



ALL GOD'S CHILDREN

Volume 1, Issue 1

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Changes in the Office of Child Protection

With the reorganization of the offices at the Pastoral Center this summer the Office of Child Protection/Victim's Assistance now has a full time director. Cathy Shannon, long time employee of the Pastoral Center and Archdiocese was asked to step into this role. Cathy has been working in this area on a very part-time basis since 2002 while serving as the director of Religious Education.

With this move the Archdiocese has made a long term commitment to the protection of "All God's Children". The intent of this change is expand and strength the two-fold purpose of the office:

1. To provide on-going emotional, psychological and spiritual services to those sexually abused as children.
2. To expand and strengthen preventative screening, training and education so that children/youth in our programs will find a safe environment in the Church.

One way of fulfilling these goals is the creation of this quarterly newsletter. The newsletter's title—**ALL GOD'S CHILDREN**, will address issues of protecting all children/youth currently in parish and Catholic school programs, for those who minister to these children and to the survivors of sexual abuse that occurred in the past. This newsletter has been designed so that the first 2 pages are directed to parish and school employees and leadership. The last 2 pages will contain information for the general public. Parishes and schools are encouraged to print all or part of this information in their newsletters, bulletin, family pages etc.

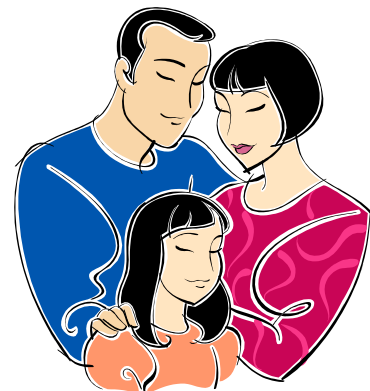
This commitment enables the archdiocese to provide on-going training, resources and support for parishes and schools as well as providing support and assistance to victims in terms of gatherings, support groups and spiritual opportunities.

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Reminder:

All employees must have a criminal background check run at the time of employment and attend training at least every 3 years.

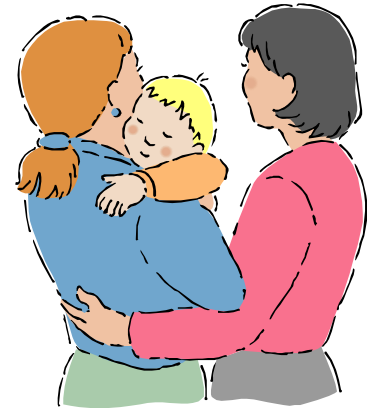
Log sheets to report training of employees and volunteers are to be faxed to the Human Resource Office-503-230-1477. Log sheets are available on the HR website.



Office Changes continued from previous page

The office is looking at new materials and resources for training employees/volunteers and the education of parents and children. Cathy hopes to be visiting parishes this year to talk with staff members about strengthening our efforts to make children feel safe as well as continuing the train-the-trainer workshops.

Later this month, Fr. Dennis O'Donovan will bless the new office space and the work of the Child Protection Office. We ask God to grant us the wisdom and knowledge to protect all children/youth involved in our schools and parishes. We ask God's blessing on our efforts to be a support and resource to assist in the healing of victims of sexual abuse. We pray too that the steps the Catholic Church has taken to prevent abuse of children will encourage other schools, churches, community and state agencies to join in efforts to protect all children.



Job Well Done— St Mary School/Parish in Albany

Last spring a courageous young student told principal, Christine Meadows that one of her teachers had touched her in a private area. Chris, the pastor, Fr. John Betts and the faculty sprang into action. The police were called, the teacher was arrested, and action was taken to secure the safety of all the children. Counseling was provided for children,

families and faculty. Regular communication and resources were provided for families of the school.

We hope that all of our efforts will keep our children safe but when something does happen we want to be prepared to offer the quick and thorough response that Chris and Fr. Betts provided for the families of St. Mary.

Chris has assisted us with suggestions and practical tips for parishes and schools for this kind of response. Cathy will be sharing this information at upcoming principal, DRE and Youth Ministry gatherings.

Thank You

Time Again to Provide Safe Environment Training and Education



Parishes and schools are required to train all volunteers who work regularly with children by using the video from the State of Oregon—The Role of the Mandatory Reporter in Child Abuse Cases and the Archdiocesan Policy on Child Abuse. This training can not be substituted with other programs for the initial training of employees and volunteers. However parishes and

schools can provide additional training using other resources.

Education of parents on keeping their children safe is a very different kind of education. This education must also be offered at least once a year.

For questions about the distinctions of these two areas of inservice please contact Cathy Shannon.



ALL GOD'S CHILDREN

BE NOT AFRAID

As the Archdiocese has dealt with so many claims, some have experienced frustration. We have all heard statements like: "all they want is the money." or "why don't they just move on with their lives and get over it, after all it happened so long ago." Maybe we have even had these same thoughts or hear these words come out of our own mouths.

In this first newsletter I would like to focus on the reality for those abused by a priest when they were young. The victims of clergy abuse are not the enemy just as those of us in the pews are not. Many parishioners, volunteers, employees and clergy are appalled and saddened by the sinful actions of a few. We need to stay focused on what is important, members of our church family have been violently hurt by a person they were taught to respect and honor. Hurt by

a person they believed cared for them. This hurt is not like a skinned knee that is going to heal without ill effects on their being. This hurt goes deep into the spirit and soul of the person. This hurt affects how they see themselves, how they relate to others and the choices they make in their lives. Victim are often forced to keep the "secret" which further isolates them from others who could help.

Although we may not have committed the abuse or covered it up, each of us does have a role to play in the support and care of victims of abuse. It is who we are as Catholics— to care for those in need. If you or someone you knows was abused by a priest or employee of the church, the Archdiocese would like to provide opportunities of healing such as counseling, support groups, retreats etc. Please contact Cathy Shannon for information.

☺ CONTACT:

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Ember Day—September 27

Please plan to join Archbishop Vlazny and other in observing this day of prayer and fasting for the healing of victims of child sexual abuse and for reconciliation with the Church. Check with your local parish for scheduled prayer services or Mass on this day.

St. Maria Goretti

Maria was 12 years old when she was sexual assaulted by a 20 year old neighbor. Before she died she forgave her attacker, who was sent to prison. During his 28 years in jail, he repented of his hideous crime. Upon release he went to Maria's mother and sought her forgiveness, too. Maria died in 1902 and in 1950 was recognized as a heroic Christian by

being proclaimed St. Maria Goretti.

A young man who was sexually abused began the Maria Goretti Network as a way of promoting his own healing and the healing of



others. Local chapters of Maria Goretti Network provide peer support through regular meetings and prayer. Meetings are open to any one who has been sexually abused and of any religious or non-religious background. Survivors helping each other journey toward recovery.

Continue to next page.

For more information about the Maria Goretti Network or to express interest in beginning a local chapter in Western Oregon, contact Cathy Shannon by phone or email or Maria Goretti Network: www.mgoretti.org

This information on St. Maria, the network and the prayer is taken from the Maria Goretti Network brochure.

**ATTENTION ALL PARENTS
AND ADULTS UPCOMING
EDUCATIONAL MEETING**

**Recognizing Child Molesters: A
New Approach to Protecting
Children**

Presented by : Washington County
Sheriffs

September 23—in Spanish

September 30—in English

At St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church, Aloha

Call Donna for more information

503-649-9044

St. Maria Goretti Patroness of Abused Children

Survivors Prayer

Dear God, we ask you to help all those who suffer from abuse. Help them find healing and peace in their life. May Maria Goretti who was strengthened by Your Grace join with us in prayer for healing of all victims of abuse, particularly those abused as children or young adults.

Grant us your Love that we might reach out to them in Your Name with hope in times of trial. As Maria prayed for her attacker, grant us the grace to pray for the true conversion of all involved with the abuse: that they might seek Your Mercy through prayer and penance. Loving God, pour into our hearts and lives your healing Spirit, that the sacredness of every human person might be respected and protected as the precious image of God.

Help us to live in the peace which Maria Goretti had found in Christ and in the love of his mother Mary

We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



What Can Parents Do to Protect Their Children

These tips and other resources can be found on the Missing and Exploited Children's website, www.missingkids.com.

- Listen to your children. Pay attention if they tell you they don't want to be with someone or go somewhere.
- Take time to talk to your children. Encourage open communication and learn how to be an active listener.
- Notice when someone shows one or all of your children a great deal of attention or begins giving them gifts.
- Teach your children they have the right to say NO to any touch or actions by others that makes them feel scared, uncomfortable, or confused. Teach them to tell you immediately if this happens. Reassure them that you're there to help and it is ok to tell you anything.
- Be sensitive to any changes in your children's behavior or attitude.
- Screen babysitters and caregivers—follow up on references.
- Provide oversight and supervision of your children's computer use. Know who they are communicating with online and where they have access to computers.
- Be involved in your children's activities. As an active participant, you'll have a better opportunity to observe how the adults in charge interact with your children.
- Work with your child's school (and Church) to institute sound child-safety programs as part of their curriculum.
- Practice basic safety skills with your children and discuss their safety openly and honestly.