

March 31, 2008

Dear All:

Alleluia! The Lord has Risen!

As we enter the Easter season with the power of Christ's Resurrection, we remember the reality of child abuse that affects many in our society. Our Safe Environment Program includes active participation in observing April as *Child Abuse Awareness Month*. Please take time to promote awareness of Child Abuse during the month of April, and observe April 27 as **Blue Sunday**.

Thankfully in recent years, there has been an increased awareness of the great tragedy of abuse of children. Adults are creating a safer environment for children by being aware of appropriate boundaries and recognizing grooming behaviors. Every adult has both a legal and moral responsibility to help protect children and vulnerable adults.

Nationally, the blue ribbon has become a symbol of victims of abuse. See www.bluesunday.org.

Enclosed is a flyer to be distributed in all parishes, missions, and Catholic schools in the Diocese of Tyler. Also, please find a set of intercessions for use on the Sundays of April 2008.

In addition, please recall that every parish, mission, and school should be actively participating in the Safe Environment Program with ongoing efforts that include, at a minimum, recognition of the September and January Safe Environment Weeks, and active promotion of April as *Child Abuse Awareness Month*. If your parish is behind in its Safe Environment efforts, please see to this immediately. It is imperative that each community actively participate in the Safe Environment Program, as it is part of our obligation under the Charter.

As a further reminder, each parish should be keeping a physical file of whatever is done that is related to Safe Environment, or promoting Ethics and Integrity. These filed materials will be required for the upcoming national audit, which will include some parish visitations.

Blessings,

Rev. Gavin N. Vaverek, JCL
Promoter of Justice

Sample intercessions for Sundays of April 2008

April 6

For an end of abuse of the weak and vulnerable, particularly all children. We pray to the Lord.

April 13

That families and communities may work together to create a safe environment where the sacred dignity of every person is respected and protected. We pray to the Lord.

April 20

That perpetrators of abuse may come to recognize the evil they have committed, and genuinely embrace penance and conversion of life. We pray to the Lord.

April 27

That through our efforts and God's Mercy, all victims of abuse will find healing and peace. We pray to the Lord.