

April is National Child Abuse Prevention Month

Suggestions for parish awareness and involvement...

1. Pray the Maria Goretti prayer at each Mass.
2. Have available Maria Goretti prayer cards in the foyer, pews, etc.
3. Print the Maria Goretti prayer from the diocesan website...can be used as a handout during various adult and/or children's faith formation sessions during April.
4. Print the Maria Goretti prayer from the diocesan website and use on the back of the bulletin insert.
5. Gather information from the Prevent Child Abuse America or Prevent Child Abuse Texas websites and provide information, tips, available community support in the parish bulletin each week during April.
6. Using the same websites listed above, locate and print available activities to use during faith formation sessions or on the back of the children's bulletin each Sunday.
7. Invite your local police department to provide finger printing and tips to parents. *The children love McGruff the Crime Dog.*
8. Hold a Child Abuse Prevention poster contest during April...award 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place prizes...can be simple ribbons to donated items from the community.
9. Purchase materials from Channing Bete company
@ www.pcaamerica.channing-bete.com
10. Run a five week series of handouts covering several topics. List the upcoming handout in the bulletin the week before. This creates an ongoing interest.
11. If outdoor events are scheduled in the month of April have a balloon launch. Each person is given a helium filled balloon then a brief prayer is given for all those who suffer, have suffered or have died as a result of abuse. The balloons are let go as a symbol of our prayer for the children's freedom from abuse. *(Area merchants may get involved and donate the balloons)*
12. Host a speaker from your community who works with the prevention of child abuse, such as...parents anonymous, parent service centers, child psychologists, etc.
13. Invite your Parish Contact Person to speak at the Masses about the Safe Environment Program. Most parishioners have no idea who their contact person is.
14. Parents Nurture – Kid's Blossom project...have a parish grounds beautification day and invite families to plant flowers or create an outdoor prayer space for victims of abuse.

AVAILABLE RESOURCES

www.preventchildabuse.org

www.bluesunday.org

www.childhelp.org

www.preventchildabusetexas.org

www.netsmartz.org

www.netsmartzkids.org

www.nsteens.org

www.safechild.org