

Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph, MO

Day of Prayer in Atonement for Those Harmed by Sexual Abuse

Each year since 2017, the Diocese has set aside April 26th to devote to prayer in atonement for those harmed by sexual abuse in the Catholic Church. A day in April was chosen because April is National Child Abuse Prevention month.

Activities on this day include mass presided by Bishop Johnston which involves participation through music and serving mass by students from our diocesan high schools. Bishop Johnston encourages our schools to set aside time for an activity or prayer for the protection of all children from abuse of any kind. Bishop Johnston typically pays a visit to a school to join in their activity on that day. In previous years, Bishop joined school students praying the rosary dedicated to the safety of children; had lunch with 8th graders who attended mass from various schools; and joined students for a prayer service at the end of the school day. Some schools appointed ambassador students to give Bishop a tour so he could say hello to their schoolmates.

In 2008, Prevent Child Abuse America introduced the pinwheel as a new national symbol for child abuse prevention through Pinwheels for Prevention®. The pinwheel by its very nature, connotes whimsy and childhood and has come to serve as the physical embodiment, or reminder, of the great childhoods we want for all children.

Parishes and parish schools of religion have sponsored Pinwheel Gardens to commemorate Child Abuse Prevention Month. Pinwheels can be planted in patches of grass, planters, and garden beds. They can even be 'planted' by posting colored pictures in office and school windows. Pinwheel events are a great opportunity to show our solidarity with those who have been affected by child abuse and to work to prevent future abuse.

We encourage you to take a picture of your Day of Prayer activity and post it to your school social media page(s).

Thank you for helping us show our love for all children and our desire for them to have safe and happy childhoods.