



**A Letter from Archbishop Chaput:
“Revised sexual misconduct policy for the Archdiocese of Denver”**

September 27, 2002

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

Today, we issued a revised and updated Sexual Misconduct Policy for the Archdiocese of Denver. Copies were earlier provided to all priests, deacons and seminarians of the archdiocese. The text and related materials will be permanently available on our diocesan website.

This revised policy builds on and now supercedes the original Sexual Misconduct Policy, which has served the Church in northern Colorado well since 1991. It is the product of wide consultation over several months. The revised text reflects both the U.S. bishops' 2002 Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People, and changes in Colorado law.

All clergy and paid employees of the archdiocese and its affiliated entities are obligated to review, agree to and sign this policy, and return it as part of their personnel record no later than December 2, 2002. As with the original policy, both of us as diocesan bishops have already received and signed this policy.

We believe this revised policy -- like its predecessor -- is thorough, comprehensive and strong. Nonetheless, no policy dealing with matters as sensitive and complicated as sexual misconduct can be perfect. Therefore we will revisit and adjust this policy in the future, as circumstances require.

Finally and most importantly, no policy, no matter how good, can substitute for personal holiness. The Church is not a corporation. She is the Bride of Christ and our mother and teacher. As disciples, we need to act accordingly. We need holy priests, and we need holy laymen and laywomen to encourage, guide and support them. We all share the task of not only preventing crime or discouraging sin but also leading others to Jesus Christ through a witness of virtue and right conduct.

We thank every priest, deacon and religious who has continued to serve with dignity and integrity in these difficult past months. And we thank the people of the archdiocese – tens of thousands of Catholics around northern Colorado – who have stayed firm in their faith, generous in their support and confident in their priests. Because of you, the work of the Church continues.

*+Charles J. Chaput, O.F.M. Cap.
Archbishop of Denver*