

## **Response to Allegations of Abuse of Minors**

Each member of the parish should consider it his or her legal and moral responsibility to report suspected abuse whenever it comes to his or her attention regardless of where the abuse takes place. Reporting of abuse is a form of ministering to the needs of a person(s) crying out for help. The parish will seek to provide a supportive atmosphere, offering both objectivity and empathy as we seek to create a climate in which healing can take place.

If abuse is suspected, observed by or disclosed to a volunteer and/or a paid staff member of the parish, that person should report the incident immediately by following the steps below.

### **Reporting of Alleged Abuse of Minors**

1. In all cases of alleged, suspected, or known child abuse or sexual misconduct by a cleric, religious, or seminarian, the information must be reported to civil law enforcement authorities (the local police department) and by calling the Cuyahoga County Department of Children and Family Services at 216-696-KIDS.
2. In all cases of alleged, suspected or known child abuse or sexual misconduct by a paid member of the parish staff or other paid Diocesan staff or volunteer, the information should be brought to the attention of the parish Pastor or Associate Pastor as soon as possible. In addition, the person with knowledge of the alleged abuse has the legal responsibility to report the allegation to civil authorities with the local police department and the Department of Children and Family Services. All allegations of abuse must be reported to the Department of Children and Family Services at 3955 Euclid Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio 44115 or by call their 24 hour hotline at 216-696-KIDS.