

H O M I L Y H E L P S

Talking Points

- Throughout the Gospel, Christ calls upon His followers to care for the most vulnerable among us, especially children.
- Our faith also calls for us to uphold the value of human life and the dignity of the human person. The protection of children is the responsibility of the entire Church, including the faithful. The protection of children and youth from abuse and other harm is a respect life issue, and we must all do our part to uphold this ideal.
- During Child Abuse Prevention Month, we are reminded of the call to be instruments of justice, working for the common good of all, which includes the protection of children. As Jesus entrusts to Peter the care of the flock, we are reminded that this responsibility belongs to everyone as a matter of charity and justice.
- Child Abuse Prevention Month should lead to heightened awareness of the need to be vigilant about providing a safe environment for all within the Church and for our communities.
- Recent statistics tell us one out of every four girls, and one out of every six boys, are sexually abused before they turn 18. If those statistics are correct, on every Sunday in our congregation are people who have been abused and may continue to experience the pain of that abuse. Reaching out to all victims/survivors of abuse is critical in bringing hope and the love of Christ to them. Our diocese is here to provide anyone suffering from abuse with steps towards healing.
- We are all part of a larger culture of protection and healing within the Church. As members of this culture, we value the prevention of abuse and the support of those who have been abused. Each one of us can play an important role in strengthening this culture. For example, we can better prevent abuse by ensuring that the signs of abuse are identified and reported. Noticing these warning signs, taking them seriously, and reporting them could prevent abuse in the future. Even when we witness inappropriate behavior or something that just doesn't seem quite right, we must report our concerns through the appropriate channels.
- We can also play a role in victim outreach by offering support, compassion, and prayers to those close to us who have been abused. The importance we place on carrying out these acts of charity will go a long way in creating a culture within our Church where children are safe, and victim/survivors find healing.