

Child Protection

PRAESIDIUM ACCREDITED

Our passion. Your protection.



Praesidium Accreditation™ publicly demonstrates that St. John the Baptist Province has achieved the highest industry standards in abuse prevention and response.

“The Rule and Life of the Friars Minor is to live the Holy Gospel.”

(St. Francis of Assisi)

Abuse of a minor is a direct contradiction of Gospel values. It is criminal behavior and contrary to the laws, tradition and sacred vows of Franciscan life. We Franciscan Friars of St. John the Baptist Province are deeply concerned for those who have experienced sexual abuse, especially as minors, and grieve that some of this abuse was caused by representatives of God and the Church. We know that this causes deep wounds and is a serious breach of trust. As a province, we are committed to meeting the standards for prevention of abuse, for responding to allegations with compassion and determination, and for supervision of any friars who have perpetrated such abuse.

The leadership of the Franciscan Friars in our Province has been involved in an educational program led by The Conference of Major Superiors of Men (CMSM), which is the national organization for men’s religious communities, and Praesidium Religious Services, which is a consulting agency for groups that work with minors. Praesidium has been hired by CMSM to help educate us and our members, examine our policies and procedures, and ultimately certify that we are in compliance with national standards for protecting children and vulnerable adults.

The Province’s “Policies and Procedures Regarding the Protection of Minors and Vulnerable Adults” is available for review by those wishing to do so. A copy of this document can be obtained by writing the Special Delegate for these matters:

Fr. Jim Van Vurst, OFM
St. Francis Seraph Friary
1615 Vine St.
Cincinnati, OH 45202

Anyone who believes he or she has been sexually abused by a friar of St. John the Baptist Province is encouraged to contact the local prosecutor’s office to report the abuse, regardless of when it occurred.

Representatives of the friars are willing to meet in person with anyone who has been abused by a member of the Province. One who wishes to report an allegation of abuse by a friar of

St. John the Baptist Province should contact Fr. Jim Van Vurst, the Special Delegate of the Provincial, at the address above or at (513) 721-4700, extension 3214.

If it would be preferable, a counselor from Mercy Professional Services is willing to receive any allegation of abuse and refer it to the Franciscans. In that case, please call 513 221-2330 and ask for Dr. Nan Fox, Ph.D.

All allegations are taken seriously. We can discuss ways to assist in the healing of those who have been abused, including offering to pay for counseling for a period of time.