



DIOCESE OF KANSAS CITY - ST. JOSEPH

One Family: RESTORED IN CHRIST - EQUIPPED FOR MISSION

OFFICE of CHILD and YOUTH PROTECTION

November 17, 2021

Dear parents and guardians,

A documentary film called *Procession* will be released on Netflix this Friday, Nov. 19. The film is rated R and deals with clergy sexual abuse in the Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph, the Archdiocese of Kansas City in Kansas, the Archdiocese of St. Louis and the Diocese of Cheyenne, Wyoming. Many scenes in the film are disturbing to watch. First and foremost, we want to make you aware so that you can monitor your child(ren)'s access to the film and to prepare you for questions or conversations that may arise.

As director of the diocesan Office of Child and Youth Protection (OCYP), and a parent myself, I **do not recommend this film** to anyone under the age of 17 and strongly caution those who choose to view the film.

The OCYP supports the two overarching messages of *Procession* in raising awareness of men's mental health and offering opportunities for healing, in this case through a practice of drama therapy. Our diocese provided the film crew access to several of our local parishes as a gesture of faith and to facilitate the healing process for the six men who revisit their trauma in the film. The diocese did not provide any props, vestments, or facilitate any of the activity within the scenes.

In the documentary, scenes are filmed in Cheyenne, Lake of the Ozarks and Lake Viking as well as in several of our diocesan parishes, specifically Our Lady of Peace, St. Elizabeth, and St. Peter Parishes and Nativity of Mary School. In addition to the difficult subject matter, and local parishes involved, there are Catholic rituals and sacraments reenacted in several scenes. Actors are dressed in religious vestments while reenacting several aspects of their experience as altar boys. These scenes could reopen wounds of trauma experienced by those watching the film and raise questions surrounding the safety of our young people.

The OCYP exists to ensure the prevention of sexual abuse of children and vulnerable adults in our diocese. As of June 2020, nationwide* nearly every single priest, deacon, candidate for ordination, Catholic school educator, Church employee and volunteer (98.6%) has completed safe environment training. **Your children are safe in our Catholic churches and schools.** I encourage you to visit the OCYP website, linked below, for a full menu of resources and information on safe environment procedures and requirements for every parish and Catholic school in our diocese.

Media coverage and discussion has already started in our community surrounding this film. To assist you, these tools can provide comfort and encourage healing conversations within your families and community:

[Office of Child and Youth Protection | Resources](#)

[Journey to Bethany | Resources](#)

[Journey to Bethany | Community Conversations](#)

Carrie Cooper
Director, Office of Child & Youth Protection

*[2020 Annual Report on the Implementation of the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People. October 2021. United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.](#)