



**MOST REVEREND JOSEPH R. KOPACZ, D.D., PH.D.**  
CATHOLIC DIOCESE *of* JACKSON

July 15, 2021

Dear Priests, Deacons, and Lay Ecclesial Ministers:

This letter refers to forthcoming documents that are substantial, but with patience and perseverance I am confident that this body of best practices in time will be a blessing for our ministries and for our diocese. Be assured that Carolyn Callahan and the staff in the office of Temporal Affairs, along with Father Lincoln Dall and the office of the Vicar General have done their due diligence to prepare these materials. This corpus of protocols and procedures is aligned with many Archdioceses and Dioceses in the United States.

The Diocese of Jackson, like all multi-faceted organizations, periodically has produced manuals for protocols and procedures to train and guide diocesan leadership, lay, religious and ordained to be good stewards in service to God's people. However, publications quickly can be shelved and the best practices contained within are implemented unevenly and unreliably. This latest edition builds upon the expertise of those who have gone before us, and is informed by the painful experiences and problems that arose when protocols were ignored. The lengthy questionnaire that accompanies the policy manual is a reliable and necessary guide to navigate around and through the body of best practices. It calls for a thorough annual evaluation that when properly executed, will foster a culture of financial administration that faithfully oversees the treasure of the people of God entrusted to us.

An applicable parallel that comes to mind is the diocesan-wide safe environment program for the protection of children and young people that has been advanced in a systematic way on an annual basis for nearly two decades. These efforts have reaped a rich harvest of restored trust, an evolution that did not happen overnight. It is the good fruit of commitment, perseverance, encouragement, and most of all, a love for the people of God. The same will be required if we are to transform our diocesan-wide network of temporal affairs into an outstanding organization that safeguards the generosity of our people. To accomplish the goal there can be no shortcuts, and our chancery staff is more than willing and capable to assist whenever you call upon them.

May our God of encouragement and perseverance direct our minds and hearts in this process.

Yours sincerely in Christ,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read "Joseph R. Kopacz".

Joseph R. Kopacz  
Bishop of Jackson