

## Local Administrators

Please take time to do a quick check and verify that all employees and volunteers have taken the Protecting God's Children training. If this task feels a bit overwhelming schools can ask each teacher to provide a volunteer list within their classroom for you to verify. Parishes can ask the Faith Formation/DRE to give you a list of all Catechist and Catechist Aides and any other parent volunteer.

The audit will ask if a background check has been performed so please verify that as well.

Remember, your numbers have to balance. If the numbers don't balance, it is called a **Gap**. You will need to give an explanation as to why there is a Gap and the numbers given do not balance.

**tip** Do we lock our parish class room doors during classes or events? The answer is to use your common sense and set best practices in your own parish. There is no policy or law for the parish to follow. Our schools have polices. We suggest that if you do not have consistence through out your parish campus, call your local police and ask for them to come and do a walk through. I would very much welcome your invitation to come and walk through too. It would very much help me answer questions as they come up in other parishes.

**tip** If you have a recreation group who wants to use the school gym after hours for games or practices, the coach does not need to be trained in PGC if the follow criteria apply. 1. The coach is **not** paid by the school. 2. If the coach is a **volunteer as opposed to a school employee**. 3. If the event/practice is **NOT** a school or parish supported function; it just a community event. 4. If the group is just using the space. You do have the option to ask the coach to take the training. You can approach it from the stand point that the training can really enhance their own awareness.

**tip** Zero Tolerance is our mantra when it comes to protecting our children and youth. Don't ever look away, don't ever ignore a gut feeling, don't ever ignore that little voice in your head. Put the child in the center of the room. Please make sure you have the Promise to Protect Pledge to Heal and Code of Conduct posters posted in your high traffic areas. Last March, I sent two per parish and two per school. Take a look. If you don't have two sets please let me know and I will be happy to send more. It is important for those visual aides to be easily seen.

**The Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People**, affirms our deep commitment to creating a safe environment within our parishes and schools for children and youth. During 2017, a brief summary each month of what the seventeen Articles in the Charter means for us as a community, will be highlighted in our newsletter.

### To Promote

**Article 3** - Diocese/eparchies are not to enter into settlements with which bind the parties to confidentially unless victim/survivor request confidentially and this request is noted in the text of agreement.

Article 4 - Diocese/eparchies are to report any allegations of sexual abuse of a person who is a minor to public authorizes and comply with civil laws and cooperate with investigation in accord with the laws of the jurisdiction in question. If the person is no longer a minor the Diocese/eparchies are to still report the case.

In every instance the victim is to be advised of their right to make a report to the public authorities.

For a copy of the Charter go to [http://www.dioceseoflansing.org/child\\_and\\_youth\\_protection](http://www.dioceseoflansing.org/child_and_youth_protection) under Resources and Information section.



Safe Environment Newsletter

As today marks the middle of the fifth week of Lent, our minds are turning to Holy Week. Many of you have been preparing in some way for all the events, Masses and Services that will take place in our parishes during Holy Week. Without all the preparation that is done ahead of time our Holy Week would not be as beautiful as it is.

In our house, our dining room table is loaded down with all the music preparation and pieces of music that my husband Jon has been working on for weeks and weeks; just to be ready for Holy Week, Easter Vigil and Easter Sunday. Don't worry though, many Lent pieces are still on the table as well.

I'm not sure how he has the energy to prepare for what I see him preparing for and he is just one moving part in our parish. You all know exactly what I mean because you are in the same boat.

All of you are preparing for all of us in the pews. Jesus prepared for us in the pews too. On Holy Thursday night, I find myself trying so hard to comprehend what Jesus must have felt as he knelt in the garden preparing himself for His death. It has to be the most difficult and frightening part of his life. He prayed so deeply and with such trust in God. As He prayed, He didn't hold back what He was feeling. I love how God already knew his deepest thoughts and desires. He knew each one before Jesus prayed about them. I don't know about you, but it's not always easy to be open and honest and to trust Him *completely* with what I fear and desire. Why is it so hard when He already knows? He knows before we ever come to Him.

Jesus already knew what He was getting in me and in you as he dragged that incredibly heavy piece of timber to the top of the hill. That heavy piece of timber *IS*, our fears, our desires, our hurts, our addictions, our baggage, the bad things we do and say about others. Sometimes we hold back what we really need to tell Him because we are afraid. He already knows. He's just waiting. He's prepared!

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