



Office of the Bishop
Diocese of Saint Cloud

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Dear Pastors, Principals and Site Administrators,

One of my responsibilities as Bishop is to ensure that all our parishes and schools comply with the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*. We want to provide safe and loving places for our children, youth and vulnerable adults to grow in their faith.

This is evident by the Diocese of Saint Cloud's willingness to settle with abuse victims of the past. I am very sorry for what has happened and vow to work diligently to ensure abuse of a minor or vulnerable adult will not happen or be tolerated ever again. I have created an Office of Safe Environment in the Diocese of Saint Cloud to help ensure that background checks and training takes place for all adults who work with children, youth and vulnerable adults. One of the responsibilities of this new office is to conduct parish audits to ensure the parishes of the diocese are paying attention to the importance of maintaining safe environments.

Please be sure all adults working regularly with children, youth and vulnerable adults have an up-to-date background check. **No person should work or volunteer until a background check has been cleared.** Parishes and schools must follow this if we are ensuring the safety of our children and youth. It is a known fact that programs with children, youth and vulnerable adults are targets for pedophiles. That is why all parishes and schools need to pay due diligence in training and screening of workers and volunteers.

This past year was an unprecedented year in the parishes and Catholic Schools of the Diocese. Many faith formation programs and Catholic Schools were unable to complete the safe environment training for children and youth. There is some concern for faith formation programs and Catholic Schools for the upcoming 2020-2021 school year. Training materials for all students in grades K-12 will be provided by the Office of Safe Environment. I encourage you to do your best to complete training as soon as possible.

If you have questions, please contact Linda Kaiser, the Director of the Office of Safe Environment at 320-251-2340 or lkaiser@gw.stcdio.org.

May God bless you and know how much I appreciate all you do to protect our children, youth and vulnerable adults.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

+ Donald J. Kettler

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Bishop, Diocese of Saint Cloud