ARCHDIOCESE OF
SAN FRANCISCO | OFFICE OF THE ARCHBISHOP

March 20, 2023

On November 1, 2017, the Archdiocese of San Francisco began using VIRTUS for its safe environment training. VIRTUS offers programs and services to a majority of the dioceses in the United States and is used in the Archdiocese of San Francisco for the training of children in its parishes and schools as well as training for our clergy, adult educators and volunteers of the Archdiocese.

The job of ensuring children's safety is challenging for parents, teachers, catechists, youth ministers and educators, and requires more than adult awareness, education, and training. Children must also be given the tools needed to overcome the advances of people who might intend to do them harm. After a careful review of its training modules, we are pleased with VIRTUS's **Touching Safety Program for Children**, and its accompanying guide, **Teaching Touching Safety**. This is a school-based curriculum with lesson plans created for five age groups:

Pre-Kindergarten (not currently required under the *Charter)*
Grades K through 2
Grades 3 through 5
Grades 6 through 8
Grades 9 through 12

Each school year, VIRTUS provides a theme that introduces and builds on basic safety concepts through its **Teaching Touching Safety Guide**. The material is developmentally appropriate for each age group and includes content and activities that reinforce the important concepts presented.

We continue to affirm parents as the first educators of their children. All VIRTUS programs offer opportunities for parental involvement. Please take time to review the VIRTUS website and its programs at www.VIRTUS.org. We are interested in your input, and invite you to send your questions or comments about the programs to Deacon Fred Totah, Director of Pastoral Ministry, at Totah.Fred@sfarch.org, and his assistant, Karen Guglielmoni, at GuglielmoniK@sfarch.org.

Thank you for all that you do to implement these important programs as we work together to keep our children safe.

Sincerely yours in the Lord,

+ Salvatore Cordileone

Most Rev. Salvatore Cordileone
Archbishop of San Francisco