

HARASSMENT POLICY

The Diocese of St. Petersburg requires that each parish adopt the policy that prohibits any form of harassment by any individual. The Diocese strives for the establishment of a Christian, professional and supportive educational environment for all persons engaged in or involved with religious education and youth ministry programs in a non-employment situations. No parish will be responsible for off-campus harassment, unless it occurs at a parish-sponsored event.

PURPOSE OF THE POLICY: This policy intends -

- that each individual is free from physical, psychological or verbal intimidation and harassment in religious education and youth ministry settings;
- that each individual involved in religious education and youth ministry programs maintain and further develop attitudes and behaviors which express respect for others and are reflective of each person's God-given dignity;
- to encourage a heightened sensitivity toward behaviors that others may find offensive and intimidating, whether these behaviors refer to race, religion, color, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, age marital status, familial status, veteran status or disability.

This policy is not intended to otherwise limit the expectation of staff, children, students and volunteers to engage fully in the traditions of teaching, celebrating, participating in and being formed by the Catholic faith, including but not limited to curriculum, catechesis, the Sacraments, other liturgies, worship services and ministries.

EXPLANATION OF HARASSMENT:

Harassment can result from a single incident or from a pattern of behavior involving verbal, written or physical conduct or communication.

Harassment encompasses a broad range of behaviors, which could include, but are not limited to:

- Physical, mental or verbal abuse
- Insults, jokes, or derogatory slurs based on one or more of an individual's protected status(es)
- Unwelcome sexual advances or touching
- Implicit or explicit requests for sexual favors
- Unwanted sexual comments (serious or humorous)
- Unwanted sexually suggestive telephone calls, letters, e-mail, etc.
- Comments or jokes based on issues of modesty and developing social awareness
- Unwanted forced involvement in activities (e.g. physical, religious, etc.)
- Coercion of religious styles or personal beliefs upon a participant
- Intimidation in front of a group or forced personal sharing in groups
- Inappropriate media or music use which would violate this policy

CONFIDENTIALITY:

The right to confidentiality, both of the complainant and of the accused, will be respected to the extent possible, but will be consistent with legal obligations and with the necessity to investigate allegations of misconduct and to take corrective action when this conduct has occurred.



PARENT/LEGAL GUARDIAN SIGNATURE REQUIRED ON BOTH SIDES

Safe Environment Policy

The Diocese of St. Petersburg has mandated that all adult staff and volunteers who are entrusted with the care or supervision of children, youth, and vulnerable adults, must be trained on the Safe Environment Policy. This parish follows the Diocese of St. Petersburg's Policy on Safe Environment and provides training on the subject to catechist, assistants, and other volunteers. In addition to this training, volunteers are also background checked. SEP classes are also provided for parents and children (age-appropriate material is presented). As a parent, I understand that I am free not to take advantage of the Safe Environment Training Program for adults and children.

Acknowledgement

I acknowledge that I have received, read, understand, and accept the Harassment Policy and Safe Environment Policy of the Diocese of St. Petersburg regarding the parish youth ministry program and parish religious education programs.



Signature of Parent or Legal Guardian

Please Print Name

Date

*St. Stephen Catholic Church
Office of Religious Education and Youth Ministry, Valrico, FL*