

CHURCH OF THE RESURRECTION OF THE LORD  
**Emmaus Catholic Parish**

September 14, 2018

Dear members of Emmaus Catholic Parish,

As you are aware, one of my responses to the issue of sexual abuse in the Church has been to reemphasize the necessity of everyone in ministry at Emmaus being compliant with diocesan Ethics and Integrity in Ministry (EIM) requirements. I have heard that some in the parish view this requirement as a sort of punishment. “Why,” I have been asked, “do I have to do this when it is a problem among clergy?” I understand, and I regret that some are seeing EIM in this way. That is not what it is about.

Since the implementation of EIM requirements for ministry, under the leadership of Bishop Gregory Aymond in the Austin diocese, there have been two components: a criminal background check and an educational component on sexual abuse. In all but a very few cases, the criminal background check is fine. So, in truth, I am much more concerned about raising the awareness of my parishioners to the reality of sexual abuse in our culture. And this is not just a thing going on in the Church. It is everywhere.

Because I am a priest (and people know that I respect confidentiality), I can tell you that sexual abusers include clergy, teachers, neighbors, youth organization leaders, family friends and very often relatives. They live in every kind of neighborhood. They range from teenagers to elderly persons. Unfortunately, there remains a certain level of naiveté about sexual abuse. People have actually responded to me in disbelief when I state that it happens even here in Lakeway, just as it does everywhere. Such naiveté allows abusers to function.

The educational component of EIM is designed to help remove that lack of knowledge. It is designed to raise our awareness levels of how sexual abuse happens. Because abusers demand silence from their victims, education can teach the signs that something might be happening to our children. It gives parents and teachers (and all who have children under their care) the tools to help children know when a person is doing something inappropriate to them. This education teaches how to encourage children to tell their parents. It also equips us with understanding how perpetrators “groom” those they eventually abuse.

It is such valuable information. Everyone needs this so that children and all who are vulnerable can be safe. I am adamant about helping everyone at Emmaus gain the knowledge needed to make our parish and also our schools, homes and neighborhoods places of safety.

Please get educated and stay well-informed. I hope that everyone will join me in understanding how such knowledge has the power to protect and to even end abuse.

Yours in Christ,

Rev. Samuel L. Hose