

VIRTUS - Protecting God's Children - The Diocese of Grand Rapids has fully implemented a "safe environment" education program. By learning the warning signs and the steps to take to prevent abuse, we can keep 'our' children from being hurt. With more people involved in maintaining safe environments for all children, we can continue to build and restore trust in our ministries and programs. This educational program is for parents, pastors, educators, and any others who have regular contact with children and youth. No one can volunteer for school, Religious Ed., Youth Ministry, Children's Liturgy of the Word, Altar server trainer, Children's choir, or VBS until they attend a "PGC" session. Yes, your help is greatly needed, but we must also abide by the rules of the diocese.

A current listing of "Protecting God's Children" training sessions is always available at www.virtusonline.org. In the left (green) panel locate 'register' and for 'location' enter Grand Rapids, MI and a drop down list of available sessions will appear, choose the one that best fits your needs. Pre-registration is required. Article 12 of the Charter states all adults having contact with children **must** go through this diocesan program. All volunteers must also have a background check completed before working with children. If you have any questions, please contact the parish office or email Diane Beckwith at dre@ourcluster.org

** The United States Catholic Conference of Bishops (USCCB) is promoting a new website for helping keep children and families safe online: www.faithandsafety.org. The website is a partnership with the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America and it is designed to be a place where families learn to see technology through the eyes of faith and stay safe online. The site offers guidance how to use the Internet, cell phones and video games safely, as well as protecting children's privacy. We encourage you to check it out.