

**DIOCESE OF HARRISBURG  
OFFICE OF THE BISHOP**



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My Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Every April our nation observes National Child Abuse Prevention Month. Once again, I wish to express how profoundly sorry I am for the deep pain survivors' of abuse have experienced. It is true that in the past, Church officials and those in our Diocese failed in their responsibilities to protect children from abuse. Child abuse is abhorrent and our past negligence is inexcusable. We continue to offer support to survivors.

However, drastic changes have occurred in our Church since 2002, specifically to ensure children, young people and vulnerable adults are protected. This protection is not just accomplished by our clergy, staff and cleared volunteers, but by all people of good will, working together to ensure the safety of our children.

During this month, we also draw attention to the dedicated work of so many who strive daily to keep our children and vulnerable adults safe. Whether in a Catholic school, parish Religious Education Programs, youth retreats or any of the many programs and events sponsored by our Diocesan offices, we are all working together to make these experiences safe. In the Diocese of Harrisburg, more than 13,800 clergy, educators, administrators and volunteers have undergone extensive background checks and training in order to work with our youth. Our offices of Youth Protection, Safe Environment and Victim Assistance continue to work with parish, school and program staff to ensure training and prevention procedures are followed. I am grateful for all of these dedicated members of our faith community as we continue to strive to offer a safe environment for those children, youth, and vulnerable adults whom worship in our parishes and are active in our various programs and ministries.

In closing, I invite you to join me in asking Our Lord to protect every child, especially those in our care, and that all those that have been abused or affected by abuse may find healing and peace.

Sincerely in Christ,

Most Reverend Ronald W. Gainer  
Bishop of Harrisburg

*The Diocese of Harrisburg encourages anyone aware of misconduct or abuse by any person affiliated with the Diocese to report it to local law enforcement and to the Diocese by calling 1-800-626-1608.*