



DIOCESE OF HARRISBURG

OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

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August 25, 2023

Dear Friends in Christ,

The Diocese of Harrisburg Safe Environment program has been in place since 2002 and is now being updated. In accord with the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People* Article 12, the Diocese of Harrisburg is reinforcing its efforts to ensure the safest possible environment for children, youth and vulnerable adults.

The Safe Environment Program now includes VIRTUS *Empowering God's Children*® annual training for all children enrolled in the Catholic Schools and religious education classes in the Diocese of Harrisburg. VIRTUS was chosen for many reasons, primarily because the program materials are continually updated and easily accessible through the VIRTUS Online website. Additionally, the VIRTUS program offers tutorials and webinars on the functions of use. Another consideration for choosing VIRTUS was the ownership by National Catholic Services, LLC which developed and launched its first program in 2001. To date, more than 100 Dioceses and Eparchies utilize the VIRTUS Programs in some capacity.

I am most grateful for all of the hard work done in parishes and schools to ensure that all of the mandates of the Bishops' Charter are effectively implemented. I am also grateful to staff and volunteers who have been so gracious in their cooperation with these requirements and who have dedicated themselves to keeping our children safe.

With the implementation of the VIRTUS *Empowering God's Children*® lessons, I reaffirm our commitment to work diligently to promote safe environments throughout the Diocese of Harrisburg.

May the Lord abundantly bless our children and all those entrusted with their care.

Sincerely in Christ,

Most Reverend Timothy C. Senior  
Bishop of Harrisburg