

**“Your mission is to help ensure that abuse is prevented. Yet prevention is never just a set of protocols or procedures. It is about helping to form, throughout the Church, a culture of care, in which the protection of minors and persons in vulnerable situations is not seen as an obligation imposed from outside, but as a natural expression of faith.”**

ADDRESS OF POPE LEO XIV TO THE PLENARY  
ASSEMBLY OF THE PONTIFICAL COMMISSION FOR THE  
PROTECTION OF MINORS  
16 March 2026



## Let Us Pray

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.

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**DIOCESE of  
PALM BEACH**  
PROTECTION AND SAFEGUARDING  
THE PEOPLE OF GOD

9995 N. Military Trail  
P.O. Box 109650  
Palm Beach Gardens, FL 33410  
**561-775-9500**

[www.diocesepb.org/safe-environments](http://www.diocesepb.org/safe-environments)

Every child deserves a  
**safe environment.**

**DEVELOP** appropriate  
relationships

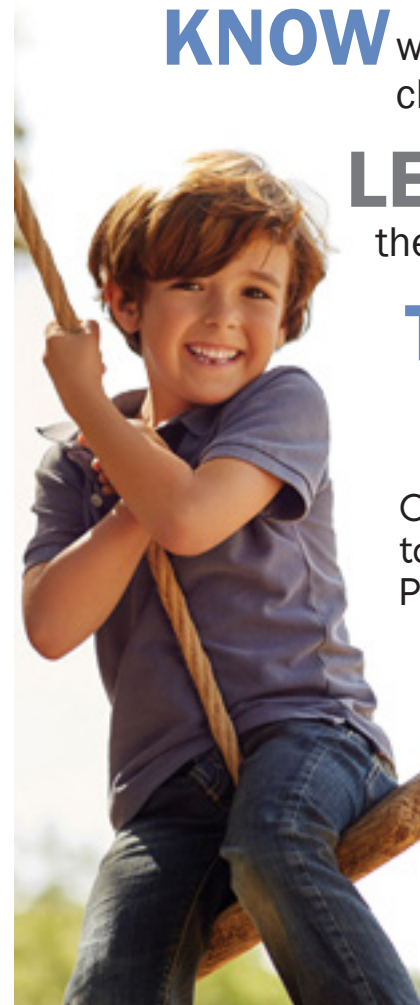
**TEACH** our children about  
safety

**KNOW** who has your  
children

**LEARN**  
the warning signs

**TRUST**  
your instincts

Our Promise  
to **Protect** and  
Pledge to **Heal**



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Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Maintaining the highest standards of a safe environment is essential in all the parishes, schools and ministries of the Diocese of Palm Beach because the Church's mission is founded upon the God-given dignity of every human person, especially the most vulnerable. Our parishes and schools are not merely institutions; they are communities of faith and learning where children, families and adults must be able to trust that their well-being is protected and that they are treated with respect, care and compassion.

The Diocese is firmly committed to the vigorous enforcement of its Code of Professional and Ministerial Conduct for all clergy, employees, volunteers, educators and others who serve in any diocesan, parish, school or ministry setting. We maintain a zero-tolerance approach toward all forms of abuse, misconduct, exploitation, harassment or boundary violations. Through ongoing education, background screening, safe environment training and active supervision, we seek not only to respond to misconduct but, above all, to prevent it from occurring.

Complete transparency in the handling of allegations and sensitive situations is equally indispensable, as it protects justice, credibility and the process of healing. The Diocese is committed to ensuring that all allegations are taken seriously, investigated promptly, and addressed fairly and responsibly.

The protection of children and vulnerable adults remains a sacred responsibility from which the Diocese will never waver.

Sincerely yours in Christ,  
Bishop Manuel de Jesús Rodríguez



### **Office of Safe Environments**

Personal safety for our students is our highest priority, especially when it comes to protecting children from sexual misconduct and violence.

We require:

Background Checks

Education and Training for Adults

Children's Training

### **Background Checks**

All Church Personnel, ages 18 and older, are required to submit a Level 2 criminal background investigation. Eligibility for employment, volunteer work, or ministry will be contingent and conditioned upon a satisfactory background investigation. This background investigation will be updated every five (5) years.

### **Education and Training — Adults**

All Church Personnel are required to complete Safe Environment Training through the VIRTUS program, if they are in contact with children. This training must be renewed every five years and must be completed prior to service. All employees are required to complete safe environment training upon hiring regardless of their contact with minors and vulnerable adults.

### **Children's Training**

As part of its effort to protect all children from harm, as well as to create safe environments in which children can learn and grow in faith, we provide semi-annual safe environment training to all children enrolled in diocesan Catholic schools and parish religious education programs. In age-appropriate lessons, the children learn about God's love for them; personal space; treating ourselves and others with respect and care; safe and unsafe touches; and how to get help from a trusted adult if needed.

### **IMPORTANT NUMBERS**

#### **REPORTING ABUSE INFORMATION:**

If you or anyone has been abused or victimized by someone representing the Catholic Church, help is available.

Report any abuse of a child or vulnerable adult to the Department of Children and Family Services.

If someone is in immediate danger, call **911**.

**FL Abuse Hotline: 1-800-962-2873**

**Alert the Diocesan Reporting Line:  
1-833-710-0909**

**Victim Assistance Coordinator:  
561-775-9558**

For detailed information, or to view our policies, please contact the office or visit our website at:

**[www.diocesepb.org/safe-environments](http://www.diocesepb.org/safe-environments)**