

April is Child Abuse Awareness Month!

Signs of Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse is defined as acts of sexual assault and sexual exploitation of minors by parents or other caretakers. It includes a broad range of behavior and may consist of a single incident or many incidents.

Consider the possibility of sexual abuse when the child

- has difficulty walking or sitting
- suddenly refuses to change for gym
- demonstrates bizarre, sophisticated or unusual sexual knowledge
- becomes pregnant or contracts a venereal disease
- runs away
- exhibits withdrawal, chronic depression, has poor peer relationships
- experiences a drop in academic performance

Consider the possibility of sexual abuse when an adult authority figure (teacher, clergy, parent, coach, or other adult caregiver) close to the child, in conjunction with the above, also

- is unduly protective of the child
- describes marital difficulties involving sexual relations
- lacks social and emotional contacts outside the family
- was sexually abused as a child

What is the Church doing to protect people from abuse?

- ALL Church employees and all volunteers that work with minors in the Diocese of Tyler are required to commit to a Code of Ethics and Integrity after being trained on appropriate.
- Each year, information is made available by every parish through our Safe Environment Program Behaviors to parents/guardians of minors.
- The Church encourages reporting any sexual or physical abuse of minors or vulnerable adults to be reported to the local police or Texas Family and Protective Services 1-800-252-5400 or www.txabusehotline.org .
- Concerns about the conduct of any Church Personnel can be reported to the Promoter of Justice for the Diocese of Tyler, Rev. Gavin Vaverek, JCL, 903 266 2159 promoter@dioceseoftyler.org .
- The Church encourages prayer for all victims of abuse, particularly through intercession of St. Maria Goretti the patroness of abused children. (also Maria Goretti Network www.mgoretti.org)



April 26 is Blue Sunday

Child abuse prevention is everyone's job.