BISHOP VEROT
CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

WELCOME, VOLUNTEER!

On behalf of the entire Bishop Verot family, welcome and thank you for supporting us with your time, talent, and generous spirit. Before volunteering, there are a few requirements that must be satisfied to assure the safest possible environment on campus for all our students.

Attached is the Bishop Verot Catholic High School Volunteer Packet that must be completed and returned to Ms. Suzanne Sim. Suzanne will review the fingerprint process with you as part of a required background check. You will also be required to attend a Safe Environment Training. The Safe Environment Training dates are available on our website – www.bvhs.org.

In addition, please go to the Main Office to sign in and get a volunteer badge each time you come to campus to volunteer. Please wear the volunteer badge while you are volunteering.

We will make every effort to make the fulfillment of these requirements and every visit to campus as smooth and efficient as possible! These precautions are required by state law and diocesan policy and they reflect an honest concern for the well being of our faculty and students, a concern I know we all share.

Thank you for volunteering at Bishop Verot Catholic High School. Everyone here appreciates your time! Your time and effort make a huge difference in the lives of staff and students alike. If you have any questions, please call Ms. Suzanne Sim at (239) 274-6747 or e-mail at suzanne.sim@bvhs.org. Thank you and God bless you for your support of Bishop Verot Catholic High School.

Sincerely,

Dr. Denny Denison
Principal

Attachments

BISHOP VEROT
CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

VOLUNTEER PROCESS

Fingerprints

Volunteer Packet

Safe Environment Training

VOLUNTEER PACKET

- Available online – www.bvhs.org

VOLUNTEER FINGERPRINTS & SAFE ENVIRONMENT INSTRUCTIONS

- Go to - dioceseofvenice.org
- Scroll down to Safe Environment
- On the Diocesan Safe Environment Website, click "New to the Diocese?"
- Follow the prompts for background screening and safe environment training certification. You will be guided through the process by creating an account in Virtus Online.
- Complete your account in Virtus by clicking the link to register for the fingerprints process.

If you have any questions, please contact Suzanne Sim at suzanne.sim@bvhs.org or (239) 274-6747.

BISHOP VEROT
CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

PARENT VOLUNTEER WORKSHEET

Name _____ Date _____

Street Address _____ City _____ Zip _____

Home Phone _____ Cell Phone _____

Child's Name(s) _____ Grade _____

E-mail address _____

- ❑ **Wherever needed on campus.**
- ❑ Athletic Boosters – Booster board, concession stands, golf tournament, etc.
- ❑ Development Office – Auction, mailings, alumni program.
- ❑ Office Help – General office, photocopying, mailings, reception, phone calling, etc.
- ❑ Viking P.R.I.D.E. – Staff appreciation and other functions.

Days Available: S M T W Th F S All

Hours Available/Comments _____

CHECKLIST:

- ❑ Application

SAFE ENVIRONMENT TRAINING FORMS:

- ❑ Attestation of Good Moral Character
- ❑ Code of Conduct for Volunteers Working with Minors
- ❑ Policy & Procedural Guidelines relating to the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults (Acknowledgment)
- ❑ Code of Pastoral Conduct (Acknowledgment)

Fingerprints

- ❑ Date Approved _____ Which School or Parish _____

Safe Environment Training:

- ❑ Date Attended: _____ Which School or Parish _____
- ❑ Copy of Certificate: _____

Please turn in completed packet to Suzanne Sim

DIOCESE OF VENICE IN FLORIDA

SCHOOL VOLUNTEER APPLICATION

Diocesan School: _____

Dear Volunteer,

Thank you for offering your time and talent to work with our parish/school/organization. Volunteers such as you are indispensable to our programs. The policy of the Diocese of Venice requires background screening of all volunteers who have unsupervised access to minors. Please supply the following information below and return this form to the person who provided it to you, along with necessary attachments and the Attestation of Good Moral Character before proceeding to electronic fingerprinting and Safe Environment Training.

I. PERSONAL INFORMATION

Date _____

Name _____ Social Security No. _____

Present
Address _____
STREET CITY STATE ZIP

Do you have any prior names or surnames? Yes No If yes, please list: _____

Daytime Phone: _____ Evening Phone _____ Cell phone _____

Number of years residing in Florida _____

Emergency Contact _____ Phone _____

Current Employer _____

Current Occupation _____ Past Occupation _____

Previous Volunteer Experience working with youth: _____

_____

_____

What has prompted you to volunteer with our school?

_____

II. Volunteer Interests

Office work	Field Trip Chaperone	Driver	Maintenance
Lunch Room	Library	In class tutor	Grounds/Gardening
Playground	Fund Raising	Guest Speaker	Special project
Computer Lab	Music	Other _____	

If driving, Florida License # _____ (attach copy of license & insurance card)

Has your license ever been suspended or revoked? _____

*If driving van designed to seat 16 persons or transporting children, see DOV Transportation Manual.

Number of hours/particular days you would like to volunteer each week:_____

Availability: Daytime Evening Weekend

Special skills/training pertinent to anticipated volunteer activity:

_____

_____

III. REFERENCES (GIVE NAMES OF THREE PERSONS NOT RELATED TO YOU, WHOM YOU HAVE KNOWN AT LEAST FIVE YEARS)

NAME	ADDRESS	PHONE NUMBER
1.		
2.		
3.		

IV. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

As a condition of your potential service to the school, we will perform a background investigation. Inquiries into criminal backgrounds are necessary and are being used solely because of the potential for ensuing relationships with children. Your participation in this process is voluntary. HOWEVER, if you choose not to complete this section, you will be eliminated as a possible candidate for volunteer activity with children.

Have you ever committed, been arrested for, entered a plea of guilty or nolo contendere, or been convicted of a crime?
Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, please explain type of crime, date, place, and penalty imposed: _____

_____

Have you ever been a defendant in a civil action for intentional tort? Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, please identify the nature of the tort, date and disposition of the action:_____

_____

Have you ever been the subject of an investigation involving an allegation of sexual abuse? Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, please give details:_____

Applicant Authorization and Release

I certify that the information contained in this application is true and complete to the best of my knowledge. I understand that any volunteer position is conditioned on a satisfactory background check and agree to complete an attestation of good moral character.

In connection with the above request to serve as a volunteer, I authorize the Diocese of Venice to investigate my background, including criminal and driving history and hereby release said information to them. I further release and discharge from liability the Diocese of Venice, their agents, employees, officers and other persons from all liability arising from the investigation or disclosure of the requested information, as well as those companies, agencies, officials, officers, employees and other persons, who in good faith provide this information to the DOV.

_____ _____

Signature Date

SCHOOL USE ONLY:

Reference #1 checked by: _____ Date: _____

Reference #2 checked by: _____ Date: _____

Reference #3 checked by: _____ Date: _____

Date Fingerprinted: _____ Date Cleared: _____

Date of Safe Environment Training: _____

DIOCESE OF VENICE IN FLORIDA
ATTESTATION OF GOOD MORAL CHARACTER

I, _____ a prospective or current **(circle one):** employee, volunteer, religious brother or sister, deacon or priest, or independent contractor, hereby attest, under penalty of perjury, that I am of good moral character. I further attest that I have not committed, nor been found guilty of, regardless of adjudication, or entered a plea of nolo contendere or guilty to, any offense (or attempt or conspiracy thereunder) prohibited under any of the following provisions of the Florida Statutes (See level 2 screening standard of 435.04) or under any similar statute of another jurisdiction:

a. Section 393.135, relating to sexual misconduct with certain developmentally disabled clients and reporting of such sexual misconduct.

b. Section 394.4593, relating to sexual misconduct with certain mental health patients and reporting of such sexual misconduct.

c. Section 415.111, relating to adult abuse, neglect, or exploitation of aged persons or disabled adults.

d. Section 782.04, relating to murder.

e. Section 782.07, relating to manslaughter, aggravated manslaughter of an elderly person or disabled adult, or aggravated manslaughter of a child..

f. Section 782.071, relating to vehicular homicide.

g. Section 782.09, relating to killing of an unborn quick child by injury to the mother.

h. Section 784.011, relating to assault, if the victim of the offense was a minor.

i. Section 784.03, relating to battery, if the victim of the offense was a minor.

j. Section 787.01, relating to kidnaping.

k. Section 787.02, relating to false imprisonment.

l. Section 787.025, relating to luring or enticing a child.

m. Section 787.04 (2) or (3) relating to taking, enticing or removing a child beyond the state limits with criminal intent pending custody proceedings or to avoid producing a child at a custody hearing or delivering the child to the designated person.

n. Section 790.115 (1) or (2) relating to exhibiting firearms or weapons within 1,000 feet of a school or possessing an electric weapon or device, destructive device, or other weapon on school property.

o. Section 794.011, relating to sexual battery.

p. Section 794.041, relating to prohibited acts of persons in familial or custodial authority.

q. Section 794.05, relating to unlawful sexual activity with certain minors.

r. Chapter 796, relating to prostitution.

s. Section 798.02, relating to lewd and lascivious behavior.

t. Chapter 800, relating to lewdness and indecent exposure.

u. Section 806.01, relating to arson.

v. Section 810.02, relating to burglary.

w. Section 810.14, relating to voyeurism, if the offense is a felony.

x. Section 810.145, relating to video voyeurism, if the offense is a felony.

y. Chapter 812, relating to theft, robbery, and related crimes, if the offense is a felony.

z. Section 817.563, relating to fraudulent sale of controlled substances, only if the offense was a felony.

aa. Section 825.102, relating to abuse, aggravated abuse, or neglect of an elderly person or disabled adult.

bb. Section 825.1025, relating to contributing to the delinquency or dependency of a child.

cc. Section 825.103, relating to exploitation of an elderly person or disabled adult, if the offense was a felony.

dd. Section 826.04, relating to incest.

ee. Section 827.03, relating to child abuse, aggravated child abuse, or neglect of a child.

ff. Section 827.04, relating to contributing to the delinquency or dependency of a child.

gg. Former 827.05, relating to negligent treatment of children.

hh. Section 827.071, relating to sexual performance by a child.

ii. Section 843.01, relating to resisting arrest with violence.

jj. Section 843.025, relating to depriving a law enforcement, correctional, or correctional probation officer means of protection or communication.

kk. Section 843.12 or 843.13, relating to aiding in an escape or in the escape of juvenile inmates.

ll. Chapter 847, relating to obscene literature.

mm. Section 874.05(1), relating to encouraging or recruiting another to join a criminal gang.

nn. Chapter 893, relating to drug abuse prevention and control, only if the offense was a felony or if any other person involved in the offense was a minor.

oo. Section 916.1075, relating to sexual misconduct with certain forensic clients and reporting of such sexual misconduct.

pp. Section 944.35(3), relating to inflicting cruel or inhuman treatment on an inmate resulting in great bodily harm.

qq. Section 944.40, relating to escape.

rr. Section 944.46, relating to harboring, concealing, or aiding an escaped prisoner.

ss. Section 944.47, relating to introduction of contraband into a correctional facility.

tt. Section 985.701, relating to sexual misconduct in juvenile justice programs.

uu. Section 985.711, relating to contraband introduced into detention facilities.

vv. Has not committed an act that constitutes domestic violence as defined in Section 741.28, whether such act was committed in this state or in another jurisdiction.

****

I understand that any employment/volunteer work is conditioned upon a satisfactory criminal background and reference check and that offenses other than those listed above may preclude my employment or volunteer work to the extent they reflect on my fitness for the position. I authorize, without reservation, the release of information to the Diocese of Venice and do further release, agree to hold harmless and discharge from all damages and liability, Frank J.Dewane, as Bishop of the Diocese of Venice, a corporation sole, the Diocese and all companies, agencies, officials, officers, employees and other persons, who in good faith provide to the Diocese of Venice information in order to successfully complete a background investigation.

I further agree to inform the Diocese of Venice immediately if I am charged with or arrested for any disqualifying offenses while engaged in employment, volunteer work, or other work on behalf of the Diocese.

School/Parish/Other: _____ Position: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

*This form is to be completed with the volunteer or employment application and maintained as part thereof in the personnel/volunteer file at the local diocesan entity.

Updated 6.25.13

Code of Conduct for Volunteers Working with Minors

As a volunteer I promise to strictly follow the rules and guidelines in the Volunteer's Code of Conduct as a condition of providing services to children.

Volunteers shall:

- Treat everyone with respect, loyalty, patience, integrity, courtesy, dignity, and consideration.
- Try to avoid situations in which one is alone with a child at Church activities.
- Use positive reinforcement with children and youth rather than criticism, competition, or comparison.
- Refuse to accept expensive gifts from children and youth or parents without previous written approval of the pastor or administrator.
- Refrain from giving expensive gifts to children or youth without prior approval of the parents or guardian and the pastor or administrator.
- Report to the Department of Children and Families (DCF Abuse Hotline: 800-962-2873), Victim Assistance Coordinator (941-416-6614) and the Pastor/Administrator, any reasonable suspicion of abuse.
- Be familiar with the Diocese of Venice Policy and Procedural Guidelines on Sexual misconduct by Diocesan Personnel.
- Cooperate fully in any investigation of abuse of children or youth.
- Demonstrate respect for the teachings of the church as well as the provisions of secular and canon law.
- Provide appropriate adult supervision of minors.

Volunteers shall not:

- Smoke or use tobacco products in the presence of children, unless to leave their presence would result in inadequate supervision.
- Use, possess, or be under the influence of illegal drugs at any time while volunteering.
- Use, possess, or be under the influence of alcohol at any time while volunteering.
- Pose any health risk to children and youth (i.e., no fevers or other contagious situations).
- Strike, spank, shake, or slap children and youth.
- Humiliate, ridicule, threaten, or degrade children and youth.
- Touch a child in a sexual or other inappropriate manner.
- Use any discipline that frightens or humiliates children and youth.
- Use profanity in the presence of children and youth.
- Engage in any conversation of a sexual nature which does not comport with church teaching.
- Wear sexually suggestive or immodest attire.

I understand that any action inconsistent with this Code of Conduct or failure to take action mandated by this Code of Conduct may result in my removal as a volunteer with children and youth.

_____

Volunteer's Signature Date

_____

Printed Name

Policy and Procedural Guidelines for Diocese of Venice in Florida relating to the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults

I Introduction

II Definitions
- A Allegation
- B Child or minor
- C Vulnerable Adult
- D DCF
- E Diocesan Personnel
- F Sexual Abuse
- G Diocese of Venice Contact Person – Victim Assistance Coordinator
- H Promoter of Justice

III Disclosure and Reporting
- A Summary and Purpose
- B Distribution of Policy
- C Obligation to Report Abuse
- D Diocesan Investigation

IV Pastoral Response and Review Board
- A Pastoral Commitment
- B Education and Screening of Seminarians
- C Educational Programs for Diocesan Personnel
- D Background Screening Policy of Diocesan Personnel
- E Policy on Parish Rectory Residence
- F Review Board
- G Action When Allegations are False or Unsubstantiated
- H Communications Policy

V Abuse by Priest or Deacon
- A Clinical Evaluation
- B Response to Admitted or Established Abuse
- C Transfer Requirements

Conclusion

Appendix I
Citations from Florida Statutes

Appendix II
Acknowledgment of Receipt

I INTRODUCTION

The Diocese of Venice in Florida is committed to the well being of those who are served by the Church. The People of God have a right to be able to trust those who serve them in God's name. The violation of this trust through any sexual abuse of minors by priests, deacons and other diocesan personnel is a source of great pain for those involved and for the entire Church community.

The Diocese of Venice will make every reasonable effort to prevent sexual abuse and to respond promptly to allegations of abuse where there is a reasonable belief that abuse has occurred. The diocese will comply with the obligations of civil and canon law. The diocese will promote healing where it is needed, provide education, training and guidance when it is appropriate, and implement procedures to minimize the risk of sexual abuse of minors and vulnerable adults with firm justice and mercy toward all. No person, including clergy, who has been determined to have sexually abused a minor, will be allowed to remain in active ministry. Such actions violate Christian principles and are outside the scope of duties and employment of all diocesan personnel. The diocese will not tolerate such behavior. This policy applies to all diocesan agencies including religious communities and all parishes and parish activities within the diocese.

Care will always be taken to protect the rights of all parties involved, particularly those of the person claiming to have been sexually abused and the person against whom the charge has been made. When the accusation has been proven to be unfounded, every step possible will be taken to restore the good name of the person falsely accused.

II DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of this policy:

A **Allegation:** A statement of accusation of sexual abuse.

B **Child or minor:** A person less than eighteen (18) years of age.

C **Clergy:** Shall mean all priests and deacons who have faculties of the diocese.

D **Vulnerable adult:** Such persons as so defined in Chapter 415, Florida Statutes. A copy of the statutory definitions is attached. For purposes of this policy only, vulnerable adults are considered to be included whenever the term "child(ren)" or "minor(s)" is used.

E **DCF:** The Florida Department of Children and Families.

F **Diocesan personnel:** For purposes of this policy only, diocesan personnel shall include any person who is employed by, or engaged in ministry, or providing service, either directly or indirectly, for the Diocese of Venice; an agency of the Diocese of Venice; or a parish of the Diocese of Venice. Diocesan personnel shall include, but not be limited to priests, deacons, religious, employees and any volunteer involved in any diocesan or parish activity. "Personnel," as defined herein, has reference only to the applicability of this policy and is not indicative of any agency or employment relationship between the diocese and the party whose compliance with this policy is sought.

G **Sexual abuse:** Sexual abuse means any act constituting sexual abuse as defined in Chapter 39 and Chapter 415, Florida Statutes, whether perpetuated against a child or vulnerable adult as defined herein. A copy of the applicable provisions of the statutes is attached.

H **Diocese of Venice Contact Person** – Victim Assistance Coordinator: Person named by the bishop to be contacted: **Susan Benton, 941-416-6114.**

I **Promoter of Justice:** The prosecuting attorney in Church courts (Tribunals).

III DISCLOSURE AND REPORTING

A Summary and Purpose

This policy is intended to establish requirements and procedures in an effort to minimize the risk of sexual abuse by diocesan personnel and the resulting harm to the victims and the Church community, and to provide guidance on how to respond to allegations of sexual abuse. All diocesan personnel must comply with applicable laws regarding incidents of actual or suspected sexual abuse of minors or vulnerable adults and with these procedural guidelines.

B Distribution of Policy

A copy of this policy shall be distributed to all diocesan personnel who must acknowledge in writing receipt of same. The original signed receipt must be kept in the individual's personnel file.

C Obligation to Report Abuse

1 Duty to Report

All diocesan personnel, who know or have reasonable cause to believe that a child or vulnerable adult has been a victim of sexual abuse, shall immediately make any report required by law directly to the Department of Children and Families (DCF). Any mandatory report may be made by calling the toll free statewide abuse or neglect registry at 1-800-962-2873, or by calling the local DCF office responsible for receiving such reports. Any verbal report to the DCF, which is required by law to be confirmed in writing, shall be confirmed in writing to the local DCF office within forty-eight (48) hours of making the verbal report. The statutory clergy confidentiality privilege, as provided in Section 39.204, F.S. and as described in Section 90.505, shall apply to all reporting required under this paragraph.

2 Obligation of Clergy to Disclose Any Past Allegations

Past behavior can have consequences far into the future. Quite often, state laws governing statutes of limitations for civil and criminal suits for sexual abuse are difficult to determine. Lawsuits or criminal charges can be filed decades after an incident allegedly occurred.

Thus, it is imperative for a priest or deacon to inform his bishop of past allegations against the cleric alleging sexual abuse, as well as any past incident which potentially may give rise to a civil claim or a criminal charge. Such information is also important to the bishop in making future assignments and personnel decisions and in determining if preventive or remedial measures are necessary.

Moreover, any priest or deacon who has knowledge or a reasonable belief that a fellow priest or deacon is guilty of sexual abuse involving a minor is to follow the reporting requirements of the State of Florida and also notify the bishop or his delegate.

3 Notice to Diocese of Accusations Against Any Diocesan Personnel

All allegations of sexual abuse by diocesan personnel shall be reported promptly to the Diocesan Contact Person – Victim Assistance Coordinator, Barbara DiCocco, LCSW, at 941-416-6114 or the Chancellor's Office at 941-484-9543. Allegation of Sexual Abuse Form is attached.

4 Victim Assistance Coordinator

The diocese has designated a competent Victim Assistance Coordinator to aid in the immediate pastoral care of persons who claim to have been sexually abused by diocesan personnel when they were minors or vulnerable adults. This Victim Assistance Coordinator also will serve as the diocesan contact person in cases of sexual abuse, unless a different contact person is appointed. Barbara DiCocco, is the Victim Assistance Coordinator and may be contacted at 941-416-6114. The Victim Assistance Coordinator shall, on behalf of the Diocese of Venice and as appropriate, develop an outreach program to each victim of sexual abuse and his/her family. This outreach will include provision of counseling, spiritual assistance and other social services as may be agreed upon by the victim and the diocese.

5 Information in Report

Any report made to DCF should contain, when possible, the name and address of the child or vulnerable adult and of the child or vulnerable adult's parent(s), guardian(s), or other adult(s) having custody and control of the child or vulnerable adult; the child or vulnerable adult's age; the nature and possible extent of the child or vulnerable adult's injuries; any other information that the person reporting believes may be helpful with respect to the investigation of the alleged abuse; and the identity of the alleged perpetrator.

6 Notice to Parent or Guardian

If the complaint does not involve the parent or guardian of the child or vulnerable adult, arrangements should be made immediately to notify the parent or guardian. Notice should not be given to the parent or guardian if he or she is the person against whom the complaint is made. Appropriate pastoral concern and support shall also be shown to all parties involved, including the family. All information relating to a child or vulnerable adult incident, in which a complaint is made against diocesan personnel, shall be assembled and retained in a written form in a confidential manner.

7 Cooperation with Public Authorities

The diocese will cooperate with public authorities about reporting cases when the person alleged to have been abused is no longer a minor. In every instance the diocese will advise and support a person's right to make a report to public authorities.

8 Confidentiality Agreements

In cases of child sexual abuse, the diocese will not enter into confidentiality agreements except for grave or substantial reasons brought forward by the victim-survivor and noted in the text of the agreement.

D Diocesan Investigation

1 Preliminary Investigation

When an allegation which at least seems to be true is made of sexual abuse of a minor by diocesan personnel, the bishop shall initiate a preliminary investigation in harmony with canon law. When the preliminary investigation so indicates, the bishop will temporarily relieve the alleged Diocesan Personnel from ministry.

2 Outside Investigators

The bishop, or his designee when necessary, may use outside investigators for the preliminary investigation and the fact finding investigation to assist him in a determination of whether the accused has committed the acts alleged. Such investigation will include the use of at least one lay person, not employed by the diocese, who has professional competence and qualifications to conduct a thorough investigation to determine the facts. The results of the investigation will be reported to the Review Board as described in section IV, F.

IV PASTORAL RESPONSE and REVIEW BOARD

A Pastoral Commitment

When an allegation of sexual abuse of a minor or vulnerable adult by any clergy is received, a preliminary investigation in harmony with canon law will be initiated and conducted promptly and objectively. The accused will be encouraged to retain the assistance of civil and canonical counsel and will be promptly notified of the result of the investigation. If a credible allegation of sexual abuse of a minor by clergy is made, the alleged offender will be temporarily relieved of any ecclesiastical ministry or function, pending an investigation in harmony with canon law which will promptly commence. The diocese will exercise care not to interfere with any investigation by law enforcement. When there is sufficient evidence that sexual abuse of a minor by clergy has occurred, the Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith shall be notified.

B Education and Screening of Seminarians

The diocesan Vocations Office is responsible for assessing and evaluating men who make application and are considered for admission to study for the priesthood for the Diocese of Venice. In addition to the requirement that recommendations come from a variety of sources, a full psychological profile of each seminarian will be obtained. This profile will assist in determining general psychological fitness and emotional health and well being. All candidates are screened and evaluated on a wide variety of issues and factors, including their sexual maturity and the appropriateness of their behavior and background. Efforts will continue to assure that the criteria and techniques utilized in these processes are in conformity with the most recent testing and assessment procedures. A national criminal background check is also completed. Finally, the diocese also will monitor the activities and educational development during the entire course of a seminarian's studies.

C Educational Programs for Diocesan Personnel

The importance of education of diocesan personnel regarding child sexual abuse is stressed by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. The Diocese of Venice mandates all diocesan personnel to attend educational "safe environment awareness" programs as directed by the diocese in order to develop skills in recognizing and preventing sexual misconduct. Those programs will focus on such subjects as the dynamics of sexual misconduct, the impact of such misconduct on its victims, reporting requirements and diocesan policies.

D Background Screening Policy of Diocesan Personnel

All parishes, schools and other diocesan institutions shall fully comply with the existing diocesan background screening policies and procedures.

The Diocese of Venice holds accountable all church personnel for maintaining the integrity of their ministerial and professional relationships and has promulgated *Codes of Pastoral Conduct* ("Code") for employees and volunteers which set forth the basic principles and guidelines which are to govern the behavior of those who act on behalf of the church in certain pastoral situations. All church personnel are to be guided in their conduct by their particular employment/ministerial agreement, their particular professional codes as well as applicable diocesan personnel, screening, anti-harassment and sexual abuse policies, and the
provisions of canon law.

E Policy on Parish Rectories and other Priest Residences

Lay persons unrelated to resident priests, are not permitted to reside, even temporarily, in parish rectories or priests' residences provided by the parish. Exceptions to this rule in special circumstances will be granted only upon specific request made in writing to the Bishop's Office. (Parents and family members of priests may, of course, stay at the rectory during their periodic visits.)

F Review Board

1 Membership

To assist the diocesan bishop in his work, a Review Board has been established. The Review Board is composed of at least eight persons of outstanding integrity and good judgment in full communion with the Church. The majority of the Review Board shall be lay persons who are not in the employ of the diocese. At least one member shall be a priest who is a pastor in the diocese. At least one member shall have particular expertise in the treatment of the sexual abuse of minors or vulnerable adults. The members shall be appointed by the bishop for a term of five (5) years, which can be renewed.

2 Functions

The Review Board functions as a consultative body to the bishop in discharging his responsibilities. The functions of this Review Board include:

a. Reviewing diocesan policies for dealing with sexual abuse of minors and vulnerable adults in order to recommend to the bishop any modification, if appropriate. Offering advice on all aspects of sexual abuse cases involving a minor, or vulnerable adult whether retrospectively or
prospectively.

b. Receiving the results of the preliminary investigation for allegations against clergy and recommending a finding to the bishop on whether the allegation is credible and substantial, whether it is unfounded or whether the results of the investigation do not substantiate the allegations. The Review Board may recommend that further investigation be undertaken if it will reasonably assist in gathering additional facts not otherwise presented.

c. Advising the diocesan bishop of the Review Board's assessment of the allegations.

3 Procedures

The Review Board shall, at a minimum:

a. Meet promptly to review the allegations and make recommendations to the bishop.

b. Allow both the person making an accusation and the accused clergy to meet with the Review Board before the review is concluded, subject to reasonable limitations established by the Review Board. For good cause, the person making the accusation and/or the accused clergy may request to meet with the Review Board during a supplemental review. The Board shall exercise reasonable discretion in permitting such appearances and in establishing reasonable time limits for such appearances. Care shall be exercised to schedule appearances in such a way that the accused clergy and the person making the accusation do not have any contact, unless expressly approved by the Review Board.

c. Hear the report of any investigation and make any recommendations to the bishop regarding any further investigations.

d. At the request of the bishop, the Review Board and the diocesan attorney shall meet with the bishop to respond to any questions or provide additional information desired by the bishop.

e. Consult with the Promoter of Justice for the Diocese of Venice, as necessary, when issues arise that relate to canon law.

f. Make recommendations regarding assistance with healing and reconciliation for the victim as necessary.

g. Request the alleged offender to seek clinical evaluation or counseling.

h. Make recommendations for appropriate media response.

i. Make recommendations for responding to the needs of the Church community.

j. Make such recommendations that the Review Board considers appropriate.

4 Meetings

The Review Board shall conduct its business at meetings, to occur as often as necessary to perform its duties. The meeting shall reflect the pastoral character of this policy and procedure which is consultative and advisory, not adversarial and adjudicative. The meetings are not to be hearings, but rather sessions in which the Review Board receives and considers information, deliberates and formulates its advice and recommendations to the bishop. The Review Board may, at its discretion, limit the information it receives or considers.

5 Confidentiality

Unless compelled by law or authorized by the bishop, all information received by the Review Board shall be considered confidential, and shall not be revealed by any member except to the bishop, the diocesan attorney or other members of the Review Board. All reasonable care will be taken to protect the identity of the victim when requested by the victim. The recommendation of the Review Board and the decision of the

bishop shall be communicated to the person making the allegation and to the alleged offender.

G Action When Allegations Are False or Unsubstantiated

If, after the Review Board reviews, investigates, and receives the professional advice of knowledgeable experts, an allegation of sexual abuse is unsubstantiated (to a lesser degree than moral certitude), the bishop shall use whatever means are at his disposal to repair the damage done to the reputation of the Clergy Personnel and to the church in general, and shall notify the alleged victim of the outcome, and shall continue to offer pastoral assistance, as appropriate.

There is always the possibility of false allegations. It is important for all diocesan personnel to know that both secular law and canon law provide judicial recourse and possible penalties when individuals become victims of false denunciation, calumny and loss of reputation. A cleric must proceed with caution before considering secular recourse and must consult with the bishop before taking civil action.

H Communications Policy

The diocese shall continue its communication's policy that reflects a commitment to transparency and openness. Within the confines of respect for the privacy and the reputation of the individuals involved, the diocese shall deal as openly as possible with members of the community. Openness is especially required with regard to assisting and supporting parish communities directly affected by ministerial misconduct involving minors. All media inquires regarding an incident of sexual abuse will be directed to the diocesan Director of Communications.

V ABUSE BY CLERGY

A Clinical Evaluation

If the preliminary investigation so indicates that a credible allegation of sexual abuse of a minor or a vulnerable adult has been made against a member of the clergy, the alleged offender shall be requested to seek an appropriate medical and psychological evaluation. The diocese will offer to provide professional assistance to the alleged offender (priest or deacon) for his own healing and well-being, as well as for the purpose of prevention.

B Response to Admitted or Established Abuse

When sexual abuse by a priest or deacon of the Diocese of Venice is admitted or is established after an appropriate investigation in accord with canon law, the following will pertain:

1 Removal from Ecclesiastical Ministry

At all times, the bishop has the executive power of governance, through an administrative act, to remove an offending priest or deacon from office, to remove or restrict his faculties and to limit his exercise of priestly ministry. Because sexual abuse of a minor or vulnerable adult is a crime, and in observance of the provisions of canon law, the bishop shall exercise his power of governance to ensure that any priest or deacon who has committed even one act of sexual abuse as described above shall not continue in active ecclesiastical ministry. If the penalty of dismissal from the clerical state has not been applied, the offender is to lead a life of prayer and penance. He shall not be permitted to celebrate Mass publicly or to administer the sacraments. He shall be instructed not to wear clerical garb or to present himself publicly as a priest.

2 Removal from the Clerical State

The priest or deacon may request dispensation from the obligations of Holy Orders: return to the lay state. In exceptional cases, the bishop may request of the Holy Father the dismissal of the priest or deacon from the clerical state ex officio even without the consent of the priest or deacon. If the case would otherwise be barred by prescription, because sexual abuse of a minor is a grave offense, the bishop shall apply to the Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith for a dispensation from the prescription, while indicating appropriate pastoral reasons. For the sake of due process, the accused is to be encouraged to retain the assistance of civil and canonical counsel. When necessary, the diocese shall supply canonical counsel to a priest or deacon.

3 Conformity with Canon Law

In every case involving canonical penalties, the processes provided in canon law must be observed, and the various provisions of canon law must be considered (cf. Canonical Delicts Involving Sexual Misconduct and Dismissal from the Clerical State, 1995; Letter from the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, May 18, 2001) unless the Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith, having been notified, calls the case to itself because of special circumstances.

C Transfer Requirements

No priest or deacon who has committed an act of sexual abuse of a minor may be transferred for ministerial assignment to another diocese or religious province. Before a priest or deacon can be transferred for residence to another diocese or religious province, the bishop shall forward in a confidential manner to the local bishop or religious ordinary (if applicable) of the proposed place of residence any and all information concerning any act of sexual abuse of a minor and any other information indicating that the priest or deacon has been or may be a danger to children or young people. This shall apply even if the priest or deacon will reside in the local community of an institute of consecrated life or society of apostolic life.

CONCLUSION

The patience, understanding and good will of all in the Diocese of Venice are needed to continue implementing the policies and procedures outlined in this document. Above all else, however, all must be faithful and responsible stewards of the Gospel.

Approved _____ Date: May 13, 2013

Citations from Florida Statute

From Section 415.102

*(24 "Sexual abuse" means acts of a sexual nature committed in the presence of a vulnerable adult without that person's informed consent. "Sexual abuse" includes, but is not limited to, the acts defined in s.794.011(l)(h), fondling, exposure of a vulnerable adult's sexual organs, or the use of a vulnerable adult to solicit for or engage in prostitution or sexual performance. "Sexual abuse" does not include any act intended for a valid medical purpose or any act that may reasonably be construed to be normal caregiving action or appropriate display of affection.

(26) "Vulnerable adult" means a person 18 years of age or older whose ability to perform the normal activities of daily living or to provide for his or her own care or protection is impaired due to a mental, emotional, sensory, long-term physical, or developmental disability or dysfunction, or brain damage, or the infirmities of aging.

From Section 39.01 Definitions:

Section 39.01(63):

(63) "Sexual abuse of a child" means one or more of the following acts:

(a) Any penetration, however slight, of the vagina or anal opening of one person by the penis of another person, whether or not there is the emission of semen.

(b) Any sexual contact between the genitals or anal opening of one person and the mouth or tongue of another person.

(c) Any intrusion by one person into the genitals or anal opening of another person, including the use of any object for this purpose, except that this does not include any act intended for a valid medical purpose.

(d) The intentional touching of the genitals or intimate parts, including the breasts, genital area, groin, inner thighs, and buttocks, or the clothing covering them, of either the child or the perpetrator, except that this does not include:

1. Any act which may reasonably be construed to be a normal caregiver responsibility, any interaction with, or affection for a child; or

2. Any act intended for a valid medical purpose.

(e) The intentional masturbation of the perpetrator's genitals in the presence of a child.

(f) The intentional exposure of the perpetrator's genitals in the presence of a child, or any other sexual act intentionally perpetrated in the presence of a child, if such exposure or sexual act is for the purpose of sexual arousal or gratification, aggression, degradation, or other similar purpose.

(g) The sexual exploitation of a child, which includes allowing, encouraging, or forcing a child to:

1. Solicit for or engage in prostitution; or

2. Engage in a sexual performance, as defined by chapter 827.

39.201 Mandatory reports of child abuse, abandonment, or neglect; mandatory reports of death; central abuse hotline.

(1)(a) Any person who knows, or has reasonable cause to suspect, that a child is abused, abandoned or neglected by any person, or that a child is in need of supervision and care and has no parent, legal custodian, or responsible adult relative immediately known and available to provide supervision and care shall report such knowledge or suspicion to the department in the manner prescribed in subsection (2).

(d) Reporters in the following occupation categories are required to provide their names to the hotline staff:

1. Physician, osteopathic physician, medical examiner, chiropractic physician, nurse, or hospital personnel engaged in the admission, examination, care, or treatment of persons;

2. Health or mental health professional other than one listed in subparagraph 1;

3. Practitioner who relies solely on spiritual means for healing;

4. School teacher or other school official or personnel;

5. Social worker, day care center worker, or other professional child care, foster care, residential, or institutional worker;

6. Law enforcement officer; or

7. Judge.

Section 39.204:

39.204 Abrogation of privileged communications in cases involving child abuse, abandonment, or neglect.--The privileged quality of communication between husband and wife and between any professional person and his or her patient or client, and any other privileged communication except that between attorney and client or the privilege provided in s. 90.505, as such communication relates both to the competency of the witness and to the exclusion of confidential communications, shall not apply to any communication involving the perpetrator or alleged perpetrator in any situation involving known or suspected child abuse, abandonment, or neglect and shall not constitute grounds for failure to report as required by s. 39.201 regardless of the source of the information requiring the report, failure to cooperate with the department in its activities pursuant to this chapter, or failure to give evidence in any judicial proceeding relating to child abuse, abandonment, or neglect.

90.505 Privilege with respect to communications to clergy.--

(1) For the purposes of this section:

(a) A "member of the clergy" is a priest, rabbi, practitioner of Christian Science, or minister of any religious organization or denomination usually referred to as a church, or an individual reasonably believed so to be by the person consulting him or her.

(b) A communication between a member of the clergy and a person is "confidential" if made privately for the purpose of seeking spiritual counsel and advice from the member of the clergy in the usual course of his or her practice or discipline and not intended for further disclosure except to other persons present in furtherance of the communication.

(2) A person has a privilege to refuse to disclose, and to prevent another from disclosing, a confidential communication by the person to a member of the clergy in his or her capacity as spiritual adviser.

(3) The privilege may be claimed by:

(a) The person.

(b) The guardian or conservator of a person.

(c) The personal representative of a deceased person.

(d) The member of the clergy, on behalf of the person. The member of the clergy's authority to do so is presumed in the absence of evidence to the contrary.

APPENDIX II
DIOCESE OF VENICE IN FLORIDA
ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF RECEIPT
OF THE
POLICY AND PROCEDURAL
GUIDELINES RELATING TO PROTECTION OF
CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS

□ Parish _____
□ School _____
□ Institution _____
□ Agency _____
Date: _____
I, _____, (please print) the undersigned
□ Clergy
□ Employee
□ Volunteer
have received and read a copy of the *Policy and Procedures on Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults for Diocesan Personnel of the Diocese of Venice in Florida.*
I have read the Statement, I fully understand and accept it, and I agree to abide by it.
Signature _____
Printed Name _____
Position _____
Date _____
Return signed copy to: **Your Parish / School**

Code of Pastoral Conduct

I Preamble

The Diocese of Venice holds accountable all church personnel for maintaining the integrity of their ministerial and professional relationships. The purpose of this *Code of Pastoral Conduct* ("Code") is to set forth the basic principles and guidelines which are to govern the behavior of those who act on behalf of the church in certain pastoral situations. All church personnel are to be guided in their conduct by their particular employment/ministerial agreement, their particular professional codes as well as applicable diocesan personnel, screening, anti-harassment and sexual abuse policies, and the provisions of canon law and civil law.

II Responsibility for Compliance/Enforcement

This Code is a condition of employment/ministry in the Diocese of Venice. Responsibility for adherence to this *Code of Pastoral Conduct* rests with the individual. In order to repair scandal, restore justice and reform offenders, appropriate action will be taken when any church personnel disregards or fails to comply with the expectations and behaviors outlined in this Code. Violation of this Code or any other applicable diocesan policy will lead to remedial action. Such action may take various forms, from verbal reproach to civil or canonical disciplinary action, including termination of employment or ministry, depending upon the specific nature and circumstances of the offense and the extent of the harm.

To ensure compliance, leaders and supervisors in the Diocese, parish or affiliated organization will:

- share and discuss the *Code of Pastoral Conduct* with all personnel within his or her realm of responsibility.
- maintain records of training and acceptance by personnel, in their personnel file.
- immediately and appropriately address questions or issues resulting from application of the standards outlined in the *Code of Pastoral Conduct.*
- ensure that the *Code of Pastoral Conduct* is provided to and reviewed with new church personnel in a timely manner.

Anyone who knows or suspects a violation of this *Code of Pastoral Conduct* is to report it to the Chancellor of the Diocese of Venice at (941) 484-9543. The Diocese of Venice strictly prohibits retaliation or threatened retaliation against anyone reporting, in good faith, actual or suspected misconduct.

III Definitions

A **Church Personnel** - For purposes of this policy, the following are included in the definition of Church Personnel:

1 Priests and Deacons who enjoy the faculties of the Diocese of Venice.

2 Seminarians and those enrolled in the Permanent Diaconate Formation Program.

3 Women religious and religious brothers working for a diocesan entity.

4 All lay employees on church payroll and those independent contractors (self-employed) or consultants who perform services on diocesan property and have an ongoing relationship with a diocesan entity.

Volunteers working with minors are covered under a separate *Code of Conduct for Volunteers Working with Minors* which is found on page 26 of this booklet and is available from the diocesan Department of Human Resources and on the diocesan website: www.dioceseofvenice.org

B **Administrator** - Any pastor/parish administrator, principal, chancery department supervisor, program head, who is responsible for hiring and supervising employees, volunteers and religious brothers and sisters.

C **Pastoral Counselor and/or Spiritual Director** - Any church personnel who, on behalf of the church, engages in ministry to another in which there is a trust relationship and component of counseling, personal advice or spiritual direction. This would include, but is not limited to those serving as sponsors, those involved in any type of counseling or representation in the annulment process, clerics, extraordinary ministers of the Eucharist and others who bring communion to the sick and homebound, to the divorced and separated, to the grieving, to youth, to victims of domestic violence, sexual abuse or those seeking post-abortion healing, to RCIA and sacramental sponsors (non-spousal), school guidance counselors, professional counselors and social workers serving through parishes or Catholic Charities programs.

D **Misconduct** - For purposes of this policy, misconduct includes the following:

1 Imprudent or inappropriate conduct - conduct which is contrary to diocesan policy or good judgment, but not necessarily in violation of canon law or civil law.

2 Immoral conduct - Conduct contrary to the discipline and teachings of the Roman Catholic Church.

3 Harassment - Conduct or language which creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment.

4 Exploitation - Taking unfair advantage of another for one's own advantage or benefit.

5 Abuse- includes physical, sexual or emotional abuse of children under 18 or adults who are uniquely vulnerable to abuse because of physical or mental disabilities.

6 Illegal - Conduct (potentially including immoral conduct, harassment, exploitation and abuse) which is contrary to the civil laws of the jurisdiction in which the conduct takes place.

E **Child or minor** - A person less than eighteen (18) years of age not emancipated.

IV Pastoral Standards

A **Prevention of Immoral Conduct:**

General Guidelines for Ethical and Moral Behavior for Church Personnel

Church personnel enjoy a public trust and confidence. It is essential that Church personnel exhibit the highest ethical standards and personal integrity in their day to day work and in their personal lives. Therefore:

1 Church personnel should not formally reject the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church or the Christian way of life.

2 Church personnel should demonstrate respect for the rights, dignity and worth of each person, from conception until natural death. Church personnel should not procure or participate in abortion, homicide or euthanasia, nor should they possess pornographic materials.

3 Church personnel should conduct their relationships with others free from deception, manipulation, exploitation and intimidation. Church personnel should not engage in any form of harassment, exploitation, physical, emotional or psychological abuse.

4 Church personnel should not abuse alcohol, drugs or gambling.

5 Church personnel should examine their own actions and intentions objectively to ensure that their behavior promotes the welfare of the community and exemplifies the strong moral tradition of the church.

6 Church personnel should witness in all relationships the chastity appropriate to their state in life.

7 Church personnel should keep all information received in the course of counseling, spiritual direction or other professional or ministerial contact in the strictest confidence, except as mandated by law. Church personnel should not harm the reputation of others through disclosing the faults or failings of others who have no cause to know them or making false allegations against another.

8 Church personnel should be responsible stewards of Church resources, human and financial, observing diocesan policy, as well as canon law and civil law. Church personnel should not steal or engage in any other form of theft, including misappropriation of church funds.

B Prevention of Psychological Abuse or Exploitation:

Guidelines for Pastoral Counselors and Spiritual Directors

1 Pastoral Counselors and Spiritual Directors shall not step beyond their competence in counseling situations and shall refer clients to other professionals when appropriate.

2 Church personnel shall ensure that all counseling sessions are conducted in appropriate settings at appropriate times.

- No session may be conducted in the private living quarters of a rectory.
- Sessions may not be held at places or times that would tend to cause confusion about the nature of the relationship for the person being counseled.

3 Pastoral Counselors and Spiritual Directors may not audiotape or videotape their sessions.

4 Information disclosed to a Pastoral Counselor or Spiritual Director during the course of counseling, advising, or spiritual direction shall be confidential, except for compelling professional reasons or as required by law.

5 Church personnel who engage in pastoral counseling and spiritual direction shall not engage in inappropriate physical contact with the persons they counsel in any private setting and shall be mindful of the possibility of misconstruction of physical contact in even public settings, engaging in such contact only for the benefit of the person being counseled.

6 Pastoral Counselors and Spiritual Directors assume the full burden for establishing and maintaining clear, appropriate boundaries in all counseling and counseling-related relationships.

7 Pastoral Counselors and Spiritual Directors shall not engage in sexual intimacies with the persons they counsel, their relatives, friends or other individuals who are close to the client.

C Prevention of Child Abuse and Exploitation:

Guidelines for those working with minors

1 Church personnel are required to have completed the appropriate application and criminal background screening prior to being allowed unsupervised access to minors.

2 Church personnel must be familiar with the Diocese of Venice Policy and Procedural Guidelines Relating to the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults and their reporting obligations under Florida law.

3 Church personnel are prohibited from speaking to others, particularly to or in the presence of minors, in a manner that is derogatory, demeaning or humiliating. They are to use positive reinforcement with minors rather than criticism, competition or comparison.

4 Church personnel are generally prohibited from engaging in any sexual oriented conversations/discussions with minors, except that age appropriate religious education curriculum and lessons for youth and young adults, may address human sexuality issues, or it may be necessary to address such issues in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. The lesson or cleric will convey Church views on the topic in response to specific questions. Additional questions should be referred to parents or guardians for clarification. In addition, church personnel are not permitted to discuss their own sexual activities with minors.

5 Church personnel are prohibited from possessing child pornography. Further personnel are prohibited from possessing any pornography or morally offensive materials in the presence of minors or on church property.

6 Church personnel are prohibited from interaction with minors in a manner that could not be conducted in the presence of parents or a responsible adult.

7 Church personnel are to refrain from wearing any sexually suggestive or immodest attire in the presence of others.

8 Church personnel are prohibited from the use or possession, or being under the influence of any alcoholic beverage, or illegal drugs while in the presence of minors. Church personnel are likewise prohibited from providing minors with any alcohol, tobacco, drugs or substance prohibited by law.

9 Church personnel should conduct themselves according to the *Guidelines for those supervising minors*.

10 Church personnel are prohibited from taking an overnight trip alone with a minor who is not an immediate family member.

11 Church personnel should avoid being alone with a minor in an area that does not readily provide for accountability in a ministerial relationship.

12 Church personnel should never be nude in the presence of minors. Changing and showering facilities should be separate for male and female and either facilities or time of use should be separate for adults and minors.

13 Church personnel should not give inappropriate gifts or other favors to minors.

14 Unrelated minors are not permitted in the residence or living quarters of a cleric at any time without a parent or guardian.

Guidelines for those supervising minors

15 Church personnel are responsible for releasing minors in their care only to parents, legal guardians or other persons designated by parents or legal guardians. In the event of uncertainty about the propriety of releasing a minor, Church personnel should contact their supervisor before releasing a child from an activity.

16 Church personnel must obtain written parental permission, in accord with diocesan policy, for any field trip, overnight on or off of diocesan property, overseas trip or other excursion with a group of minors.

17 Church personnel should promptly report uncontrollable or unusual behavior of minors to their parent(s)/guardian(s).

18 Church personnel are to provide adequate supervision of minors, consistent with diocesan policy for all church related activities

Guidelines for physical contact with minors

19 Church personnel are prohibited from using physical discipline with minors. Physical restraint of minors is permitted only to prevent them from inflicting harm on themselves or others.

20 Physical contact with youth can be misconstrued and should only occur under appropriate public circumstances. Appropriate forms of affection include kneeling, or bending down for hugs with small children, "high fives" and hand slapping, and pats on the shoulder or back. Inappropriate contact includes kisses on the mouth, wrestling with minors and any form of affection identified as unwanted.

D Prevention of Financial Abuse or Exploitation:

Guidelines for the Solicitation of Funds

1 Church personnel should be meticulously honest in their handling of church finances and of church financial records. Parish finances must be managed in cooperation with the parish finance committee, as required by canon law, and all personnel are bound to carefully follow all policies and procedures outlined in the "Parish Financial Policies" Handbook.

2 Church personnel are prohibited from entering into any contract or legal instrument, e.g., trust, with an individual to whom they minister from which such personnel may directly or indirectly derive a financial benefit, for either themselves, their relatives or a business in which they have an interest.

3 Church personnel are restricted from entering into any contract, agreement or arrangement with a church related entity as identified in the Diocese of Venice Conflict of Interest Policy. See policy on diocesan Web site at: www.dioceseofvenice.org

4 Church personnel should not accept or share responsibility for the management of the finances or assets of one to whom they minister. This includes, but is not limited to, acting as a power of attorney, a joint signatory on a bank or brokerage account, co-signatory on a safe deposit box, joint owner of property, legal guardian of the assets of a person, etc. When there are no able family members or friends, church personnel may act as the guardian of the person with the written permission of the Bishop, provided no fee or other compensation is sought or agreed upon.

5 Church personnel should not act as the personal representative, executor, trustee or other fiduciary on behalf of one they serve in the name of the church, particularly when such personnel or a church related entity is a significant beneficiary, unless there is a familial relationship.

6 Church personnel should avoid even the appearance of any impropriety or exploitation in the procurement of a substantial gift or bequest from an individual to whom they serve in the name of the church. Church personnel shall not accompany a parishioner or other person to whom they serve in the name of the church to an attorney to change a will or transfer property to the bank, financial planner or any church entity, etc.

7 Church personnel soliciting funds from parishioners should be sensitive to the appearance of undue influence or exploitation and adhere to the following:

a Church personnel should not invite themselves to a potential donor's home, but identify by telephone in advance that donations are being sought for a given purpose and request an opportunity to meet. Church personnel should provide photo identification to the parishioner, unless already well known to the potential donor.

b When possible, two church representatives should visit with the potential donor in the home with no more than one half hour committed to financial solicitation, (announcements, gifting/tax/estate seminars, etc.).

c A signed pledge rather than a check should be requested at the time of the solicitation, with the donor to mail the check directly to the diocesan entity. Said check should be payable to either the Diocese of Venice for the benefit of (specify) or to the recognized diocesan entity, e.g., parish, school.

d All solicitation efforts must be authorized in advance by the pastor/principal, both as to purpose (new parish hall, scholarship fund, etc.) and activities (i.e., phone calls, mailings, home visits, bulletin announcements, gifting/tax/estate seminars, etc.).

Prevention of harassment, intimidation or exploitation:

Guidelines for Administrators and Employees

1 Church personnel shall follow the diocesan Harassment Policy which is available from the Human Resource Department and on the diocesan website at: www.dioceseofvenice.org

Diocese of Venice - Code of Pastoral Conduct

Acknowledgment by Church Personnel

I have received and reviewed the *Code of Pastoral Conduct* for church personnel in the Diocese of Venice. By means of my signature, I express my understanding and acceptance of its terms.

Name: _____
First Last M/I

Signature: _____

Date: _____

This acknowledgment form must be maintained in the individual's personnel file.

Sign and return to: **Your Parish / School**