

# Diocese of Sacramento: Policy Concerning Parish Security

## Background:

In the wake of numerous incidents in which shocking acts of violence have been inflicted upon congregants at houses of worship across America, thoughtful consideration of the issue of security at parishes of the Diocese of Sacramento is warranted. Prudence dictates, however, that fear and anxiety should not result in arrangements that could yield unintended consequences or actually compromise the security of parishioners. This policy is intended to provide uniform standards concerning security for our parish and school premises.

## Policy

California regulation of concealed firearms is extensive and includes restrictions on concealed carry of firearms within 1000 feet of a school. While it is conceivable that parishioners or visitors with a valid CCW license, or who have such rights by virtue of status as active or retired law enforcement officers, might make an independent decision to exercise those rights, parishes shall not organize, arrange for, or encourage (formally or informally) any such action.

As part of any plans to ensure security of those attending parish or school activities (liturgy, parish events, parish committee meetings, etc.), pastors and school administrators are encouraged to do the following:

- Consult with parishioners who are active or honorably retired law enforcement officers for input on ways to enhance the security and safety of parishioners and visitors, in a manner that is specific to the parish premises.
- Consult with the diocesan security director for input on how other parishes in the diocese are addressing these concerns, and to share ideas for providing on-site security.
- In consultation with the groups above, organize informal security teams to be present at parish events, who will observe and report any incidents that might take place, and who will constitute a visible presence at parish events of organized watchfulness for any disruptive acts by third parties.

Pastors and school administrators may not, however, employ any of the following measures:

- There shall be no formal organization of individuals, in particular those who are part of any security teams formed at the parish, to be armed with concealed firearms while attending Masses or other parish and school events.
- There shall be no endorsement or encouragement of parishioners to carry firearms when attending Mass or other parish and school events, regardless of whether they are active or retired law enforcement or have a license to carry a concealed weapon (CCW).