



May 7, 2015

TO: Pastors, School Superintendent, School Principals, Head Teachers, DREs, and Youth Ministers

RE: Protection of God's Children Diocesan Policy Clarification for Homebound Ministry

It has come to our attention that there are situations where Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion (EM) are having children/youth (minors), other than their own children, accompanying them to parishioners' homes. In such a scenario there are pastoral considerations and protection of children policies to be taken into account.

Pastoral Considerations

- All cases where minors accompany an EM for homebound visits requires parish pastor approval – even if the minor(s) are the children of the EM
- Those people being visited must give their permission that minors may accompany the EM
- The accompanying minors must be comfortable with being in the presence of the elderly or very sick

Protection of God's Children (PGC) Policies Apply

To guard the reputation of our staff and volunteers and to ensure the safety of our children, a minimum of two adults, who have complied with all diocesan PGC policies, must be present at all children/youth school and parish events. An adult (staff or volunteer) should never be alone with children/youth.

Where minors are accompanying an EM who is not their parent the following policies apply:

- The EM must be in compliance with PGC policies
 - undergo a *criminal background* check
 - complete the *Darkness to Light* safe-environment training
 - sign the *Code of Conduct for Ministry with Children and Youth* (updated January 2013)
- A second adult, who has also complied with PGC policies, must accompany the EM
- Parents of the minors must give their written consent; be informed of the dates, times and locations of all homebound visits; be provided the name and cell phone number of the two adults
- The EM and accompanying adult must have the parent(s) phone number of each accompanying minor

If you have any questions regarding this policy clarification, or any related topic concerning the Protection of God's Children policies, please contact me.

In Christ,

Barry M. Metzentine

Director of Evangelization and Catechesis | Coordinator for Protecting God's Children

cc: Very Rev. Richard Fischer, Vicar General