



Diocese of Fall River

A Message from the Office of Safe Environment

April 2020

Dear Diocesan Families,

It is hard to keep track of the calendar these days, but we want to acknowledge that April is National Child Abuse Prevention month. The Diocese remains committed to protecting our children and young people. While we cannot gather together as a faith community right now, we ask you to join us in prayer for the protection of children and the healing of those who have been harmed by abuse.

The blue pinwheel is the national symbol of child abuse prevention efforts. It represents the innocence, joy and fun that should be the experience of all children. Planting a pinwheel in your yard is wonderful visual display of support for protecting all of God's children from any kind of harm. We've included below two DIY options for creating a pinwheel. If you decide to do this with your children and want to send a picture, let us know if we can share it on Diocesan social media.

We also want to take a moment to acknowledge the stress that you are all under. Parents have been handed an unbelievably heavy burden. You are now tasked with educating your children, who have been taken out of their normal routines, while maintaining your own employment and managing the stress and uncertainty of this time. We know some are now facing unemployment or other financial stress. It is a lot to bear.

As Catholics, we know that God is with us in all of this, but it may be hard to feel His presence. It is challenging for our children to handle their stress and acting out will be common. Even small actions we take to manage our stress can help. Step into a room alone for 5 minutes. Take a walk when the weather allows. Pray a simple prayer when stress or anxiety rise such as, "Come Holy Spirit" or "Jesus, you are my strength."

Please reach out if you need additional prayer and support. Our diocesan Victim Assistance Coordinator, Carolyn Shipp, is a licensed social worker. Her primary role is to assist those harmed by abuse in the church. She is also available to listen and assist with connecting you to needed resources during this unusual time. She is working remotely and is checking voicemail and email throughout the day. Carolyn can be reached at 508-985-6508 or cshipp@dioc-fr.org.

Let us pray fervently both for the protection of children and an end to this pandemic.

Yours in Christ,

The Safe Environment Team

[Pinwheel Coloring Sheet.pdf](#)

[Make Your Pinwheel.pdf](#)