

## *DIOCESE OF RAPID CITY*

Dear Friends in Christ:

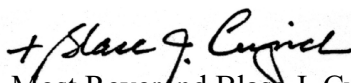
Under the leadership of then-Bishop Charles Chaput OFM Cap., the Diocese of Rapid City took decisive steps in 1993 to deal openly and directly with the scandal of sexual abuse of minors by clergy. One of those steps was the *Human Sexuality Issues for Those in Ministry* document, which invited victims to come forward for healing and pastoral support and provided a clear statement as to how the diocese would handle such matters.

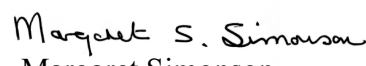
In 2002, the bishops of this country agreed that a national policy was needed. This led to the adoption of the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*. Many of the principles of the *Charter* were already reflected in our diocesan policy. To ensure that we are in full compliance with the *Charter*, I asked our Diocesan Review Board and others to advise me as I revised the 1993 document. The revised document is called the *Sexual Misconduct Policy of the Diocese of Rapid City*.

The publication of the revised policy prompts me to again invite victims of clerical sexual abuse to contact the Victims Assistance Coordinator at (605)209-3418. Victims are also welcome to contact the Vicar General or me at the Chancery Office at (605)343-3541.

The sexual abuse of minors scandal has been disheartening, and we are all saddened by the grave harm done to our children. We must now pledge ourselves as a church to be candid and open in dealing with this serious problem, ensuring that it never happens again. This commitment is based not on our own strength, but on the healing and life-giving presence of Christ in our midst. Let each of us hear His call to be holy and virtuous, accountable and faithful, as He leads us forward to be transfigured into His image and likeness.

Given in Rapid City, South Dakota, on this sixth day of August, The Feast of the Transfiguration, in the Year of Our Lord, 2003.

  
Most Reverend Blase J. Cupich  
Bishop of Rapid City

  
Margaret Simonson  
Chancellor

(Seal)