

Safe Environment of the Archdiocese



April, 2017

Blue Ribbon Tree

If you missed the deadline for your Blue Ribbon Tree to participate in the State slideshow, no worry! You still have time to submit your tree to be in our slideshow at the Pastoral Center on April 27th. To take part in our show, please submit your pictures via email **no later than APRIL 19TH**. This will give me time to get ; slideshow together. Be sure to identify the name of the parish and the city.



Blue Sunday



During the month of April we are reminded of Jesus' words in Matthew 18:5, "Whoever, receives one little child like this in my name receives me." There are over 6 million confirmed cases of child abuse in our nation annually. Over 1500 children die annually from child abuse in the US. Nearly 80% were under 4 years old. A study found that as many as 2/3's

of individuals in drug treatment programs reported being abused as children. Our church can make a difference. We can make a difference in the life of even one child and it surely starts with prayer. April 30th has been designated as **Blue Sunday** throughout the nation. On this day all churches, regardless of denomination have been asked to pray for the victims of child abuse and for those who rescue them. To unite with all people of faith in changing the statistics above, the Safe Environment Office is encouraging our parishes to do something as simple as include an intention in the prayers of the faithful for the victims of child abuse.

Let us find the courage needed to take all necessary measures and to protect in every way the lives of our children, so that such crimes may never be repeated. In this area, let us adhere, clearly and faithfully, to "zero tolerance".

(Pope Francis in a letter to bishops on the Feast of the Holy Innocents – Dec. 28, 2016)

Pray to stop child abuse in our country! Do your part!

April Bulletin

Don't forget that April is the fourth and final time (for this reporting year) to publish your Safe Environment Bulletin announcement. You can find the complete wording in your [Manual, Section VII, page 2](#).

Parish Compliance Survey



In a relatively short time I will send out the annual Parish Compliance Survey. Yes, it is that time again! This is the report of your parish statistics for the audit year beginning last **July 1, 2016 to the coming June 30, 2017**. Although the report will not be due until mid-June, it is not too early to begin preparing your statistics on how many employees and volunteers you have currently, how many were trained, background checked, etc. My report to the audit company hired by USCCB is a compilation of the numbers that you send me. To see a sample of the form used please go to your [Manual](#), Section VI page 1.

Please note that you **do not** account for anyone hired or trained after **June 30, 2017**. That would go on next year's report.

Did You Know?

Recently I attended the national Safe Environment/Victim Assistance Conference in Savannah, GA. It was an excellent conference with many fine speakers. One of our presentations was entitled, "Community Safety and Sex Offender Registration". The speaker shared the following statistics on Victim-Offender Relationship

Family Member:	26.7%
Acquaintance:	59.6%
Stranger:	13.8%



In addition, 66% of sexual offenses are not reported.

National Snapshot of Sex Offenders:

Age (Mean):	44.3	Caucasian:	66%
Male:	98%	Adult Offender:	80%
Juvenile Offender:	20%	Minor Victim:	90%

These statistics brought to mind for me that we are ALL legally bound to report even the SUSPICION of abuse.

You do so by calling the DHS hotline at: **1-800-522-3511**

If the abuse involves Church personnel also call: **1-405-720-9878**

We do not investigate or do not wait until we are positive. REPORT, REPORT, REPORT



Growing Up Digital: Stats You Need to Know

Kids are growing up in a digital world. Young people born since the mid-90's have never known a world without computers or the internet. In fact, some parents may barely even remember a time before they had a computer in their home!

Now, of course, technology is part of kids' lives. A recent study found that nearly 70% of kids ages 2 to 5 can operate a computer mouse...but only 11% can tie their own shoes!

REMEMBER: KIDS GO ONLINE DAILY:

- Age 3: 1/4 of children go online daily
- Age 5: This increases to about 1/2
- Age 8: 2/3 of kids use the internet on any given weekend
- Age 13: 73% of kids have a mobile phone



WHAT DO KIDS DO ONLINE?



- 68% of 13 to 17 year old send a text
- 51% visit a social networking site
- 19% use an instant messenger tool
- 19% headset chat in an online games
- 8% chat using video

KIDS AND MOBILE:

- *The average 15 to 18 year old spends more than an hour every day consuming media on his/her phone.
- *33% of young people (ages 15 to 24) own smartphones
- *84% of teens with cell phones sleep with the phone on or near the bed.

PARENTS:

- *Only 1/3 of parents set up parental controls and monitor what their children do online.
- *41% of American teens agree that their parents have no idea what they are doing online.

Our internet use is largely solitary. We believe what we do online, what we see, how much time we spend, and who we talk to is nobody's business but our own. This culture of anonymity often leads to what Dr. John Suler, a psychologist from Rider University, calls the Online Disinhibition Effect. He says, "Everyday users of the internet have noted how people say and do things in cyberspace that they wouldn't ordinarily say and do in the face-to-face world. They loosen up, feel less restrained and express themselves more openly."

Online disinhibition trains us to put pixels before people. We begin to prefer bite-sized updates to a face-to-face conversation. We feel freer to insult and bully someone else because we don't have to look them in the eye, or prefer the quick buzz of porn instead of fostering intimacy with a real live human being. (The above is taken from Covenant Eyes, [Protecting Your Family Online](#))