



During the Month of April we remember:

SEXUAL ASSAULT AWARENESS MONTH
CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH



Dear Friends,

April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month. My guess is, until four years ago, there were not a lot of people in the Church who paid much attention to that. Shame on us. With the spotlight on the sexual abuse scandals involving priests still shining brightly upon us, I can say that the Church has worked hard these past four years to try and become an example of how institutions can address the issue of sexual abuse of minors, which plagues *all* of society.

So much has been accomplished in the past four years, yet I know that we can not and should not take pride in the strides that have been made or rest because our work is done.

Rather, we should be grateful: grateful for the courage of victims/survivors who have come forward to report their abuse; grateful for those same victims/survivors who have helped the Church develop a compassionate and caring response; grateful for those victims/survivors, advocates, and professionals who have worked diligently to ensure the Church has the proper systems, awareness programs, and training to create safe environments; and grateful to those who continue to challenge us, as a Church and as a society, to do more.

Most of all, we are grateful to God for the grace he provides us to acknowledge the hurt that has been caused, beg forgiveness, and move forward with our commitment to the safety of every child in our world.

Thank you for all you are doing.

In Christ,

Most Reverend Timothy M. Dolan
Archbishop of Milwaukee

April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month. Nationwide, communities will come together to remember the courage of sexual assault survivors. Let us honor those who in our own community have come forward with their stories of abuse. "The key to seeing is to let real light flood the darkness and cast away the shadow." –victim/survivor

To all those who have come forward to report their abuse by church personnel, we give thanks for the light that your voice has brought to our faith community.

Amy Peterson

Victim Assistance Coordinator
Archdiocese of Milwaukee

The month of April is also Child Abuse Prevention Month. As a community, we are all responsible for the welfare of the children in our midst. When one child is harmed, we all feel the ripple effects of that harm.

Let us then, as a community, continue to keep all victims/survivors of abuse and neglect in our prayers; continue to look for ways to break the cycle of abuse and neglect; and continue to assist in any way we can those who have been abused or neglected.

Patti Loehrer

Safe Environment Coordinator
Archdiocese of Milwaukee



A PRAYER FOR HEALING

Victims of Abuse

God of endless love,
ever caring, ever strong,
always present, always just:
You gave your only Son
to save us by the blood of his cross.

Gentle Jesus, shepherd of peace,
join to your own suffering
the pain of all who have been hurt
in body, mind, and spirit
by those who betrayed the trust placed in them.

Hear our cries as we agonize
over the harm done to our brothers and sisters.
Breathe wisdom into our prayers,
soothe restless hearts with hope,
steady shaken spirits with faith:
Show us the way to justice and wholeness,
enlightened by truth and enfolded in your mercy.

Holy Spirit, comforter of hearts,
heal your people's wounds
and transform our brokenness.
Grant us courage and wisdom, humility and grace,
so that we may act with justice
and find peace in you.
We ask this through Christ, our Lord. Amen.