



DIOCESE OF GARY - SAFE ENVIRONMENT

CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH RESOURCE

APRIL 2024



APRIL IS NATIONAL CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH

April is designated as National Child Abuse Prevention Month. Child Abuse Prevention Month has been observed each April since its first presidential proclamation in 1983. We are called through scripture and teaching to protect the life and dignity of the human person. Throughout the year, but especially in the month of April, all are asked to increase awareness, to educate ourselves and the community, and to seek healing for those who have been so tragically impacted by this horror.

The attached resources can be incorporated throughout the month of April to observe National Child Abuse Prevention Month.

CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION BLESSING

Dear Lord, We ask You to bless us “Your holy people” who have gathered to learn new ways to help stop child sexual abuse.

Open our hearts to Your call to be the “eyes, ears and voice of children and young people everywhere.” Give us the vision and grace we need to fulfill the special “commitments” that each of us has made to “Protecting God’s Children” in our homes, churches, schools and communities. Amen.



Child abuse and neglect are common. At least 1 in 7 children have experienced child abuse or neglect in the past year in the United States. This is likely an underestimate because many cases are unreported. In 2020, 1,750 children died of abuse and neglect in the United States.

-Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Essentials for Childhood

Young children experience their world through their relationships with parents and other caregivers. Safe, stable, nurturing relationships and environments are essential to preventing child abuse and neglect.



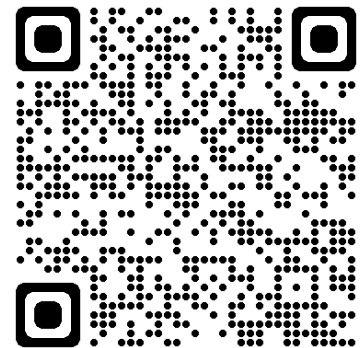
PROMISE TO PROTECT PODCAST

Janet Magee, Co-Founder of Blue Sunday, discusses the organization's history and child abuse prevention month with Melanie Takinen of the USCCB Secretariat of Child and Youth Protection.

Visit www.bluesunday.org/ for more.

Select the link or access the QR Code to listen to the podcast.

[Blue Sunday Child Abuse Prevention | USCCB](#)



LITURGICAL AIDS

Petitions

- For the children who are wounded and tearful, that they may find comfort and healing, we pray to the Lord.
- For those who are living in fear, that they may find safety, we pray to the Lord.
- For those who have had their innocence stolen, may they overcome the darkness and find the light of your heavenly kingdom, we pray to the Lord.
- For those affected by abuse, in all of it's forms, that they may find the courage and strength and continue to grow and trust in the love of our Lord, we pray to the Lord.
- For civic leaders entrusted with upholding the common good and justice, that they may act with wisdom grounded in faith, we pray to the Lord.
- The those who provide accompaniment, that they continue their work with grace and compassion imbued with the Holy Spirit, we pray to the Lord.
- For the Universal Church to recognize and acknowledge our failings, and diligently work to repair past injustices, we pray to the Lord.



Our local **Victim Assistance Coordinator**,

Cheryl Sopo, is available to help anyone who has been abused or victimized by someone representing the Catholic Church.

Cheryl can be reached at (219) 588-9089.



A PRAYER
FOR
HEALING
VICTIMS OF ABUSE

Holy Spirit, comforter
of hearts,
heal your people's wounds
and transform brokenness
into wholeness.

Grant us the courage
and wisdom,
humility and grace, to act
with justice.

Breathe wisdom into our
prayers and labors.

Grant that all harmed by
abuse may find peace
in justice.

We ask this through
Christ, our Lord.

Amen.

Copyright © 2014, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops,
Washington, DC. All rights reserved. To order publication
no. 7-493, visit usccbpublishing.org or call 877-978-0757.



UNA ORACIÓN
DE
SANACIÓN
VÍCTIMAS DE ABUSO

Espíritu Santo, consolador de
corazones,

Cura las heridas de tus hijos
e hijas

Y devuelve la integridad a lo
que ha sido quebrantado.

Concédenos el valor y la
sabiduría,

La humildad y la gracia, para
actuar con justicia.

Sopla tu sabiduría en nuestras
oraciones y empeños.

Que todos los que han sido
heridos por el abuso
encuentren paz y justicia.

Te lo pedimos por Cristo,
nuestro Señor.

Amén.

Copyright © 2014, United States Conference of Catholic
Bishops, Washington, DC. Se reservan todos los derechos.
Para ordenar la publicación no. 7-494 visite el sitio web
usccbpublishing.org o llame al 877-978-0757.

Save the Date

Please save the date for
the 34th Annual IUN Forum
on Child Abuse and Neglect

Friday, April 19, 2024

8:30 AM to 4:00 PM

**Indiana University
Northwest**



The United States Catholic Conference of Bishops *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People* calls for all dioceses to maintain “safe environment programs.” Through VIRTUS® child sexual abuse prevention programs our Diocese continues to fulfill this commitment. Since 2003, the Diocese of Gary has trained more than 24,000 adults to proactively protect children and young people from child sexual abuse. Thank you for your assistance with our Safe Environment Program.