



MOST REVEREND JOSEPH R. KOPACZ, D.D., PH.D.
CATHOLIC DIOCESE *of* JACKSON

July 1, 2014

Dear Friends:

The Diocese of Jackson in solidarity with the Catholic Church throughout the United States remains faithful to our commitment to foster safe environments for children who are entrusted to our care in our parish, school, and ministry settings. All forms of abuse and neglect must be eradicated, especially sexual misconduct which violates human dignity and the mission of the Church. I am grateful to all church personnel in our diocese who remain vigilant in the implementation of effective safe environment practices, and in the distribution of the best researched based literature for sustaining safe environments.

Over the years the Diocese of Jackson has periodically revised the policy that guides the implantation and monitoring of safe environments throughout our institutions. The last such update was October 1, 2011. This most recent update does not contain wholesale changes, but a process of fine tuning that results in a greater clarity of expression promoting unambiguous expectations and conduct.

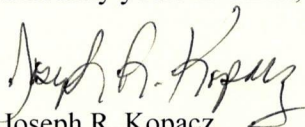
This current document, like the previous ones, finds its direction in response to the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People and the Essential Norms for Diocesan, Eparchial Policies Dealing with Allegations of Sexual Abuse of Minors by Priests or Deacons approved by the United States Conference of Bishops in 2002 and revised in 2011. By this letter I promulgate this revised document entitled Protection of Children Diocese of Jackson. It will take effect on July 1, 2014. It applies to all parishes, schools, offices, agencies and other institutions which operate under the administrative authority of the Jackson Diocese. On July 1, 2014, Protection of Children-Diocese of Jackson supersedes any existing policies of the Jackson Diocese which deal with issues of child protection or child abuse, insofar as they are not in conformity with this document.

This document seeks to protect, enhance and, in some cases, restore the trust that our faith calls for between agents of the Church and the children and adolescents entrusted to our care. To victims and their families I again extend my sincere apology and ask forgiveness on behalf of the Diocese of Jackson for the harm inflicted by any agents of our local Church. If there are any cases of abuse that have not been brought to our attention, I once more urge victims to come forward.

All members of our local Church are called upon to be vigilant in implementing this document fully. I offer my sincere thanks to all of the faithful for their past vigilance and ask for your continued support in the future. Our children need safe environments to thrive as God's children, and the Church is committed to fostering safe environments for all in our churches, schools and institutions.

May the Holy Spirit continue to guide and protect us.

Sincerely yours in Christ,


Joseph R. Kopacz
Bishop of Jackson