



Diocese of Fall River
Office of the Bishop
Most Reverend Edgar M. da Cunha, S.D.V., D.D.

May 2021

To the People of the Diocese of Fall River:

Following the adoption of the 2002 *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People* by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, the Diocese of Fall River has worked diligently to expand its efforts in protecting all the faithful, especially our children and vulnerable adults. As we approach the twentieth anniversary of this important *Charter* next year, I affirm our ongoing commitment to this endeavor.

In July 2020, I promulgated our updated **Policy for Protecting the Faithful** which outlines our Essential Three requirements for all who minister, work or volunteer in the Diocese of Fall River. This includes our criminal background screening, safe environment training and code of conduct.

As Bishop of the Diocese of Fall River, I hereby approve and promulgate the following safe environment training programs for use in the Diocese to meet the requirements of The Essential Three and Article 12 of the *Charter*:

- **Catholic Mutual Group Safe Environment:** online training for all adults who minister, work, or volunteer in the Diocese. This comprehensive program promotes child protection throughout the Diocese by teaching the warning signs of abuse and boundary violations and how to respond.
- **Circle of Grace:** for all children and youth enrolled in our Diocesan schools and parish Faith Formation programs. This curriculum, developed by the Archdiocese of Omaha, is used by more than 40 dioceses throughout the country. In an age-appropriate manner, **Circle of Grace** teaches children and youth important safety skills including recognizing appropriate physical, emotional, and spiritual boundaries; identifying trusted adults; and taking action, if boundary violations occur.

I stand firm with you in my commitment to the ongoing work of protecting children and vulnerable adults throughout the Diocese of Fall River.

Sincerely yours in the Lord,

Most Reverend Edgar M. da Cunha, S.D.V., D.D.
Bishop of Fall River