

Message from Cardinal Mahony

Dear People of God of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles:

In June 2002, the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People* was adopted by the Catholic Bishops of the United States. The *Charter* in 17 Articles makes the pledge to resolve the crisis of sexual abuse of children and young people in our Church. Furthermore, the *Charter*, which was revised in 2005, encourages all those in parish ministry who have responsibility for young people to support and collaborate with the clergy in protecting our children and promoting healing and reconciliation among victims and survivors.

In 2004, I published the “Report to the People of God: Clergy Sexual Abuse in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles.” At that time, I wrote: “You have my commitment that all of us in leadership of the Archdiocese will work closely with all of you, our Catholic community, to make certain that everyone in our Church – especially our children and youth – is safe, and that their faith lives are nourished through our various ministries and apostolates” [February 17, 2004].

This Tidings insert documents the commitment of the Archdiocesan leadership and our Catholic community “to make certain that everyone in our Church — especially our children and youth — is safe.”

At the Archdiocesan level, the collaborative efforts of the offices of Victims Assistance Ministry, Safeguard the Children, Vicar for Clergy, Department of Catholic Schools, Religious Education, Human Resources and Legal Counsel have resulted in programs for both adults and children being implemented and policies being developed and promulgated. Together, these combined efforts and comprehensive programs address the safety issues surrounding our children and youth. I am so very grateful to all who have been involved in the protection of our children. Indeed, the commitment of time

and talent attest to the Holy Spirit working through and among us.

On the parish level, our parishes have established Safeguard the Children Parish Committees. These committees ensure that all adults and volunteers working with or around children have had background checks. These parish committees have diligently overseen the training of all parish staff and volunteers in the protection of children and youth. Over the last few years, we have also seen the extensive implementation of programs designed for children and youth in self-protection.

Not only have these parish committees advanced training at all levels, but they have spent time and resources on parish plant improvements to guarantee children’s safety – changes such as windows being placed on all office doors, safe arrival and departure procedures, proper supervision of all Church programs. I commend these efforts.

Since the promulgation of the *Charter*, the leadership and people of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles have dedicated themselves to establishing practices, policies, procedures and programs to ensure that the goals of the *Charter* have been implemented. Thank you for reviewing this insert and familiarizing yourself with this important information.

Asking the Lord’s blessings upon you, I am

Sincerely yours in Christ,

His Eminence

Cardinal Roger Mahony

Archbishop of Los Angeles

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