



## Catholic Diocese of Arlington

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Each year during the month of April, National Child Abuse Prevention Month, we recall our promise to protect and our pledge to heal. The protection of minors from all forms of abuse is one of our greatest responsibilities as a Church. Our contribution to the healing of victims of abuse is an also intrinsic part of our effort to extend the compassion, care and love of Jesus to those who are suffering in our midst today.

With my brother Bishops in the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, I encourage all of the faithful to participate in National Child Abuse Prevention Month through prayer and by promoting awareness of the need to protect and heal. Just as Jesus embraced the children who came to Him, we pray that every child and young person will always find safety and security in our churches, communities and in their homes. Through the intercession of Mary, Mother of Consolation, may we continue to make every effort to heal and protect those who are most vulnerable in our midst.

Sincerely in Christ,

Most Reverend Michael F. Burbidge  
Bishop of Arlington

### What is the process for dealing with allegations of sexual abuse of a minor?

- All allegations are reported immediately to legal authorities.
- The Diocese cooperates fully with any law enforcement investigation.
- All allegations are forwarded to the diocesan Victim Assistance Coordinator so that outreach to the alleged victim-survivor can be offered.
- After a prompt internal initial investigation, if the allegation meets a preliminary threshold of credibility, the accused cleric is placed on administrative leave.
- An announcement is published at parishes and any diocesan institution where the accused cleric served.
- When the diocesan review is complete, all evidence is considered by the Diocesan Review Board, which consists mostly of lay men and women.
- The Review Board determines whether the allegation is credible and advises the Bishop regarding the accused cleric's suitability for ministry. (No cleric with a credible allegation of sexual abuse against a minor may return to ministry.)
- If an act of child abuse by the accused cleric is admitted or established, the Bishop will take appropriate canonical action, up to and including laicization.

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT HOW THE DIOCESE  
WORKS TO CONFRONT AND ADDRESS SEXUAL  
ABUSE OF MINORS BY THE CLERGY, GO TO



**[ARLINGTONDIOCESE.ORG/CHILDPROTECTION](https://www.arlingtondiocese.org/childprotection)**

### How to Report a Suspected Incident of Child Abuse or Sexual Misconduct

The Office of Victim Assistance seeks to reach out and support victim-survivors of sexual abuse. The Diocese of Arlington encourages anyone who knows of any misconduct or abuse on the part of any cleric or employee of the Diocese to report it to the Virginia Attorney General hotline ([VirginiaClergyHotline.com](https://www.virginiaclergyhotline.com)), and also to contact the diocesan Victim Assistance Coordinator at 703-841-2530. The diocesan child protection policy is online at [arlingtondiocese.org](https://www.arlingtondiocese.org).

Should you have any questions regarding the Office of Child Protection and its policies in the Diocese of Arlington, please call 703-841-3847.

## PROMISE TO PROTECT: The Office Of Child Protection

SINCE 2004:

**425,000+**  
**YOUTHS** HAVE BEEN "SAFE ENVIRONMENT" TRAINED

**60,875+**  
**ADULTS** HAVE RECEIVED "SAFE ENVIRONMENT" TRAINING

**63,000+**  
**BACKGROUND CHECKS** CONDUCTED BY THE DIOCESE

**42**  
**FACILITATORS**  
WHO LEAD "SAFE ENVIRONMENT" TRAININGS



**96**  
**PARISH/SCHOOL/MINISTRY REPRESENTATIVES** FOR THE OFFICE OF CHILD PROTECTION

**1,370**  
**TRAININGS**

FOR ADULTS TO HELP THEM UNDERSTAND CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE, IDENTIFY POTENTIAL PROBLEMS, AND IMPLEMENT DIOCESAN POLICIES

THE DIOCESE CONTINUES TO

**EQUIP PARENTS**



BY PROVIDING AWARENESS TRAINING RELATED TO SOCIAL MEDIA, HUMAN TRAFFICKING, AND PORNOGRAPHY

## PLEDGE TO HEAL: The Office Of Victim Assistance

SINCE 2005:

**87**  
**PRAYER SERVICES & MASSES**

FOR THOSE IMPACTED BY SEXUAL ABUSE WITH MORE THAN 4,000 ATTENDEES

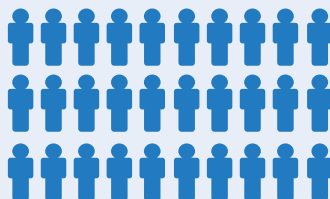


**TRAINING FOR CLERGY**

ANNUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES ABOUT HOW TO HELP VICTIMS HEAL FROM ABUSE

**ANNUAL RETREATS**

ANNUAL DAYLONG RETREATS FOR VICTIMS AND FAMILIES WITH AN AVERAGE ATTENDANCE OF 20 PEOPLE



MORE THAN **600** PEOPLE

HAVE CONTACTED THE DIOCESE FOR ADVICE, GUIDANCE, AND SUPPORT; MOST ARE NOT VICTIMS OF CLERGY SEXUAL ABUSE

**40+**  
**SUPPORT GROUPS**

FOR VICTIMS AND FAMILIES WITH AN AVERAGE ATTENDANCE OF 20 PEOPLE



**INCREASED CONTACT** WITH VICTIM-SURVIVORS THROUGH INDIVIDUAL MEETINGS AND MONTHLY GATHERINGS