

Saint Francis De Sales Church

P.O. BOX 97
LENNI, PA 19052

November 26, 2014

Dear Volunteer,

"See that you do not look down on one of these little ones. For I tell you that their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father in heaven". (Matthew 18:10). Our children, their innocence, and their window looking into heaven should and must always be protected.

There is nothing more important than the safety of our children. Providing a safe environment for young people entrusted to our care through our Parish activities is vital in God's eyes and in keeping with the Archdiocese of Philadelphia's pledge to be guardians of our children's safety and help survivors of sexual abuse heal.

With His continued guidance and grace, for over a decade, the Archdiocese has put in place policies and procedures to protect the children in our care, some of which exceed those required by law. Now, as part of our continued vigilance, the Archdiocese recently updated its policies and *Mandatory Reporting of Suspected Child Abuse* training curriculum to reflect our continued progress as an institution and changes in Pennsylvania Child Protective Services law, which goes into effect on December 31st, 2014.

These new policies and laws may affect the invaluable role of volunteers within our Parish. **While for years, some volunteers have been required to report suspected abuse under Archdiocesan policy, now, volunteers, who have direct contact with children, are mandated reporters and legally required to report suspected abuse under Pennsylvania law.**

Marie McGonigal is our Safe Environment Coordinator and will be working with every facet of our Parish life to educate mandated reporters about their responsibilities and refresh their training on how to, first and foremost, properly report child abuse to ChildLine, Pennsylvania's child abuse reporting hotline. In the meantime, Marie can be reached at (610)459-2203 with any questions. Additionally, information is available at www.Childyouthprotection.org.

I am eternally grateful for your vigilance as part of our pledge to protect children and pray for the Holy Spirit's continued guidance and strength as we stand watch over the most precious legacy our Church has, our children.

Sincerely,



Rev. Alan J. Okon,
Pastor

P.S. In addition to education and training, the Archdiocese's Office for Child and Youth Protection has services, resources and support for those victims and survivors of child sexual abuse and their families. They can be reached at (215)587-3880 or 1-888-800-8780 or philavac@archphila.org.