



Contact: Erin Looby Carlson (989) 797-6630  
ecarlson@dioceseofsaginaw.org

*November 12, 2018*

## **Audit finds Diocese of Saginaw in Compliance with Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People**

**SAGINAW** — The Diocese of Saginaw was found in compliance with the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People for the 2017 to 2018 period. The Diocese of Saginaw recently received results of the audit conducted by StoneBridge Business Partners. StoneBridge is a Rochester, New York company which specializes in investigatory and analytical business consulting.

Each year, the Diocese of Saginaw undergoes an audit to ensure its compliance with the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People, which was established by the U.S. bishops in 2002 for addressing allegations of sexual abuse of minors by Catholic clergy. The Charter includes guidelines for reconciliation, healing, accountability and prevention of future acts of abuse. The Diocese of Saginaw has been participating in the annual audit since it began in 2003, and has been found to be in compliance every year.

“Although the audit found the Diocese to be in compliance, we must not be complacent. Rather, we must be vigilant for the sake of the protection of children and young people,” said the Most Rev. Walter A. Hurley, Apostolic Administrator of the Diocese of Saginaw.

Since 2002, there are more than 12,000 individuals who have participated in training to prevent child abuse, and also have undergone background checks and have been cleared for ministry with young people in the Diocese of Saginaw. These individuals include clergy, diocesan, parish and school employees. In addition, all volunteers who have regular contact with children are included in this group.

The Diocese currently uses the Michigan State Police Internet Criminal History Access Tool to conduct background checks as well as FBI fingerprinting, in cases where required by law. The Diocese also maintains Standards of Ministerial Behavior for Those Working with Children and Young People. The Standards state appropriate boundaries and ethical guidelines.

Some items the audit looks for include: outreach to victims, reporting of allegations to authorities, and confirmation that background checks are done. The audit also ensures that educational programs aimed at preventing child sexual abuse are implemented throughout the dioceses for adults and children K-12.

The Diocese of Saginaw offers counseling, spiritual assistance, support groups and other social services to victim-survivors. Our prayers and care remain ceaseless for all those who have been victims of abuse by priests and Church personnel.

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