authorization** may arrange with their facility's competent authority or designated Safe Environment facilitator, or some other trusted individual of their choosing for someone to assist them with the online screening authorization process.

**Background screenings, once completed, remain viable for a five-year period** before renewal is necessary. The eparchy's Safe Environment Office will monitor background screenings on file for pending expiration dates and will provide notice to a facility's competent authority when any background screening for an individual associated with that particular facility is due for renewal.

**Flagged content:** Notifications will be sent immediately to the competent authority of a facility by the eparchy's Safe Environment Office in the event any processed screening includes "flagged" content. "Flagged" content is any screening result which, at the discretion of the bishop, would exclude that particular individual from rendering any compensated or uncompensated service to the particular facility.

## **Compliance Part 2: VIRTUS Safe Environment Training**

**ONLINE VIRTUS Safe Environment training:** Initial registration and the creation of a user account with VIRTUS Online is required, followed by the online completion of the VIRTUS Safe Environment training program entitled, **"Protecting God's Children Online Awareness Session 3.0."** The website address is [www.virtusonline.org](http://www.virtusonline.org). Additional information regarding the online training option:

1. **For new registrations and user account set-up**, after going to the VIRTUS website, as directed above, **choose "Holy Protection of Mary Byzantine Catholic Eparchy of Phoenix" from the drop-down menu under the heading, Archdiocese/Diocese/Religious Organization."** The registrant should then select their parish from the drop-down menu accessed by selecting the **"Primary Location"** heading. **Note:** User accounts listed under eparchies, dioceses, or organizations other than "Holy Protection of Mary Byzantine Catholic Eparchy of Phoenix," will not appear in the VIRTUS database which the Safe Environment Office monitors for Safe Environment Program compliance.
2. **For previously registered trainees with existing accounts**, an online re-taking of **Protecting God's Children Online Awareness Session 3.0** is required once every three years, and is to be renewed before the expiration date of their current training, in order to seamlessly continue Safe Environment program compliance.

**OFFLINE VIRTUS Safe Environment training option:** At the discretion of the facility's competent authority, VIRTUS Safe Environment training may also take place in-house, in the facility setting, using VIRTUS Safe Environment training materials available on disc or flash drives which, if needed, may be obtained from the Safe Environment Office. The names of adults who participate in such in-house trainings are to be recorded on an attendance sheet along with the date the training was provided. After completion of the in-house training, the attendance sheet is to be sent to the Safe Environment Office.

**SUMMARY:**

1. All bishops, priests, deacons, members of religious houses or institutions, candidates for ordination, employees, educators, and volunteers serving in or assigned to facilities affiliated with the Eparchy of Phoenix must be fully compliant with the eparchy's Safe Environment Program **before** serving in their respective areas of ministry or responsibility. There are no "grace periods."
2. Retraining with VIRTUS Online once every three years, or reauthorization of a background screening (if necessary), **must take place by or before** an individual's prior training or screening expiration in order for program compliance to continue without lapse.
3. **Priests (only) incardinated in or on active assignment within the Eparchy of Phoenix** are, in addition to completion of VIRTUS Online certification training once every three years, additionally required to attend the yearly Safe Environment training and update in service provided during the eparchy's annual clergy conference.
4. Above-described individuals whose VIRTUS training or background screening lapses due to non-renewal by or before their current training or screening expiration date **must cease immediately** from their compensated or uncompensated service until they are once again in compliance with the eparchy's Safe Environment program.
5. **Any priest incardinated in or on active assignment in the Eparchy of Phoenix** who fails to attend, or is unable to attend, the yearly Safe Environment training and update in-service provided at the annual clergy conference held by the Eparchy of Phoenix should contact the Safe Environment Office immediately to arrange for a review of the aforementioned materials.

**SAFE ENVIRONMENT PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS FOR MINORS**

With permission first having been obtained from each individual child's parent(s) or legal guardian(s), **each facility affiliated with the Eparchy of Phoenix will annually make available for each child, in grades 1 through 8**, and for their parent(s) or guardian(s) who may wish to attend the review, the applicable age-appropriate Safe Environment training materials, and this annual training for minors must be completed **no later than 15 November**. **NOTE:** The provision and review of Safe Environment materials is to be made available in the same manner as indicated herein to all minors in grades 1 through 8 associated with the facility through their family affiliation with it **whether or not they participate in a facility-sponsored catechetical program**.

### **Additional Information:**

1. **“Youth Safe Environment Training Program,”** arranged by Fr. David J. Baratelli, Ed.S., M.Div., is the age-specific training material for grades 1 through 8 which is accepted by the Eparchy of Phoenix for this purpose. This syllabus, with its training program, can be found in Appendix III of the *Policy and Procedures Governing Sexual Misconduct* manual, and may also be obtained electronically from the Safe Environment Office.
2. Safe Environment training materials and the instruction of minors as indicated above, is to be provided for each child only after receiving prior approval for this provision and instruction from the child’s parent(s) or legal guardian(s).
3. **In-house training:** Safe Environment training material and/or instruction for minors is to be provided in-house only at the particular facility by the competent authority of the facility or his/her designated representative.
4. **November 15 training cut-off date:** It is highly recommended that the first class of each new catechetical year be dedicated to provision and completion of such training, and the calendar date by which all in-house Safe Environment training of minors must be completed is November 15.
5. An attendance sheet is to be maintained which documents which children have received materials and instruction. This attendance sheet should then be forwarded to the eparchy’s Safe Environment Office once the provision of materials and instruction has been completed. The attendance sheet should include the minor’s name, their grade level, and the date the materials/instruction were provided.
6. **Opt-out Forms:** Parents or legal guardians not wishing to avail themselves of parish-provided Safe Environment training for their minor children should be requested to sign an ‘Opt-out’ Form documenting their decision to decline provision of Safe Environment materials and/or instruction offered to their minor children by the facility.

Copies of any completed “Opt-Out” forms that are collected are to be retained in the file of each facility with the original forms being forwarded, within 10 days of their receipt by the facility, to the eparchy’s Safe Environment Office.

**The Opt-Out form to be used** for the documentation of minors for whom in-house, facility-provided Safe Environment Program training was declined can be found in Appendix II of the *Policy and Procedures Governing Sexual Misconduct* manual.

## **GUIDELINES FOR MAINTAINING A SAFE ENVIRONMENT FOR MINORS AND VULNERABLE ADULTS DURING EPARCHIAL/PARISH EVENTS**

1. **Pre-approval from the pastor** or appropriate leadership is needed for the validity of the event.
2. **Background Checks** – All persons over the age of 18 working with programs are required to have background checks which may be authorized through a link on our Eparchy’s website provided for that purpose. (Paper forms for authorizations are no longer to be submitted to the Safe Environment Office.)
3. **Safe Environment Training** – All adults working with youth must have documentable proof of having currently completed online VIRTUS Safe Environment training online, or documentation for currently completed VIRTUS parish-provided training on file at the Safe Environment office.
4. **Required Forms** – All pertinent and required forms must be completed, i.e.: Pastoral Conduct Form for Adults; permission and health forms for youth. (*Copies of these three forms may be found in Appendix II.*)
5. **Instructions / Procedures for a Specific Event** – In preparation for a program or event, participants and chaperones/staff must be informed about behavioral expectations.
6. **Adult Leaders and Chaperones** – There must be at least **two adult leaders** (18 years of age or older) to provide sufficient leadership for all parish-sponsored activities. The ratio of adults to minors should be no less than 1 adult per 6 minors.
7. **One-on-One Contact** – When working with youth and vulnerable adults, leaders of the group must not meet one-on-one (privately) with a young person or vulnerable adult (as per policy). In the rare situations that require personal conferences, the meeting is to be conducted in view of other adults and youths.
8. **Transportation** – When youth are being transported in a vehicle, two unrelated adults must be present. An adult leader or chaperone should never be alone in a vehicle with a minor.
9. **Constructive Discipline** – Discipline used in youth ministry, educational or catechetical ministry, should be constructive and reflective of the Church’s values. Corporal punishment is never permitted.
10. **Appropriate Attire** – Proper clothing for activities is required. Modest tops and T-shirts with acceptable wording/logos/graphics are allowed. Torn or ripped clothing, or clothes with holes are not acceptable – neither are oversized clothes. Modest dress is required. Example: No tank tops, halter tops, transparent blouses, noticeably short or tight shorts or skirts, etc. The discretion of the adult supervisor will be respected.
11. **No Secret Organizations** – The Church does not recognize any secret organizations as part of its programs. All aspects of the youth program are open to observations by the Bishop, pastors, parents, and leaders.
12. **Hazing** – Physical hazing and initiations are prohibited and may not be included as part of any activity. Adult leaders must monitor and guide the leadership techniques used by youth leaders.
13. **Alcohol and Smoking** – Youth and adults participating in the program are prohibited from the use of alcohol, smoking of any nature, any illegal drugs or the improper use of legal drugs.

14. **Pornography** – Youth and adults participating in the program are prohibited to use, possess or share any pornographic pictures, or any other sexually-oriented material.
15. **Supervisory Structure for Sleeping Arrangements and Bathroom Facilities** – To ensure safety, specific requirements must be in place 24 hours a day.
  - Adults (18 and older) must have separate sleeping accommodations from the youth;
  - If there are boys, there must be a male chaperone; if there are girls, there must be a female chaperone to ensure adult supervision throughout the night;
  - In the case of limited bathroom facilities, appropriate arrangements must be made for youth and adults to use the facilities independently.

## **EXPECTATIONS OF CHAPERONES/STAFF DURING YOUTH PROGRAMS AND EVENTS**

### **(Tailored to the event)**

- All adults (chaperones, staff, volunteers), prior to facilitating any youth program or event, will review and sign the Pastoral Conduct Pledge Form for Adults Working with Youth or Vulnerable Adults During Parish/Eparchial Events. *(A copy of this form may be found in Appendix II.)*
- To protect both the participants and staff alike and to ensure safety for all, avoid any one-on-one situations with a teen.
- Likewise, to ensure a Safe Environment, all participants must be present at all activities for the duration of the event. Moreover, coming and going, or partial participation disturbs the dynamic process and community of the Youth Event on a personal and communal level.
- In order to keep the integrity of the event, all public announcements will be assigned to a specific person.
- Direct any and all potential problems to the event leader or a staff member.
- All medical issues are to be directed to the event leader or first aid attendant.
- Curfews and quiet times are applicable for everyone, especially the adults, who are models for the event.
- Adult event facilitators are to establish a designated meeting area to which they may direct the youth and teens in their care. Do a head count, and if all are not present inform the event leader or a member of the staff.
- No adults, other than the leaders/facilitators are to be present during the talks and reflection times. Any additional adult presence unfairly inhibits the teen's openness and participation.

- As Christian models, respect for all participants is expected. Edifying speech and behavior are necessary components in Christian models. (No yelling or talking down to teens is ever acceptable.)
- Adult leaders are not called to “police” or control participants, but rather are to guide and lead teens by emulating the love, teachings, sacrifice, and service of Jesus Christ.

## **EXPECTATIONS FOR YOUTH DURING PROGRAMS AND EVENTS**

### **(Tailored to the event)**

- Know where the designated meeting area is where everyone is to gather in the event of a general emergency.
- Youth may not leave the premises of the event.
- Youth must observe the curfew and be quiet at night in the designated sleeping areas.
- No electronic devices.
- No pornographic pictures or other sexually oriented materials whatsoever.
- No public or private display of affection.
- No smoking, “vaping,” use of drugs or alcohol.
- No foul language or foul gestures.
- Modest clothing must be worn that is appropriate to the activity.
- Render the highest respect acknowledge the dignity of everyone.
- Maintain cleanliness of the facilities and property.
- All equipment must be returned and placed in its proper location.



# EPARCHIAL GUIDELINES FOR DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS

## Guiding Principles (adapted from the USCCB Social Media Guidelines, June, 2010)

The world of digital communication, with its almost limitless expressive capacity, makes us appreciate all the more Saint Paul's exclamation: *"Woe to me if I do not preach the Gospel"* (1 Cor. 9:16) – Pope Benedict XIV, 2010 World Communication Day message.

Social Media is the fastest growing form of communication in the United States, especially among youth and young adults. Our Church cannot ignore it, but at the same time we must engage social media in a manner that is safe, responsible, and civil

## Eparchy of Phoenix Guidelines

### I. Introduction

These guidelines are intended to guide and enable appropriate use of digital media. Adherence to boundary issues as posed in the Policy and Procedures of the Eparchy of Phoenix are applicable, whether face-to-face or via the digital media.

The following are the **minimal** guidelines to protect Church personnel, youth and children and/or vulnerable adults. Leadership may expand upon these guidelines.

### II. Legal Aspects of Digital Communication

1. Use of computers and internet connectivity should be consistent with the mission of the Church. In the use of computers, equipment and other related sources, Church personnel must respect the privacy of other users, respect copyright and license agreements, protect data from unauthorized use and disclosure, and safeguard their accounts and passwords.
2. Church equipment is the property of the eparchy, and therefore must be used only for professional communications. Church personnel must not use computers for any illegal or immoral purpose. They must not transmit threatening, obscene, or harassing materials or correspondence.
3. Church personnel must not engage in unauthorized distribution of data and information. They must refrain from revealing or publicizing proprietary or confidential information.
4. Church personnel must not communicate or advocate religious beliefs or practices contrary to the teachings of the Catholic Church. Users must refrain from inappropriately representing opinions as those of the Eparchy of Phoenix, their parish, or any of their official sub-entities.
5. Church personnel may not use the computers for private advertising of products or services, or for any activity meant to foster personal gain. They must refrain from uploading or downloading commercial software in violation of its copyright.

### II. Guidelines for Eparchial / Parish Communication

All eparchial or parish digital communications must involve clear visibility, accountability, and responsibility at all times. These are not appropriate mechanisms for confidentiality and should never involve secrecy.

1. For a parish social network site, permission of the pastor must be given prior to establishing the network site.
  - A separate parish account is to be established; do not use a personal account for a network site. There must be absolutely no “unofficial,” “unauthorized,” or “personal” parish sites of any kind that use the parish name, logo, parish information, parish membership network, or recognition either in fact (de facto) or in law (de juris).
  - There should be at least two administrators (preferably more) appointed by the pastor for each site, to allow rapid response and continued monitoring of the site.
  - Passwords and names of sites must be registered with the pastor as well as in a central location, and more than one adult should have access to this information.
  - All parish social networking, blogs, chat rooms, instant messaging, texting, and web sites must be moderated at all times. No one may post anything to the public via these sites except with the review and approval of an official parish site administrator for each message, each time.
  - All parish moderators / site administrators will receive instruction and guidelines from their pastor, who is ultimately responsible, or his designee(s). All subsequent questions not covered clearly by their pastoral instruction and guidelines will be referred back to the pastor or his designee(s) for additional guidelines and instruction.
  - All users of parish social networking must be approved in advance by the pastor or his designee(s).
  - The pastor will be informed and keep record of all parish social networking site users, as well as all guidance and instruction given to parish social networking site administrators.
  - Conversations are to be brief and in line with the Policy and Procedures of the Eparchy of Phoenix.
  - All parish social networking site users, except ordained clergy and professed religious, shall write only in the first person and never claim to represent the official position of the parish, eparchy, or the Catholic Church unless specifically authorized by the pastor. Ordained clergy and professed religious will consult with, and receive authorization from, the pastor before posting official positions on Parish social networking sites.
  - It is highly recommended to save copies of all correspondence with minors or vulnerable adults to avoid any negative implications. Chat or instant messaging should be discouraged.
2. All list serve or “blast” text messages etc., to all parishioners must originate with, or be approved in advance by, the pastor.
3. Written permission must be received from parents/guardians if there are photo/video of minors or vulnerable adults in any newsletter, blog, brochures, or other promotional materials, etc. For the

safety of the individual use only the first name and set a reasonable length of time for the use of the photo/video.

In addition, parents/guardians must have access to everything provided by parish social networking to their minor children or vulnerable adults, including the opportunity to be copied on all communications to or from their minor children or vulnerable adults. Parental access and copies may be by means of parallel technology that is more accessible to them.

Parish social networking moderators/site administrators and all users should not communicate privately with minor children or vulnerable adults. All such communications must be public and open to both parents/guardians and the pastor.

4. It is acceptable to use photos/videos in which people are unidentifiable, such as group photos. Permission or release forms are not necessary.
5. All parishes are required to link their website to the eparchy's Safe Environment page to help ensure that this information is being made available to everyone at the parish level.



## APPENDIX I

### GLOSSARY

**Advocate (Victim Assistance Coordinator):** a person appointed by the eparchial bishop who actively assists and supports a victim of sexual abuse that involves clergy or Church personnel. This advocate (coordinator) seeks, through a ministerial and administrative process, to empower the victim to reclaim her/his own voice that the Church may once again be a place of sanctuary.

**Allegation:** statement(s) given in writing that a minor or vulnerable adult has been sexually abused by any Church personnel.

**Annual Audit:** annual audits are conducted for the Safe Environment Program data submitted from all parishes of the eparchy during each catechetical year from July 1<sup>st</sup> to June 30<sup>th</sup>.

**Auditor:** person appointed through the USCCB (United States Conference of Catholic Bishops) to examine the data collection from parishes regarding implementation of the Safe Environment Policy and Procedures of the Eparchy of Phoenix, including the names of all adults who have submitted authorizations for background checks and completed VIRTUS Safe Environment training, and the names of all minors ages 5-years and above who have been offered age-appropriate Safe Environment training and materials.

**Background Checks:** all clergy and personnel must have a background check performed. National Center for Safety Initiatives (NCSI) screens the applicant's backgrounds, using their Social Security Number, for state offenders and national criminal offenders. No screening service other than NCSI may be used for background checks, and Social Security Numbers must be provided by all applicants

**Canon, or Canon Law:** refers to the Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches (CCEO).

**Charter:** refers to the document created by the USCCB, Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People.

**Child Protective Services (CPS):** name of the governmental agency in many states of the United States that responds to reports of child abuse or neglect. This agency may use other names for such a service.

**Church Personnel:** any priest, deacon, religious, seminarian, catechist, employee, volunteer, or any person from the eparchy or parish that has regular contact with minors or vulnerable adults.

**Clergy:** refers to a bishop, priest, deacon, sub-deacon, or a member of a religious order or institution.

**Compliance:** in reference to our eparchy's Safe Environment policy, compliance for an adult individual consists of maintaining a current and favorably completed background screening through NCSI, and completion of VIRTUS Safe Environment training once annually during each catechetical year.

**Director of Communications:** principal spokesperson for the eparchy and official liaison with the media.

**Harassment:** verbal or physical behavior that denigrates another person and thereby creates a hostile, offensive, or intimidating environment.

**Minors:** persons who have yet to reach their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. Age-specific Safe Environment Program training for minors will be offered once annually to minors in our eparchy in grades 1-8.

**Perpetrator:** term commonly used by law enforcement officers to designate an individual who actually commits a crime.

**Policy:** document for the Eparchy of Phoenix, *Holy Protection of Mary Byzantine Catholic Eparchy of Phoenix Safe Environment Policy and Procedures Governing Sexual Misconduct.*

**Protosyncellus:** a priest appointed by the eparchial bishop to assist him in governing the eparchy.

**Review Board (Eparchial Review Board):** an independent advisory committee appointed by the eparchial bishop that makes recommendations to him concerning cases of sexual misconduct of clergy and/or Church personnel.

**Safe Environment Coordinator:** person appointed by the eparchial bishop to coordinate the implementation of the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Youth and Vulnerable Adults.*

**Safe Environment Facilitator:** a parish member, who may be appointed by the pastor or administrator, to assist him in the organization and implementation of compliance with our eparchy's Safe Environment Program requirements.

**Sexual Misconduct:** any sexual conduct by eparchial personnel while performing the work of the eparchy involving children or minors (cfr. Canon 909, p. 3) or vulnerable adults, which is contrary to moral instructions, doctrines, and Canon Law of the Catholic Church.

**Victim:** one who is harmed or made to suffer from an act, circumstance, agency, or condition; one who is tricked, swindled, or who otherwise has had their advantage taken.

**Vulnerable Adult:** one in an infirm state of physical or mental deficiency, or of deprivation of personal freedom that in fact, even occasionally, limits their capacity to intend or to want or to in any way to resist an offense.

**APPENDIX II**  
**VARIOUS FORMS**

Safe Environment Formation Program Opt-out Form ..... 37  
*(Used to document the decision of parents/legal guardians who decline having Parish-provided Safe Environment Program training for their children.)*

Form for Filing a Complaint of Sexual Abuse of a Minor or Vulnerable Adult ..... 39

Pastoral Code of Conduct Pledge Form for Adults Working with Youth  
or Vulnerable Adults During Parish or Eparchial Events .....41-42

Permission Form for Minors Attending Eparchial or Parish-sponsored Events ..... 43

Safe Environment Compliance Form for VENDORS (on Church Property) ..... 46-48  
*(For documentation of Vendors, Contractors or other service providers who may be working regularly or long term on Church property.)*

Safe Env. Compliance Form for Outside Organizations (on Church Property) ..... 49-52  
*(For use when renting/allowing the use of Church property of facilities, ie: civic groups, wedding receptions, etc.)*



# Safe Environment Formation Program Opt-out Form

## Eparchy of Phoenix

We, the undersigned, are aware that in accord with the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People, our eparchy mandates that each parish is to offer Safe Environment formation for its clergy, employees, volunteers and educators, and that Safe Environment formation, in an grade-appropriate manner, is also to be made available for minors in each parish.

As parents or guardians, we also acknowledge our role as the primary educators of our children. Therefore, we have declined the option of having our children trained in our parish regarding Safe Environment issues during this catechetical year. We, as parents or guardians, are choosing to determine and provide what is the necessary and appropriate training for our children in order to protect them from crimes of sexual harassment and assault.

We acknowledge, however, that grade-appropriate training materials have been offered to us by the eparchy, through our parish.

**Today's Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent/Guardian Name(s):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent/Guardian Signature(s):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Names of Minors to be instructed by Parent(s)/(Guardian(s):**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

***Attention:*** This form is to be retained in your parish files – do not send it to the Safe Environment office. Parishes will be contacted for this information by the Safe Environment office when documentation for Opt-outs is needed.



# Form for Filing a Complaint of Sexual Abuse of a Minor or Vulnerable Adult

Date of report: \_\_\_\_\_ Reported by: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_

**CHILD:** \_\_\_\_\_ **DOB:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Male:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Female:** \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Telephone: \_( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**Suspected perpetrator:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Relationship to the CHILD:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Public Service Agency to whom the report was made:

- \_\_\_ Alaska Child Abuse Hotline: 1-800-478-4444
- \_\_\_ Arizona Child Abuse Hotline: 1-888-767-2445
- \_\_\_ Phoenix: 602-530-1800 (24 hrs.)
- \_\_\_ California: 1-800-422-4453
- \_\_\_ Colorado: 303-866-3006
- \_\_\_ Nevada: 1-800-992-5757
- \_\_\_ New Mexico: 1-800-797-3260
- \_\_\_ Oregon: 1-800-854-3508
- \_\_\_ Washington: 1-800-562-5624
- \_\_\_ Hawaii Child Abuse of Neglect Hotline: 1-888-380-3088
  
- \_\_\_ **National Child Abuse Hotline: 1-800-422-4453**
  
- \_\_\_ **Other:** \_\_\_\_\_

Was this report made to law enforcement? Yes: \_\_\_\_\_ No: \_\_\_\_\_

To whom was the report made: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for report:

\_\_\_\_\_  
*(Use the back side of this form if additional writing space is needed.)*

*This form is to be filled out by (or for) the parent/guardian. Once it is collected by the parish priest, one copy is to be retained in the parish files and the other is to be sent to the bishop as part of notification to the eparchy of an allegation or incident of abuse.*

# Form for Filing a Complaint of Sexual Abuse of a Minor or Vulnerable Adult

Date of report: \_\_\_\_\_ Reported by: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_

**CHILD:** \_\_\_\_\_ **DOB:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Male:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Female:** \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Telephone: \_( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**Suspected perpetrator:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Relationship to the CHILD:** \_\_\_\_\_

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- Washington: 1-800-562-5624
- Hawaii Child Abuse of Neglect Hotline: 1-888-380-3088
- National Child Abuse Hotline: 1-800-422-4453**
- Other:** \_\_\_\_\_

Was this report made to law enforcement? Yes: \_\_\_\_\_ No: \_\_\_\_\_

To whom was the report made: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for report:

\_\_\_\_\_

*(Use the back side of this form if additional writing space is needed.)*

*This form is to be filled out by (or for) the parent/guardian. Once it is collected by the parish priest, one copy is to be retained in the parish files and the other is to be sent to the bishop as part of notification to the eparchy of an allegation or incident of abuse.*



## **Pastoral Code of Conduct Pledge Form for Adults Working with Youth or Vulnerable Adults During Parish or Eparchial Events**

*Our minors and vulnerable adults are the most important gifts God has entrusted to us. As a volunteer, I pledge to strictly follow the rules and guidelines in this VOLUNTEER'S CODE OF CONDUCT as a condition of my providing services to the minors and vulnerable adults of our Eparchy of Phoenix.*

### **As a volunteer, I will:**

- Have a current completed background screening that has been processed by National Center for Safety Initiatives;
- Have registered and successfully completed Safe Environment Program training for adults with VIRTUS, Protecting God's Children® Online Awareness Session 3.0;
- Treat everyone with respect, loyalty, patience, integrity, courtesy, dignity, and consideration;
- Refrain from the use of foul language and obscene or suggestive gestures at all times'
- Avoid situations where I am alone with children and/or youth and/or vulnerable adults at Church activities;
- Use positive reinforcement rather than criticism, competition, or comparison when working with children and/or youth and/or vulnerable adults;
- Refuse to accept expensive gifts from children and/or youth or their parents and/or vulnerable adults, without prior written approval of the pastor or administrator;
- Refrain from giving expensive gifts to children and/or youth or their parents and/or vulnerable adults without prior written approval of the parents or guardian and the pastor or administrator;
- Report suspected abuse, first to civil authorities, then to the pastor, administrator, or appropriate supervisor, and to the Eparchy of Phoenix Pastoral Center;
- Acknowledge that failure to report suspected abuse to civil authorities is, according to the law, a crime in most jurisdictions;
- Cooperate fully in any investigation of abuse of children and/or youth and/or vulnerable adults.

### **As a volunteer, I will not:**

- **Smoke, "vape," or use tobacco products in the presence of children and/or youth and/or vulnerable adults;**
- Use, possess, or share any pornographic pictures, or other sexually oriented material whatsoever on Church property, or in the presence of children and/or youth and/or vulnerable adults;
- Use, possess, or be under the influence of illegal drugs, or medical marijuana , at any time on Church property, or in the presence of children and/or youth and/or vulnerable adults;
- Pose any health risk to children and/or youth and/or vulnerable adults (i.e.: being present during events with a fever or other contagious situation);
- Strike, spank, shake, or slap children and/or youth and/or vulnerable adults;
- Humiliate, ridicule, threaten, or degrade children and/or youth and/or vulnerable adults;
- Touch a child and/or youth and/or vulnerable adult in a sexual or otherwise inappropriate manner.

*(Continued on other side.)*

I understand that failure to report suspected abuse to civil authorities is, according to the law, a Class B misdemeanor. The only exceptions to this requirement involve information learned only within the Mystery of Reconciliation, or within an attorney-client privilege.

I understand that any action inconsistent with this *Code of Conduct*, or failure to take action as mandated by this *Code of Conduct*, may result in my removal as a volunteer with children and/or youth and/or vulnerable adults.

I certify with my signature below that I have understood and will abide by that which is contained within this Pastoral Code of Conduct Pledge Form for Adults Working with Youth or Vulnerable Adults During Parish or Eparchial Events.

**Adult's Name – PRINTED:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Adult's Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parish:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature of Pastor (as Witness):** \_\_\_\_\_

***Attention Pastors or Parish Administrators:***

*This form is to be retained in your parish files – do not send it to the Safe Environment office. Your parish will be contacted for you to provide this documentation only if any situation should arise where it would be needed.*

## Permission Form for Minors Attending Eparchial or Parish-sponsored Events

***A separate application must be completed for each minor.***

Minor's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Legal Guardian's Primary Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Parish/Venue where Event will be held: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of the Event: \_\_\_\_\_

Time/Date of the Event: \_\_\_\_\_

I verify by my signature that I am the parent or legal guardian of (*minor's first name*): \_\_\_\_\_, and that I give my permission for him/her to attend the above-mentioned event.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Legal Guardian's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Pastor's/Administrator's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**Attention Pastors or Parish Administrators:**

*This form is to be retained in your parish files – do not send it to the Safe Environment Office. Your parish will be contacted for you to provide this documentation only if any situation should arise where it would be needed.*



Safe Environment Compliance Form – VENDORS PAGE 1 (Get this form from the Parish Manual)

Safe Environment Compliance Form – VENDORS PAGE 2 (Get this form from the Parish manual.)

Safe Environment Compliance Form – VENDORS PAGE 3 (Get this fotm from the Parish manual.)

Safe Environment Compliance Form – VENDORS PAGE 1 (Get this form from the Parish manual.)

Safe Environment Compliance Form - OUTSIDE ORGS. PAGE 1 (Get this form from the Parish manual.)

Safe Environment Compliance Form - OUTSIDE ORGS. PAGE 2 (Get this form from the Parish manual.)

Safe Environment Compliance Form - OUTSIDE ORGS. PAGE 3 (Get this form from the Parish manual.)

Safe Environment Compliance Form - OUTSIDE ORGS. PAGE 1 (Get this form from the Parish manual.)

Office for a Safe Environment  
Holy Protection of Mary Byzantine Catholic Eparchy of Phoenix  
8131 North 16<sup>th</sup> Street, Phoenix, Arizona 85020

## **Youth Safe Environment Training Program**

### **Grades 1 – 8**

This age-specific training program for children and youth is mandated by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People, and the Safe Environment Program protocols of the Holy Protection of Mary Byzantine Catholic Eparchy of Phoenix. It is to be utilized each year with the appropriate classroom level/age group at the commencement of all parish religious education programs within the Eparchy, or at the beginning of the catechetical year for the benefit of minors who may not be registered in Eastern Christian Formation classes, but are members of the parish community.

Prepared by:

**Father David J. Baratelli, Ed.S., M.Div.**

*Coordinator*

Office for a Safe Environment in Ministry  
Byzantine Catholic Eparchy of Passaic

1 April 1018

Revised: 1 September 2019



# Lessons:

## 1: Primary Safe Environment Training Grades 1 – 2

- Lesson (Pages 1-3)
- Student Worksheet (Page 4)  
*“Who are Trusted Adults?”*

## 2: Elementary Safe Environment Training Grades 3 – 4

- Lesson (Pages 5-8)
- Student Worksheet (Page 9)
- Student Take-Home Double-Sided Handout Sheet (Page 11-12)  
*“Good Touch-Bad Touch,” & “Three Important Things to Remember.”*

## 3: Elementary Safe Environment Training Grades 5 – 6

- Lesson (Pages 13-15)
- Student Worksheet (Page 16)
- Student Take-Home Double-Sided Handout Sheet (Pages 17-18)  
*“Important Things to Remember,” & “Other Important Things to Remember.”*

## 4: Secondary Safe Environment Training Grades 7 – 8

- Lesson (Page 19-21)
- Student Worksheet (Page 23-24)
- Student Take-Home Double-Sided Handout Sheet (Pages 25-26)  
*“Boundaries,” & “Understanding Boundaries in Your Life.”*



## Primary Safe Environment Training Grades 1 – 2

### Lesson Notes:

In presenting this basic lesson for children in the primary group the instructor should stress the following according to the developmental/educational level of each particular group.

1. The love Jesus has for us, especially for them.
2. The importance of always listening to their parents who God has given to them to assure their happiness, safety and well-being.
3. The importance of being safe and being aware of their environment.
4. Listening to their feelings; when their heads and hearts tell us something is not right; when they feel scared or uneasy because a person or situation makes them feel uncomfortable or unsafe.
5. Understanding: 'Good Touch' & 'Bad Touch'
6. Secret – Something that is kept hidden from others.
7. What a child might do when confronted by uncomfortable situations.  
NO!  
GO!  
TELL!
8. Things they can do to avoid such situations.

### What does Sacred Scripture tell us?

*(The following scriptural quotes may be used as a stimulus for the classroom discussion according to the group's age and educational level.)*

“Some children were brought to Jesus so he could lay his hands on them and pray for them....Jesus said, “Let the children come to me. Don't stop them! For the Kingdom of Heaven belongs to such as these.” *(Matthew 19:13-15)*

“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.” *(John 13:34)*

“Children, obey your parents because you belong to the Lord, for this is the right thing to do. Honor your father and mother.” *(Ephesians 6:1)*

**Class topics for presentation and discussion:**

*(The following are given as topics for engaging the children in developing their basic understanding of safety and respect as is appropriate to their age and education level.)*

1. What does it mean when we say “I am a child of God”?
2. The importance of their personal safety.
3. Why God gave us our parents and why it is important to listen to them and be obedient to them.
4. Respecting each other and being respectful of each other at home, in church, in school and on the playground.
5. Remember, Jesus told us; “Love one another, as I have loved you”.
6. What does Jesus mean when he tells us “Love one another, as I have loved You.”?
7. How do we respect one another? How do we love one another?
8. What might be considered not respecting or loving an individual?
9. No one should ever touch our private parts and if someone attempts to do that, immediately go for help.
10. What is the difference between good touch and bad touch.
11. What is the difference between good play and bad play.
12. Never get into the car of someone you don’t know or without your parents.
13. What it means to be safe at home, school, church or playground.
14. Being careful with people they do not know and always being with your parents or teachers and not wandering off alone.
15. Secrets are not always good and if an adult tells us to keep a secret that makes us feel bad or uncomfortable we should go to our parents or a trusted adult. There can be no secrets when it comes to our personal safety and well-being, or for that of another.
16. Do not accept gifts from people you do not know and for reasons that make you feel uncomfortable.
17. Who is a trusted adult?

**Uncomfortable people, situation and feelings; what to do:**

*(Review with students practical helps/guides when confronted with uncomfortable people, situations and feelings.)*

1. Do not venture off with strangers or on your own.
2. Do not allow anyone to touch you.
3. No one should touch your private body parts that are the part of you that is covered by your bathing suit.
4. Do not ever be afraid to tell someone who is attempting to touch you to stop, to say NO!
5. If any adult or other child tries to touch your private body parts get away from them and go get help from parents or other trusted adult.
6. Do not keep “special” secrets with adults or older children when they make you feel uncomfortable.
7. Always talk to your parents.
8. If you are uncomfortable about someone or something to tell your parents, teacher or other responsible adult.
9. Know that there are helping people in our community such as the police who are there to protect us such as the police or school teachers or principles.

**Activity:**

Using the attached work sheet have students identify “trusted” adults and what they can do if someone attempts to touch them or make them feel bad or scared. Their responses might be used to generate class discussion and clarify important lesson content.

**Conclusion:**

*(The following wrap-up or conclusion for the class should bring together some of the basic safe environment concepts to reiterate them and highlight their importance.)*

1. Loving and respecting as Jesus loves and respects us.
2. Listening to our parents.
3. Never being afraid to talk to our parents or trustworthy adult about fears or concerns.
4. What is “good touch” and “bad touch.”
5. When a child is uncomfortable to who and where they can go to for help.
6. We should always respect ourselves and each other never treating another in any way that is not loving or respectful as in the image of Jesus.

7. Use handout to review important lesson points.

## Who are Trusted Adults?

Trusted adults are:

*(Please check your trusted adults.)*

- Police Officer
- Stranger from a store
- Grandma & Grandpa
- Parish Priest
- Nice man or woman in a store who give you candy
- Teacher
- Someone in a car looking for their lost puppy
- Another child or young person you don't know
- School Principal

What do I do if someone tries to touch me and makes me feel bad or scared?

*(Check one or more.)*

- NO! - Shout NO or STOP at the person.
- GO! - Get away and go to a safe place and get help.
- Allow the person to do what they want.
- TELL! – Tell a trusted adult.

## Elementary Safe Environment Training Grades 3 – 4

### Lesson Objectives:

In presenting this basic lesson for children in the elementary group the instructor should stress the following:

1. The love Jesus has for us, especially for them.
2. The importance of being safe and being aware of their environment.
3. Listening to their feelings; when their heads and hearts tell us something is not right; when they feel scared or uneasy because a person or situation makes them feel uncomfortable or unsafe.
4. Understanding “good touch” and “bad touch.”
5. The “little voice” inside us.
6. What a child might do when confronted by such situations.
  - NO Say “No!” to the person or say “stop!” or “Leave me alone!”
  - GO Immediately Go away from someone who makes you feel uncomfortable or tries to touch your private body parts. Move or run away from him/her and try to go to another safe place.
  - TELL Immediately tell your parents or a trusted adult if someone tried to touch your private body parts in an inappropriate way.
7. Who are trusted adults?

### What does Sacred Scripture tell us?

*(The following scriptural quotes may be used as a stimulus for the classroom discussion.)*

“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.” *(John 13:34-35)*

“Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for his is right. “Honor your father and Mother”- which is the first commandment with a promise; so that it may go well with you...” *(Ephesians 6:1-3)*

“So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you for this sums up the Law and the Prophets.” *(Matthew 7:12)*

**Class topics for presentation and discussion:**

*(The following are given as topics for engaging the children in developing their understanding of safety and respect.)*

1. The importance of their personal safety.
2. Why God gave us our parents and why it is important to listen to them and be obedient to them.
3. What does Jesus mean when Jesus tells us “Love one another, as I have loved You.”?
4. Respecting each other at home, in church, in school and on the playground.
5. How do we respect one another? How do we love one another?
6. What might be considered not respecting or loving an individual?
7. What it means to be safe at home, school, church or playground.
8. What is the difference between good play and bad play.
9. What is the difference between good touch and bad touch.
10. The importance of listening to “the little voice” inside them.
11. What is that “little voice”?
12. Understanding “good touch” and “bad touch.”
  - A “good touch” can be a way for people to show they care for each other and help each other. They can include hugging, holding hands, a parent helping their child get cleaned-up or a kiss from a mom, dad, grandparent, aunt or uncle.
  - A “bad touch” can make a child feel uncomfortable or hurt. It is when someone touches a child on their body where they don’t want to be touched such as private body parts. It can also be a person placing their hands under a child’s clothing or tickling them inappropriately.
13. No one should ever touch our private body parts.
14. In such situations a child should remember:
  - NO! – Not to be afraid to say NO or STOP; to shout it at the person.
  - GO! – Immediately get away from the person and go to a safe place.
  - TELL! – Immediately tell parents or trusted adult what has happened.
15. Do not venture off with strangers or on your own.

16. Be careful with people they do not know and always being with your parents or teachers and not wondering off alone.
17. Secrets are not always good and if an adult tells us to keep a secret that makes us feel bad or uncomfortable we should go tell our parents or a trusted adult.
18. To whom, and where a child can go for help?
19. Who are their safe friends or adults?

**Uncomfortable people, situation and feelings; what to do:**

*(Review with students practical helps/guides when confronted with uncomfortable people, situations and feelings.)*

1. Listening to that “little voice” inside you.
2. Always be aware of your surroundings and the people around you.
4. Do not allow anyone to touch you.
5. Do not ever be afraid to tell someone who is attempting to touch you to stop.
6. We should always respect ourselves and each other never allowing us or treating another in any way that is not loving in the image of Jesus or respectful
7. If you are uncomfortable about someone or something, go tell your parents, teacher or other responsible adult.
8. Remember: NO! GO! TELL!
9. Know that there are helping people in our community such as the police who are there to protect us.

**Activity:**

- #1: Have students write down on paper who they feel is a trusted or safe adult. Allow for open discussion and sharing.
- #2: Have the students identify as “safe touch” or “unsafe touch” the following:
1. Grandmother or grandfather gives you a good-bye kiss.
  2. Mother or Dad gives you a hug as you go off to school in the morning.
  3. A friendly person wants to touch your private body parts.
  4. Your Doctor wants to check your temperature during a physical exam.
  5. A stranger from the Church wants to shake your hand or hug you.

Compare and discuss the responses.

**Conclusion:**

*(The following wrap-up or conclusion for the class should reiterate some of the basic safe environment concepts discussed and highlight their importance.)*

1. Loving and respecting as Jesus loves and respects us.
2. Listening to our parents.
3. What it means to respect personal space.
4. The importance of listening to the “little voice” inside us.
5. Never be afraid to talk to our parents or other trustworthy adult about fears or concerns.
6. Never be afraid to say NO!
7. Never allow anyone to touch their bodies or private parts and make them feel bad or uncomfortable.
8. When uncomfortable, to whom and where a child can go to for help.
9. Distribute “Good Touch / Bad Touch” handout and “Stop-Go-Tell Handout.”

## Lesson Worksheet

**Who are the trusted adults in your life?**

**WHO:**

**WHY?**

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

**What are some examples of safe touch?**

- (1) \_\_\_\_\_
- (2) \_\_\_\_\_
- (3) \_\_\_\_\_
- (4) \_\_\_\_\_

**What are some examples of inappropriate touch?**

- (1) \_\_\_\_\_
- (2) \_\_\_\_\_
- (3) \_\_\_\_\_
- (4) \_\_\_\_\_

**Time for Open Discussion**

What do you think?



## **“GOOD TOUCH” AND “BAD TOUCH”**

### **Good Touch:**

Does not make us feel bad, uncomfortable or sad. A good touch can be:

- When Mom or Dad gives you a hug and kiss before you go to bed at night or wake up in the morning and go off to school.
- When we go to Church and the Priest anoints us with holy oil.
- When Grandma and Grandpa or dear Aunt and Uncle come to visit and everyone gets hugs and kisses.

### **Bad Touch:**

Touches that make you feel uncomfortable are usually bad touches. You don't have to keep a secret when someone gives you bad touch. Don't feel that you are bad. Whoever gives you a bad touch is the one who is bad, not you. Your body belongs to you. Nobody should touch you if you don't want to be touched. A bad touch can be:

- It is a bad touch if it hurts you.
- It is a bad touch if someone touches you on your body where you don't want to be touched.
- It is a bad touch if the person touches you under your clothing or tickles you under your clothing.
- It is a bad touch if a person touches you in a way that makes you feel uncomfortable.
- It is a bad touch if that touch makes you feel scared and nervous.
- It is a bad touch if a person forces you to touch him or her.
- It is a bad touch if a person asks you not to tell anyone they touched you.
- It is a bad touch if a person threatens to hurt you if you tell.

## Three Important Things to Remember

What do you should do if someone touches you in the wrong way or make you feel fearful and uncomfortable by their actions.

**NO !** Say “NO!” to the person or say “stop!” or “leave me alone!” Don’t be worried to say it too loud; you may shout it at the person if they don’t stop.

**GO!** Immediately “GO” away from someone who makes you feel uncomfortable or tries to touch your body or private body parts. Move or run away from him/her and go to a safe place.

**TELL!** Immediately “TELL” our parents or a trusted adult if someone tried to touch your private body parts in an inappropriate way or made you feel uncomfortable by their actions.

**REMEMBER:** If someone touches you in the wrong way, tell what happened to someone you trust. Don’t let anyone scare you into keeping quiet. Don’t keep it a “special secret.” Don’t feel you did something bad; the person who touched you did something bad. Tell a trusted adult - your parents, a relative, a teacher, police officer, or your doctor. Do everything you can to stay away from a person who is touching you in the wrong way or making you feel uncomfortable. Never be alone with that person.

## Elementary Safe Environment Training Grades 5-6

### Lesson Objectives:

In presenting this basic lesson for children in the elementary group the instructor should stress the following :

1. The love Jesus has for us, especially for them.
2. The importance of being safe and being aware of their environment.
3. The importance of “boundaries”; what are they and what do they mean.
4. The importance of listening to their feelings;
5. What our feelings can tell us and how they can keep us safe.
6. “Good Touch” – “Bad Touch”
7. Secrets aren’t always good.
8. What to do when confronted by uncomfortable and challenging situations.
9. How to avoid such situations.

### What does Sacred Scripture tell us?

*(The following scriptural quotes may be used as a stimulus for the classroom discussion according to the group’s age and educational level.)*

“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.” *(John 13:34)*

“Let no one despise you for your youth, but set the believers as an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity.” *(1 Timothy 4:12)*

“Let what you say be simply ‘yes’ or ‘no’; anything more than this comes from evil.” *(Matthew 5:37)*

“Do not model your behavior on the contemporary world, but let the renewing of your minds transform you, so that you may discern for ourselves what is the will of God-what is good and acceptable and mature.” *(Romans 12:2)*

**Class topics for presentation and discussion:**

*(The following are given as topics for engaging the children in developing an initial consideration of personal safety and boundaries.)*

1. The importance of their personal safety.
2. What does Jesus mean when he tells us “Love one another, as I have loved You.”?
3. Respecting each other and being respectful of each other at home, in church, in school.
4. Human beings, created in God’s image, are sacred and worthy of respect.
5. What are boundaries?

*Boundaries are “dividing lines.” In interpersonal relationships they are limits that define one person as separate from another or from others. They promote and preserve personal integrity. Boundaries give each person a clear sense of “self” and a framework for how we can function in relationship to other individuals. Boundaries set the limits for how people can deal with us. They create necessary “space” between individuals. Healthy boundaries define expectations and show respect for others.*

6. How do we respect one another? How do we love one another?
7. What might be considered not respecting or loving an individual?
8. What are appropriate “boundaries”; how do they protect us.
9. No one should ever touch us in an inappropriate manner or engage us in inappropriate or personal discussion or questions.
10. Remember “Good Touch” and “Bad Touch.”
11. The importance of being careful with people we do not know and always maintain a respectful distance.
12. Secrets are not always good, and if an adult tells us to keep a secret that makes us feel bad or uncomfortable we should go to our parents or a trusted adult.

**Uncomfortable people, situation and feelings; what to do:**

*(Review with students practical helps/guides when confronted with uncomfortable people, situations and feelings.)*

1. Always respect yourself and never allow anyone to touch you.
2. Do not ever be afraid to tell someone who is attempting to touch you to stop.

3. Do not keep “special” secrets that make you uncomfortable with adults or older children.
4. Always remember the importance of healthy and appropriate “boundaries.”
5. Boundaries are about responsibility, mature decision making and most important to assure a person’s safety and well-being.
6. If you are uncomfortable about someone or something to tell your parents, teacher or other responsible and trustworthy adult.
7. Know that there are helping people in our community such as the police who are there to protect us such as the police, clergy, school teachers or school administrators.

**Activity:**

- 1: Have the students write down on a piece of paper secrets they think are safe and secrets they think are unsafe. Allow the students to share their lists.
- 2: Have the students write down on a piece of paper short definitions for the following: safe friend -- peer pressure -- trusted adult -- inappropriate touch, and boundaries. Allow the students to share their definitions.

**Conclusion:**

*(The following wrap-up or conclusion for the class should bring together some of the reiterate the basic safe environment concepts presented and discussed as well as to highlight their importance.)*

1. Loving and respecting as Jesus loves and respects us.
2. We should always respect ourselves and each other. Never treat anyone in an unkind way or allow yourself to be treated in any way that is not loving in the image of Jesus or respectful.
3. What are “boundaries” and how we maintain healthy and safe “boundaries”.
4. Never be afraid to set personal “boundaries.”
5. Never be afraid to say NO!
6. When a child is uncomfortable who and where they can go to for help.
7. Never being afraid to talk to our parents or trustworthy adult about fears or concerns.
8. Distribute “Good Touch / Bad Touch” handout and “Stop-Go-Tell” handout.

## Lesson Worksheet

**What do you think are safe secrets?**

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**What do you think are unsafe secrets?**

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**Let's talk!**

- **What is peer pressure?**
- **Who is a safe friend?**
- **Who are your trusted adults?**
- **What are appropriate and inappropriate boundaries?**

## **“Important Things to Remember”**

### **Good Touch:**

Does not make us feel bad, uncomfortable or sad.

### **Bad Touch:**

Touches that make you feel uncomfortable are usually bad touches. You don't have to keep a secret when someone gives you bad touch. Don't feel that you are bad. Whoever gives you a bad touch is the one who is bad, not you. Your body belongs to you. Nobody should touch you if you don't want to be touched.

### **What do I do if someone tries to touch me inappropriately?**

- Tell them NO!
- Get away from them immediately.
- Immediately report it to your parents, teacher, principal or police.

### **Remember the importance of “boundaries.”**

- They are about personal responsibility, mature decision making and keeping ourselves safe.

### **People who can help protect us.**

- Remember that there are people within our communities that will help us keep safe and protect us such as police, clergy, school teachers or administrators.

## **Other important things to remember!**

- Respect yourself and others in home, in school and in your community.
- If someone touches you in the wrong way tell someone you trust what happened.
- Don't let anyone scare you into keeping quiet. Don't keep it a "special secret."
- Don't feel you did something bad; the person who touched you did something bad.
- Report any inappropriate touching to a trusted adult - your parents, a relative, a teacher, police officer, or your doctor.
- Do everything you can to stay away from a person who is touching you in the wrong way or making you feel uncomfortable.
- Never be alone with that person.
- Listen to the little voice inside you; if it tells you someone or some situation is not good, listen and get yourself away from that person or out of that situation.

## Secondary Safe Environment Training Grades 7-8

### **Lesson Objectives:**

In presenting this basic lesson for children in the secondary group the instructor should stress the following.

1. We have all been created in the image of God.
2. The dignity of the human person.
3. The importance of “boundaries”; what can happen for good and bad.
4. Boundaries are for good relationships; they are loving and responsible.
5. What’s the measure of healthy boundaries; what are ‘good’ boundaries.
6. Mature and healthy attitudes about life and relationship.
7. The challenges of “growing up”.

### **What does Sacred Scripture tell us?**

*(The following scriptural quotes may be used as a stimulus for the classroom discussion according to the group’s age and educational level.)*

“God created man in his image; in the divine image he created him; male and female he created them. And so it happened. God looked at everything he made, and he found it very good. Evening came, and morning followed - the sixth day.” *(Genesis 1:27, 31)*

“Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, for many false prophets have gone out into the world.” *(1 John 4:1)*

“Let what you say be simply ‘yes’ or ‘no’; anything more than this comes from evil.” *(Matthew 5:37)*

“Love you neighbor as yourself. Love does no harm to a neighbor. Therefore, love is the fulfillment of the law.” *(Romans 13: 9-10)*

“Do not be afraid to speak out, nor allow yourself to be silenced. I am with you. I have so many people on my side that no one will hurt you.” *(Acts 18: 9-10)*

### **Points for presentation and discussion:**

*(The following are given as topics for engaging the children in developing their fuller understanding of boundaries and personal respect.)*

1. What does Jesus mean when he tells us “Love one another, as I have loved You.”?

2. Respecting each other and being respectful of each other at home, in church, in school.

*Every person is entitled to respect and dignity; inappropriate touching or physical contact is never acceptable.*

3. Do we remember; what are boundaries?

*Boundaries are “dividing lines.” In interpersonal relationships they are limits that define one person as separate from another or from others. They promote and preserve personal integrity. Boundaries give each person a clear sense of “self” and a framework for how we can function in relationship to other individuals. Boundaries set the limits for how people can deal with us. They create necessary “space” between individuals. Healthy boundaries define expectations and show respect for others.*

4. How do we respect one another? How do we love one another?

5. What might be considered not respecting or loving an individual?

6. What are appropriate and inappropriate “boundaries”; how do they impact us.

7. When are our actions or behaviors inappropriate, and possibly an invitation to trouble?

8. It is never acceptable for someone to engage us in inappropriate or personal discussion or questions of a sexually explicit or suggestive nature.

9. Always maintaining a respectful relationship.

10. Secrets are not always good. If anyone tells us to keep a secret regarding an act of abuse or something that makes us feel bad or uncomfortable we should go immediately to our parents or a trusted adult.

### **Uncomfortable people, situation and feelings; what to do:**

*(Review with students practical helps/guides when confronted with uncomfortable people, situations and feelings.)*

1. Always respect yourself and never allow anyone to touch you or disrespect you.
2. Being respectful of others feelings; just as you should be respected, you should respect others.
3. Do not ever be afraid to tell someone who is attempting to touch you to stop; boyfriend, girlfriend, or anyone.
4. Remember the importance of healthy, clear and appropriate “boundaries.”
5. Boundaries are about responsible, mature decision making and safety.
6. Never be afraid to say NO to inappropriate actions by another person.

7. If you are uncomfortable about someone or something to tell your parents, teacher or other responsible and safe adult.
8. Know that there are helping people in our community who are there to help and protect us such as the police, clergy, coaches or school teachers or administrators.

**Activity:**

#1: On a sheet of paper have students write down words that mean safe to them. Ask them to share their words with the group and explain their choices.

#2: Part I: Have the students write down on a piece of paper who they would consider the “safe” persons in their lives and what they feel they could tell such persons.

Part II: Have the students write down on a piece of paper what they should do if they are a “safe person” for someone who comes to them with a concern regarding inappropriateness or abuse by another person.

**Conclusion:**

*(The following wrap-up or conclusion for the class should bring together some of the covered safe environment concepts to reiterate them and highlight their importance.)*

1. Loving and respecting as Jesus loves and respects us.
2. Remember we have been created in the Divine Image, and what God created is good.
3. We should always respect ourselves and each other never allowing abuse or treating another in any way that is not respectful and loving in the image of Jesus.
4. What are “boundaries” and how we maintain healthy, clear and safe boundaries?
5. Never be afraid to say no to inappropriate behavior on the part of anyone.
6. Never be afraid to set personal “boundaries”; they are important and healthy.
7. Don’t give in to peer pressure.
8. Where you can go for help.
9. Never being afraid to talk to parents or trustworthy adults about concerns.
10. Distribute “Boundaries” handout.



# Student Activity Worksheet

**(1) What words mean/describe safe to you.**

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**(2) Please list who you would consider “safe persons” in your life and what you feel you could tell such persons.**

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# Boundaries

## What are Boundaries?

1. They are the “dividing lines” in interpersonal relationships.
2. They are limits that define one person as separate from another or from others.
3. They promote and preserve personal integrity.
4. They give each person a clear sense of “self” and a framework for how we can function in relationship to other individuals.
5. They set the limits for how people can deal with us.
6. They create necessary “space” between individuals.
7. Healthy boundaries define expectations and show respect for others.

## Remember:

- Boundaries should always be clearly established and consistent.
- Boundaries are a matter of maturity and healthy sense of responsibility.
- Boundaries make for good relationships.

## Understanding Boundaries in Your Life

- When you don't speak up, you hide yourself and allow others to violate your boundaries.
- When you disregard your personal beliefs, values, wants and feelings, it causes you to feel diminished or less than who you are.
- Boundaries are the invisible lines we draw around ourselves for self-protection, self-preservation and at times, security and safety.
- Most people will respect our boundaries if we let them know what they are. However, with others, we must actively defend our boundaries.
- Boundaries help us to express our uniqueness.
- Recognizing our uniqueness and our differences can help us to better understand our relationships with others in our lives.
- Healthy self-knowledge helps us establish and reinforce appropriate and healthy boundaries.

***You are a precious gift of God!***

## **Guidelines for Ministry to Convicted Sexual Offenders**

### **An Introduction:**

Concern has arisen among clergy and their worshipping communities regarding the question of ministry to individuals who have been convicted of criminal sexual offenses. In an effort to provide a safe and healthy environment for all who make parishes belonging to the Holy Protection of Mary Byzantine Catholic Eparchy of Phoenix their spiritual homes or participate in any of its programs, we offer the following guidance on this most serious matter.

This issue might arise if a sexual offender who has been released from incarceration desires to engage in the life of faith in the church community. Presently, the Eparchy of Phoenix is addressing this concern because over 60 percent (approximately 480,000) of the 800,000-plus registered sex offenders in the United States are under some form of post-incarceration supervision and many of these individuals may seek to engage in the life of the church community.

In this regard, there are certain facts that must be considered:

1. Be absolutely sure that any individual in question is, in fact, a convicted sexual offender. This may be accomplished by contacting the local police or probation authorities, or the National Sex Offender Public Website ([nsopw.gov](http://nsopw.gov)), or the applicable State Sexual Offenders registry that is published by state governments.
2. Presently, within various states there exists some form of what is known as "Megan's Law." This law, in part, provides specific legal guidelines and requirements governing the life and activity of individuals who are convicted sexual offenders and who may be released from incarceration at the completion of their sentence, or have been released on probation.
3. In the various states, sexual offenders, upon release from incarceration, are required by law to register with the appropriate police/probation authorities and to be listed on the State's Sexual Offenders Registry. At the time of their registration, they are advised of the particular limitations imposed upon them as registered sexual offenders.

Such state laws specifically prohibit convicted sexual offenders from residing within a particular distance of schools, youth centers, or places where children gather. This restriction may specifically limit convicted sexual offenders from attending church services and participating in church activities, or it may place very particular limitations upon any possible participation.

### **Our Eparchial Response:**

The Byzantine Catholic Eparchy of Phoenix recognizes its mission and obligation to proclaim the Death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ to all people, including those who have strayed from the path of God's love. It also recognizes its obligation to provide for the safety and wellbeing of all who make our parishes their spiritual homes or who participate in eparchial/parochial programs of the Eparchy.

To this end, concerning individuals who have been convicted of criminal sexual offenses, the Eparchy recognizes its responsibility to be proactive in addressing this unique aspect of possible ministry and addresses the following:

1. Should it come to the attention of the parish clergy that a person convicted of a criminal sexual offense is attending the liturgy and worship of the church, the parish pastor/administrator must confirm the accuracy of that knowledge by respectfully speaking to the person in question with two trusted members of the parish present.
2. The pastor/administrator must immediately contact the Safe Environment Office to inform it of this concern.
3. The pastor/administrator must immediately contact the appropriate local police/probation authorities to confirm with them that this individual is, in fact, listed on the State Sexual Offenders Registry, and/or the National Sex Offender Public Website (nsopw.gov),.
4. Seek guidance from police/probation authorities with regard to any and all limitations placed upon the particular individual and the manner in which the parish can deal with the issue, i.e. contact with the state probation department.
5. It is important to establish with the individual the parameters of any future ministry that might be possible with him/her.
6. Should such an individual be restricted from attendance at public worship, the clergy may provide spiritual support for him/her, if so desired, by means of technology and/or the live-streaming of services as is common in many parishes.
7. The pastor/administrator might provide guidance by way of spiritual direction and the recommendation of spiritual texts and prayer manuals to assist in a regimen of personal prayer and spiritual growth. The pastor/administrator might encourage the individual to continue or to seek professional treatment by way of counseling/therapy as he/she strives to live a life of grace.
8. Periodically, the pastor/administrator could arrange, with the cooperation of a trusted member of the parish community, to accompany him for a brief visit to bring the individual the Eucharist and allow the opportunity for the other sacraments.
9. In those states where such a person might be allowed to attend the public worship of a church, the state regulations governing such attendance (e.g. State of Virginia) usually demand that such a person be accompanied by a prudent companion who will accept the responsibility to supervise the individual at all times. Such a supervisory companion must ensure that when present on the property and during the service, the individual in question will be supervised by the responsible companion and leave the service and property immediately upon conclusion of the worship.
10. If, for some reason, a convicted sexual offender has no obligation under the law and there are no legal limitations imposed upon him/her, the following would be vitally important to any continued participation in the life of the parish.
  - A. It would be most important for the pastor/administrator to have full knowledge of the case, and with the agreement of the individual involved be authorized by that individual to speak with the police or probation authorities.

B. It would be important to establish clear and reasonable boundaries with the individual if he/she intends on attending the parish and its services of worship. Such boundaries might include, but are not limited to, the following:

Not sitting next to minors during liturgy.

Not being alone with minors on church property.

Not participating in programs which involve minors.

Understanding and accepting other limitations that may be necessary.

Breaches of such agreements would prohibit any further attendance.

As the Byzantine Catholic Eparchy of Phoenix is comprised of many parishes in the western United States, it must remember that regulations governing convicted sexual offenders and related registries may vary. When such concerns arise, it is advisable to contact local police and/or probation authorities and the Safe Environment Office for guidance.