



## *Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic Church*

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Grand Junction, Colorado 81506-8350

Dear Parishioners,

I want to take this opportunity to thank you for volunteering for Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish/Saint Ann's Mission. There are so many ways that the people of God can contribute to the mission of preaching the Gospel in words and in deeds. Every member of the Parish or mission has his or her share in this most primary work of the Parish.

Ever since 2000-2001, there has been a growing need to assure the faithful that we observe all the requirements of providing for a safe environment for those who participate in parish programs and receive ministry from volunteers, employees, and clergy. This actually began in 1989 with the enhanced screening of seminarians, the development of our Diocesan Harassment and Sexual Misconduct policies, and the training of all employees in these new policies. These policies and practices for dealing with both complaints and screening of clergy have become the backbone of the Dallas Charter for the protection of Children approved by the Holy See in 2002 and adopted for the Universal Church a couple of years ago. The Diocese of Pueblo has been at the forefront of protecting our vulnerable populations, both of elderly, infirm, and of children.

A few years ago, in response to the concerns of the faithful, and the insistence of the insurance companies for our Diocese regarding non-clergy, the training requirement was expanded to all volunteers. This includes a background check and taking the training for [Shield the Vulnerable](#).

The benefits to our volunteers are manifold.

1. They can better understand their role with regard to these issues and in respect to the Church.
2. They can produce documentation that they were trained, and understood all of the Diocesan policies and State Laws regarding the role of church volunteers.
3. They can help protect the parish from law suits alleging irresponsibility on the part of the parish by showing our due diligence in their taking the training.

The things we will check in our background checks include a search for convictions for crimes and misdemeanors that would preclude them from ministering to children.

If you have any questions, please feel free to talk to myself, Irene, Cody, Andrea, Ramana, or Wendy by calling the parish.

Again, thank you for volunteering and your generosity in this work of creating a safe environment for our children.

Sincerely,

Fr. Don Malin  
Pastor