Office of the Bishop
Diocese of Saint Cloud
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Dear Pastoral Leaders:

I write to you today to renew my annual commitment as Bishop of the Diocese of Saint Cloud to uphold and support the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People. This sacred responsibility is not only a matter of compliance but a reflection of our deep moral and spiritual obligation to ensure that every child and young person entrusted to our care is safe, respected, and nurtured in a secure environment.

The Diocese of Saint Cloud requires all adults who work or volunteer in our parishes and schools with youth or vulnerable adults to complete a background check and the *CMG Safe Haven* safe environment training program. This training must be renewed every five years using CMG *A Safe Side of the Line*.

Recent audit data from across the diocese shows that we have a strong commitment to these important practices of training adults and youth, however, we still have room for improvement. **I am asking that over this next year, all of our parishes and schools look deeper at internal data and reporting to ensure that we maintain safe environments for all people in our communities.**

This begins with ensuring that those who work with youth and vulnerable adults have current certification through training and background check. This also means that our young people are aware of the dangers around them, not only in our churches but in other aspects of their lives. This is why we provide age-appropriate training each year for young people offered through the Virtus platform, *Empowering God's Children*.

We ask that you and those leading these trainings are doing so when youth are present or offering alternatives for this training so that we can get closer to 100% compliance for all people.

Please visit our diocesan Safe Environment website at www.stcdio.org/safeenvironment for helpful resources for parishes and schools. If you have questions or need assistance, please contact Bailey Ziegler at bailey.ziegler@gw.stcdio.org.

Thank you for your continued dedication to creating and sustaining a safe, faith-filled environment for all.

Yours in Christ,

+ Patrick M. Neary, C.S.C.

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Bishop, Diocese of St. Cloud