

ARCHDIOCESE OF CHICAGO



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Dear Brothers,

The Psalmist (127:3) reminds us that "Children are a heritage from the Lord, offspring a reward from Him." And in Proverbs 22:6 we read, "Start children off in the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it."

At the beginning of the summer break I write to you about an urgent matter, the need for the adult world to join together in keeping our children safe. We have lost too many children to gun violence. Sadly, guns are the number one cause of death of young people.

I urge you to speak to your parishioners about this epidemic of violence and encourage them to take action. That begins by urging parents and all adults to speak to children in their families about making right choices. Parents should never apologize for insisting on knowing where their children are and with whom they spend time. At the same time, parents should never miss the chance to tell their children how much they are loved. They should also take time to share the hopes and dreams they have for the future of their sons and daughters. Teaching children also means steering them in the direction of participating in positive programs that keep them involved, engaged and safe.

We all need to take responsibility as communities of faith to keep our children safe. Parents have always benefitted from connecting to other parents, creating a village that raises children and trains them in the way that they should go.

We can make a difference if the adults step forward. Please look for an occasion in these early days of summer to communicate this important message, by word in your homily and/or publishing this letter in your bulletins. Also consider including a prayer in the General Intercessions each Sunday, asking God to keep our children safe.

Wishing you every blessing, I am

Sincerely yours in Christ,


Archbishop of Chicago