

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION LEADERSHIP

THE RELIGIOUS EDUCATOR AS STEWARD

INTRODUCTION

Much of the information in this section is a recognition of the complexity in society and the need as religious educators to respond to the world with both compassion and a steely-eyed honesty. As stewards of all that God has gifted us with, we must be vigilant protectors.

Crimes against children are one of those acts which cry out to the heavens for justice. Parents and guardians entrust to religious educators their most precious gift: their children. Far beyond the oath of the doctor to “do no harm”, religious educators must stand as vigilant guards against all that would harm any child. There is no excuse, there is no reason that would lessen the responsibility for carelessness in the protection of children.

While it is impossible to stop all harm against children, it is not impossible to stand our watch over them with diligence and integrity. The Diocesan Policy for the Protection of Children concerning child and student abuse provides one useful tool to help protect children.

At the same time children are protected, every reasonable precaution to protect those who work with the children as catechists or aides must also be taken. The Diocesan Policy on Blood-borne Pathogens is an effort to provide a modest set of safety guidelines. The requirements in this policy present a conservative approach to the issues of AIDS and Hepatitis-B which are real threats to the health and safety of those who work with the public. Again, as stewards of all that God has given, we must be sure that catechists and aides are reasonably protected against serious illness without becoming so cautious as to be incapacitated in the job of religious education. These guidelines, if followed, will offer sufficient protection for all who work in religious education programs.



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INTRODUCTION, CONT'D

The last form in this section (**the *Class Planning Schedule***) stands as a part of the Department's commitment to quality programs for children and youth. It helps ensure that catechists are indeed providing the expected services. While no form, in and of itself, is a guarantee that the faith is being handed on properly, it does provide the religious education leader with a specific tool to check on the progress within each classroom. While there is no intention to discredit any catechist's personal devotions or religious interest, it is also the leader's responsibility to see that the material to be covered in a particular year is in fact covered. The *Class Planning Schedule* provides the program leader with a tool to check on the progress within each class.

