



M E M O R A N D U M

TO: Arlington Diocesan Personnel (Employees and Volunteers)
FROM: Deacon Marques Silva, Director, Office of Child Protection and Safety
DATE: July 6, 2012
RE: **Notification of Child Protection Policy, OPCYP Compliance Requirements and Mandatory Training**

Welcome to the Diocese of Arlington. As part of our ongoing efforts to ensure the safety of all children in the Diocese and to carry out the mandates set forth by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' *Charter for the Protection of Children/Young People*, this memo features the diocesan *Policy on the Protection of Children/Young People and Prevention of Sexual Misconduct and/or Child Abuse* (Policy) and information on how this Policy relates to your role as a member of our diocesan family. The Policy is primarily a formal statement recognizing that all children have the right to be safe and protected from harm in any and all Church environments.

Diocesan policy requires that all adult personnel be fully compliant with the requirements of the Office for the Protection of Children/Young People (OPCYP) before beginning a work or youth-related ministry. "Personnel" includes every priest, deacon, religious sister or brother, seminarian and adult employee of the Diocese (regardless of the individual's contact with children), in addition to all adult volunteers (with substantial contact with children).

For all adult personnel, **full compliance is a condition of employment and ministry** and is comprised of the completion and clearance of background checks, other specific paperwork and the attendance to initial and ongoing safe-environment training. It is important to note that there are slight differences between the background check requirements for employees versus volunteers with substantial contact with children. More information regarding the specific differences can be obtained from the liaison that has been established at your parish or school, who is your immediate contact with regards to compliance questions.

After receiving and completing the compliance packet, it is essential to submit the completed packet to your liaison no later than **one week** upon receiving the documents. The liaison will then review the packet for errors and will submit the documents to the OPCYP for processing. Remember, for the utmost protection of children, individuals that have not been cleared by the OPCYP may not conduct any diocesan work or volunteer-related activities until they are fully compliant. To greatly reduce your waiting time before beginning your ministry, please ensure that your documents are entirely completed before providing the packet to your liaison.

In addition to the background check and paperwork requirements of compliance, there is also a training component for all personnel to complete within 45 days of the initiation of employment or volunteer activities, which is measured by the OPCYP paperwork processing date. The initial 4-hour safe-environment training for adults in the Arlington Diocese is fulfilled through attending the *VIRTUS Protecting God's Children* program. All participants must pre-register online at www.virtus.org (a complete schedule is available on the website) with their full legal names. Attendance to the initial 4-hour training is only required once, although there is an annual follow-up training component for most personnel through a DVD entitled *Keeping the Promise Alive* available at the individual's parish/school.

Again, welcome to the Diocese and best wishes to you as you begin your ministry here. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the OPCYP by phone at (703) 841-3847 or e-mail at opcyp@arlingtondiocese.org.