



Archdiocese of Seattle

Safe Environment Program

April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month!

All parishes and schools are encouraged to recognize National Child Abuse Prevention Month throughout the month of April.

Part of a nationwide effort to increase awareness about child abuse and abuse prevention, National Child Abuse Prevention Month is a great opportunity for your parish/school community to pray for the eradication of child abuse and the protection of all children. This packet includes liturgical and educational materials to help you in this effort.

Enclosed in this packet, you will find:

- Bulletin Announcements to accompany the weekly readings
- General Intercessions and Music Suggestions for Liturgies
- Safe Environment Links
- "12 Things the Bishops Have Learned From the Clergy Sexual Abuse Crisis" by Bishop Cupich, Chair of the Committee for the Protection of Children & Young People.

More resources will be available on the Safe Environment website at: www.seattlearch.org/sep.

Here are just a few ideas for your parish and school community during Child Abuse Prevention Month:

- Include an intercessory prayer as part of your General Intercessions for liturgies in April.
- Publish bulletin announcements & inserts with tips & information on abuse prevention.
- Distribute blue ribbons in honor of Child Abuse Prevention Month.*
- Encourage students or families to participate in "Pinwheels for Prevention" Activity.
- Make sure Safe Environment resources are available in your brochure rack.
- Host a *Called to Protect for Parents & Families* for your deanery and encourage attendance.
- Have your parish youth group participate in *Called to Protect for Youth*.
- Put links on your parish website to the Safe Environment Program.

*Blue ribbon stickers and blue pinwheels are available for free through the Council for Children & Families: www.ccf.wa.gov/prevention-resources/order-prevention-materials.

According to the 2010 Kennedy Directory, there are approximately 25,324 Catholic parishes and schools in the United States. If every Catholic parish or school did one thing to increase awareness about child abuse, imagine the amazing difference that would make. By educating people and working together we can make a difference in the lives of children!

For more information, on Child Abuse Prevention Month or the Safe Environment Program please call: (206) 274-3188 or email sep@seattlearch.org.

"Child abuse in our society is rampant and we are called to do what we can to stop it. Child Abuse Prevention Month deserves our attention in both prayer and action."

Bishop Blase Cupich; Diocese of Spokane
Chair of the Bishops' Committee for the Protection of Children and Young People



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Child Abuse Prevention Month – April 2011

BULLETIN ANNOUNCEMENTS

SUNDAY, APRIL 3

APRIL IS CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH!

In today's gospel, Jesus opens the eyes of a man blind since birth and gives him the gift of sight. Child abuse is a tragedy that affects the entire community but many people are blind to it. One in every four girls and one in every five boys are sexually abused before the age of 18; 90% of those victims are abused by someone they know. Although we would like to think abuse only happens to "other people," the reality is most of us know someone affected by this tragedy and it is time to open our eyes.

Throughout the month of April, you will find information and resources each week in the bulletin as we will pray together for the eradication of child abuse. For more information about the child abuse prevention, contact the parish office or find more information at:

www.seattlearch.org/sep.

SUNDAY, APRIL 10

I AM THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE!

In today's readings, we hear several stories of new life emerging from death. The tragedy of child abuse has shown to us we need to look at prevention in a whole new way. Preventing child abuse is everyone's responsibility! Here are a few ideas to get you started:

- Listen to Your Children. Strong communication is the foundation for helping children stay safe. Frequently ask them about places they have been and people they have met. Teach them to say NO if someone tries to touch them and let them know they won't be in trouble for telling you if something happens.
- Create a safe environment for children by inspiring others to participate. This could be as simple as inviting someone to a Safe Environment class. If you invited one person a month, at the end of the year there are 12 more people trained in child abuse prevention and even more kids being protected! A schedule of classes can be found at:
www.seattle.setanet.org/classes.php.
- Did you know that teachers, employees, coaches and volunteers in the Archdiocese of Seattle receive abuse prevention training and must have a background check in order to work with children? But what about the children who attend non-Catholic schools? Talk with school administrators and athletic programs to find out what steps they take to protect children.



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BULLETIN ANNOUNCEMENTS

SUNDAY, APRIL 17 (PALM SUNDAY OF THE LORD'S PASSION)

BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD – INTERNET SAFETY FOR FAMILIES

The internet is a great source for communication, information and fun but child molesters can use it to gain access to children and begin the grooming process. Here are some tips for online family safety:

- Navigate through the internet with your child; make it a family activity.
- Place the computer in a common area of the house where the screen is visible.
- Educate yourself and your children about the positive and potentially dangerous aspects of the internet. Remind your child that when they go online, they are dealing with real people.
- Teach your children that Internet Safety means never giving out personal information over the internet. This includes user IDs that reveal a child's name, age, gender, birthday or year of graduation.
- Don't forget to talk to your kids about all forms of electronic communication: chatting, text messaging, online gaming and social networking sites.

For more resources for Internet Safety can be found under "Helpful Links" on the Safe Environment website at: www.seattlearch.org/sep or the handouts received in the *Called to Protect for Ministries* class. A schedule of classes can be found at: www.seattle.setanet.org/classes.php.

Source: King Count Sexual Assault Resource Center

SUNDAY, APRIL 24 (EASTER SUNDAY)

THIS IS THE DAY THE LORD HAS MADE; LET US REJOICE AND BE GLAD!

When the stone is rolled away on Easter morning, the hope and joy of the miracle of the Resurrection is revealed.

In 2009 there were approximately 800,000 cases of child maltreatment (abuse & neglect), according to the US Department of Health & Human Services. These victims often experience devastating & lifelong effects of abuse. Their miracle comes when the abuse stops and the healing can begin. Their hope lies in you when you report suspected abuse to the proper authorities.

If you suspect that a child or vulnerable adult is being (or has been) abused, call the proper law enforcement agency or the DSHS hotline at: 1-866-END-HARM. Reports should be made within 48 hours of discovering the abuse.

For more information about reporting suspect abuse or neglect, please call the Safe Environment Program at (206) 274-3188.



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GENERAL INTERCESSIONS

Please consider using any of the following in your General Intercessions during April liturgies.

- ❖ For the protection of all God's children and the prevention of abuse...
- ❖ For the prevention of all abuse of the young and vulnerable...
- ❖ That the Church, its leaders and all God's people may be signs of hope and healing in a united effort to eradicate abuse...
- ❖ For all victims of abuse. That they may find hope, healing and comfort in the Risen Lord...
- ❖ That civil leaders will work for laws that protect the most vulnerable members of society from oppression and abuse....



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MUSIC SUGGESTIONS FOR LITURGIES

The following songs may be used for your liturgies in the month of April. These recommendations come from the Liturgy Office of the Archdiocese of Seattle and the USCCB Secretariat for Divine Worship.

- Amazing Grace
- As Grains of Wheat
- Flow River, Flow (Hurd)
- For the Healing of the Nations
- Heal Me, O God (Norbet)
- I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say
- May the Lord Bless You (Grayson Brown)
- Restless is the Heart
- Shelter Me, O God
- There is a Balm in Gilead
- You Know Me, Lord



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SAFE ENVIRONMENT LINKS

Archdiocese of Seattle

Safe Environment Program – www.seattlearch.org/sep

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

Office of Children and Youth Protection - www.usccb.org/ocyp

Child Abuse Prevention

Center for Disease Control: Preventing Child Sexual Abuse www.cdc.gov/ncipc/dvp/PreventingChildAbuse.htm

Childhaven – www.childhaven.org

Childhelp – www.childhelpusa.org

Committee for Children – www.cfchildren.org

Council for Children & Families of Washington – www.ccf.wa.gov

Prevent Child Abuse America – www.preventchildabuse.org

US Dept of Health & Human Services - www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/pubs/cm09/cm09.pdf

Washington State Dept of Social & Health Services - www.dshs.wa.gov/ca/safety/prevAbuse.asp?1

American Psychological Association: Resources on Child Abuse - www.apa.org/topics/topicsabuse.html

Community Organizations

King County Sexual Assault Resource Center – www.kcsarc.org

National Center for Missing & Exploited Children – www.missingkids.com

Children's Response Center - www.childrensresponsecenter.org/

Internet Safety

Netsmartz – www.netsmartz.org

National Center for Missing & Exploited Children – www.cybertipline.com

FBI: A Parent's Guide to Internet Safety - www.fbi.gov/publications/pguide/pguidee.htm

Sex Offender Registry

US Department of Justice - www.nsopr.gov

Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs - <http://ml.waspc.org/>

Twelve Things the Bishops Have Learned From the Clergy Sexual Abuse Crisis

BLASE CUPICH

MAY 10, 2010

The Catholic bishops of the United States have learned many lessons from the sex abuse crisis. These twelve are among the most important.

1 The injury to victims is deeper than non-victims can imagine. Sexual abuse of minors is crushing precisely because it comes at a stage in their lives when they are vulnerable, tender with enthusiasm, hopeful for the future and eager for friendships based on trust and loyalty.

2 Despite the justified anger felt by victims toward the church, bishops still need to reach out to them as pastors. Meetings with victims can be challenging for all involved, but they also can be a moment of grace and insight.

3 The causes of the clerical sexual abuse are complex, and it is simplistic to reduce them to easy answers. Many factors have been alleged to “explain” this misconduct by clergy, but the fact is that sexual abuse of minors is found in many different circumstances, perpetrated by family members, leaders of youth organizations, doctors, teachers and others. “Easy answers” underestimate how wide the scope of this problem is in our society.

4 Catholics have been hurt by the moral failings of some priests, but they have been hurt and angered even more by bishops who failed to put children first. People expect religious leaders above all to be immediate and forthright in taking a strong stand in the face of evil, such as the harm done to children and young people by sexual abuse.

5 The counsel of lay people, especially parents, is indispensable in a matter that so deeply affects families. Our capacity to respond to sexual abuse of young people has been bolstered by the insights shared with us by parents as to how to do so effectively.

6 Our priests have a resiliency that future generations will recall with admiration. They have remained committed to their vocation day-in, day-out, despite suffering from the actions of those who have besmirched the priesthood they love. Their steadfastness has built a reservoir of good will with our people and is a major factor in explaining why during this terrible crisis most Catholics in our country remain faithful to the church.

7 The church needs to maintain the mandatory safe environment efforts that have been developed. Experience shows that institutions are not as effective in protecting children if standards are voluntary. Any backsliding on this endangers children first of all, and also the credibility gained through the efforts to eradicate the effects of this scourge. Parishes must be the safest places for a child to be.

8 Bishops need to be mutually accountable in their efforts to protect children and must be willing to participate in transparent, independent audits to demonstrate they are keeping the promises we made. What happens in one place happens to us all.

9 Bishops need to resist the defensiveness that institutions often fall back on in crisis moments. Resorting to a conspiratorial interpretation of attacks and adopting a “circle the wagons” approach only prolongs a problem and does nothing to settle it or heal the victims.

10 Self deception is an inherent part of the illness abusers suffer and includes the inclination to diminish the gravity of their behavior and its effects on the individuals abused and on the church at large. Many even manage to convince themselves that they genuinely cared for the children whom they harmed. This makes it almost impossible for them to come to grips with the evil they perpetrated. Claims often made by perpetrators in the past that they were contrite and would stop abusing are never again going to be taken at face value.

11 Our people’s faith is strong and sustains them even in times of challenge. We receive from them a level of emotional and spiritual support which humbles us. Their trust in God sustains not just themselves but us too.

12 Bishops must partner with public authorities by complying with civil laws with respect to reporting allegations of sexual abuse of minors and cooperating with their investigation. All leaders of the community whether religious or secular need to work together to protect children and young people.

The Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People, which we bishops adopted in 2002 and renewed twice since, provides direction for our handling the sexual abuse of minors by priests. It can be found on the Web site of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops: <http://www.usccb.org/ocyp/charter.shtml>

Bishop Blase Cupich of Spokane, Washington, is Chair of the Committee for the Protection of Children and Young People for the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.