



**Office of the Bishop
EPARCHY OF SAINT MARON
OF BROOKLYN**
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Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

As we know, the crime of the sexual abuse of children is not a Catholic problem, but a worldwide one that affects every culture, every religion and every society. To our shame and to the great harm and pain to Catholics and others, a small minority of priests and religious have harmed the young in this way.

In 2002 the American Catholic Bishops gathered in Dallas, Texas and addressed this problem in a concentrated manner. They engaged every aspect of Church life to protect children and educate adults as to the devastating effects of childhood sexual abuse. Today, our Eparchy, as well as that of the Eparchy of Our Lady of Lebanon, is among the leaders in this effort and our success is due to your efforts.

With the desire to inform each of you on the progress made in our Eparchy, and with an ardent desire to remain constantly vigilant, below are some facts that can help us understand the steps taken:

- Safe environment training and criminal background checks are mandatory for clergy and all church personnel dealing with children in our Eparchy. We are fully compliant in both these areas.
- Our Eparchy has a Code of Conduct dealing in this matter (see our website www.stmaron.org for our Eparchy's code.)
- Our Eparchial Victim Assistance and Safe Environment Coordinator is Rosanne Solomon, her telephone number is 781-828-5183.
- Counseling assistance is provided to victims.
- Seminary screening has been tightened; all our seminarians are given psychological tests, background checks and training in how to create safe environments for children.
- Audits of our Eparchy have been conducted every year. For the past five years our Eparchy has been in complete compliance.

- A Diocesan Review Board exists in our Eparchy. Our Eparchial Board is made up of four lay persons and two priests.
- Our Eparchy cooperates fully with public authorities on credible allegations.

Information on what the Church in the United States has done can be found on the website of the United States Catholic Conference of Bishops www.usccb.org/ocyp/. Also see www.usamaronite.org for the Code of Conduct for the Eparchy of Our Lady of Lebanon.

With courage and conviction let us continue to work to ensure that our youth and children are not only safe and protected, but respected and loved as well.

If there are any concerns that you have about this matter, please feel free to contact me or Rosanne Solomon. With prayerful best wishes, I remain

Sincerely yours in Christ,

+Gregory J. Mansour
GJM/cm