

**Archdiocese of Atlanta  
Office of Child and Youth Protection  
Parent Notification Form**



**TO:** Parents

**FROM:** The Catholic Center at UGA **CITY:** Athens  
Parish or School Name

**SUBJECT:** VIRTUS - Children Safe Environment Training / Opt-Out Form

**Date:** October 2018

Lynn Renna will present a sexual abuse prevention program, VIRTUS -*Teaching Touching Safety*, to our students during their November RE Classes. This program is provided to us by the Archdiocese of Atlanta and is a part of our ongoing effort to help create and maintain safe environments for all children and youth and to protect all of them from sexual abuse. The scheduled lesson is being offered to all students at The Catholic Center during their RE Class Time. As a parent, you have the right to choose whether your student participates in the program. We encourage you to read the "overview", "parent guide", and "lesson plan" assigned to your child's age group to understand exactly what your child will be taught. All these materials are available at:

<http://archatl.com/ministries-services/safe-environment/grades-k-12/safe-environment-lesson-plans/> and entering the Password: **Virtus**. Please complete the form at the bottom of this page and return it to your child's teacher no later than November 4, 2018.

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*Check all boxes that apply, sign, print name, and return to parish office:*

- I hereby grant my approval for my child, \_\_\_\_\_, to attend the training described in this notice. Child's Name
- I decline to grant my approval for my child, \_\_\_\_\_, to attend the training described in this notice; but, I understand that as the Child's Name primary educator of my child the church requests that I certify that I have provided such training to my child within the family by returning this form to my child's teacher.
- I will allow the Archdiocese to conduct this training. As the primary educator of my child, I will also attend the presentation with my child when the presentation is being made.
- I request to review all materials prior to allowing my child to attend the training described in this notice. I will notify you in writing if my child will not be attending the training once I have reviewed the material. I will review the materials on-line using the Password: **Virtus** at <http://archatl.com/ministries-services/safe-environment/grades-k-12/safe-environment-lesson-plans/>.

Parent's Name (printed): \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

THE ROMAN CATHOLIC  
ARCHDIOCESE  
OF ATLANTA

Thursday, 8 August 2014

My Dear Faithful in Christ,

"Here, then, is the message we heard from Him [Christ] and announce to you: that God is light; and in him there is no darkness . . . if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another . . ." (1 John 1:5-7).

Ensuring the safety of our children is a challenging undertaking. In this effort, the Church relies on the collaboration of parents and competent educators. The role of catechists and teachers is to assist the work of the parents. For the past 10 years, the Archdiocese of Atlanta has brought into the light this important issue which is often shrouded in darkness by conducting Safe Environment training within our Catholic Schools and Parish Religious Education programs using a self-produced program - YOU MATTER. This year, we are switching to a widely-used, comprehensive and continually updated program produced by VIRTUS - *Protecting God's Children*. This program is currently being used in half the dioceses across our country and we have found that it amply meets the many and varied needs of the Archdiocese of Atlanta.

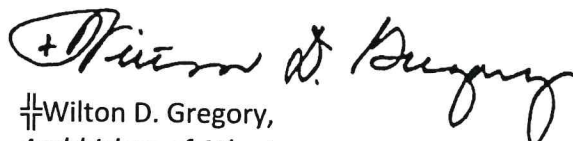
The VIRTUS *Protecting God's Children* programs were developed consistent with the guidelines established by the Church as proclaimed by Pope Paul VI in the Second Vatican Council's Declaration on Christian Education (*Gravissimum Educationis*). *Protecting God's Children* assumes that the primary education of children is in the hands of the parents and that carefully planned classroom instruction will reinforce what parents have taught their children at home. Through these programs, teachers, catechists, and youth ministers work in concert with parents in assuring that all of God's children have the tools they need to be safe and to resist the overtures of anyone who might seek to hurt them.

Teaching children to protect themselves is part of the mandate of the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People* adopted by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops in June 2002. Article 12 of the Charter states:

*Dioceses/eparchies will establish "safe environment" programs. They will cooperate with parents, civil authorities, educators, and community organizations to provide education and training for children, youth, parents, ministers, educators, and others about ways to make and maintain a safe environment for children.*

The VIRTUS *Protecting God's Children* programs are vehicles available to parents and the Church to assist in accomplishing this important mission. Please join me in my support of the VIRTUS Safe Environment Program and together we can all continue to rise to the challenge of keeping our children as safe as possible.

Sincerely in Christ,



† Wilton D. Gregory,  
Archbishop of Atlanta

Archdiocese of Atlanta

2401 Lake Park Drive, S.E. ■ Smyrna, Georgia 30080-8862  
404-920-7800 ■ Fax 404-920-7801 ■ [www.archatl.com](http://www.archatl.com)