



CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF JACKSON

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Dear Friends:

The Catholic Church has always demonstrated a concern for children. Since 1986 the Diocese of Jackson has been committed to ensuring that children served by the Church are not at risk of sexual abuse by Church Personnel. Sexual misconduct by Church personnel violates human dignity and the mission of the Church. Over the years the policies have undergone revision and updating to reflect the Church's care and concern to create a safe environment for our children. Our last revision took effect in October 2003. Now we have revised our policies and procedures once more, in response to the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People and the Essential Norms for Diocesan, Eparchial Policies Dealing with Allegations of Sexual Abuse of Minors by Priests or Deacons* approved by the United States Conference of Bishops in 2002 and revised in 2011.

By this letter I promulgate this revised document entitled **Protection of Children-Diocese of Jackson**. It will take effect on October 1, 2011. It applies to all parishes, schools, offices, agencies and other institutions which operate under the administrative authority of the Jackson Diocese. On October 1, 2011, **Protection of Children-Diocese of Jackson** supersedes any existing policies of the Jackson Diocese which deal with issues of child protection or child abuse, insofar as they are not in conformity with this document.

This document seeks to protect, enhance and, in some cases, restore the trust that our faith calls for between agents of the Church and the children and adolescents entrusted to our care.

I have witnessed the hurt and anger that is involved in child sexual abuse. To victims and their families I again extend my sincere apology and ask forgiveness on behalf of the Diocese of Jackson for the harm inflicted by any agents of our local Church. If there are any cases of abuse that have not been brought to our attention, I once more urge victims to come forward.

If there are any agents of the Diocese who believe themselves to be a risk to children, I urge them to come forward and seek assistance. All members of our local Church are called upon to be vigilant in implementing this document fully. I offer my sincere thanks to all of the faithful for their past vigilance and ask for your continued support in the future. Our children deserve safe environments and the Church is committed to keeping our churches, schools and institutions safe environments for all.

May the Holy Spirit continue to guide and protect us.

Yours sincerely in Christ,

Joseph N. Latino
Bishop of Jackson