



August 25, 2020

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

As your archbishop I want to take this opportunity to pledge my unwavering commitment to the protection of children and young people. I share your deep concern for the safety of our children, and I assure you that the vigilant work of the archdiocese to safeguard children and young people is strong and unwavering.

As I express my commitment to protect children and young people in the Church, I offer my heartfelt apologies to anyone who has suffered sexual abuse at the hands of a member of the clergy or any worker in the Church. The breach of the most sacred trust which children and young people place in those who represent the Church is the source of deepest sorrow for me personally, as I know that it is for all of you.

The Archdiocesan Office of Child and Youth Protection are committed full-time to the prevention of sexual abuse of minors in the Church, to the promotion of safety for children and young people, and to the ongoing care of those who have suffered sexual abuse. Since 2002, over 100,000 adults who are employed by or volunteer in our parishes and institutions, and who, in the course of their service to the Church, are in the presence of minors, have participated in the professionally developed and presented program entitled "Protecting God's Children." The program equips those who serve the Church to recognize questionable behavior, to implement best practices for the safety of our children, and to take the necessary steps to address even the suspicion that a cleric or other Church worker has done something inappropriate or wrong. In addition, all clergy, employees and volunteers whose service in the Church brings them into contact with children must have a regular background check reviewed by the Office of Child and Youth Protection. for those who have lived outside the state of Missouri. Also, the archdiocese has the Code of Ethical Conduct to guide workers and volunteers in the protection of children and young people.

Annually, all children enrolled in Kindergarten through grade 9 in all archdiocesan schools and parish school of religion programs receive the "Safe Touch" curriculum. The "Safe Touch" curriculum intends to educate children, adolescents, and teens, on appropriate physical boundaries with peers and adults. The curriculum also includes age appropriate lessons on physical boundary violations, how to identify and report inappropriate interactions to safe adults, and steps children can take to participate in their own safety. Recently the curriculum was updated and enhanced to include additional information and resources related to social media and technology safety.

For my part, I desire to speak with all who have been the victims of abuse in the Church. I want to offer whatever help I can to the healing of the deep wound inflicted by sexual abuse, especially when it is perpetrated by the clergy or other Church workers.

The archdiocese will continue to offer assistance in the healing of all who suffer the grave effects of sexual abuse. The Church is, likewise, committed to doing everything possible to prevent any member of the clergy or other worker, who has harmed a child or young person, from continuing his or her service in the Church.

The Church relies on the help of God's grace to remain firm in her resolve and effective in her action to protect children and young people. Let us all pray that we may always express the love of Christ for children and the most vulnerable in our midst.

Invoking God's blessing upon you and your homes, I remain

Sincerely yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "+ Mitchell T. Rozanski." The signature is written in a cursive style with a cross at the beginning.

Most Reverend Mitchell T. Rozanski
Archbishop of St. Louis