

St. James Religious Education
(815) 547-7633

To: Parents and Guardians of Religious Education

RE: Teaching Safety -Empowering God's Children

Dear Parents and Guardians,

We are happy to announce that Bishop Malloy has approved a transition to the Virtus Teaching Safety -Empowering God's Children Program for the 2022-2023 school year. We will be offering this training in October or November at the beginning of class.

This program by the authors of Virtus: Protecting God's Children for Adults offers a comprehensive approach to keeping our children safe. Lessons are taught at an age appropriate level and repeat over a 3-year cycle.

For your review, we have included the link to the Rockford Diocese Website to read and review the [Overview of the Teaching Safety-Empowering God's Children](#) and [Teaching Boundaries and Safety Guide](#).

Also, on the website is the Bishop's letter to parents. You may also go to <https://stjamesbelvidere.org/religious-education/chastity-program/> to view links.

Rockford Diocese Website: <https://www.ceorockford.org/egc-parents/>

Website Links to: Program Overview

<https://www.ceorockford.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Program-Overview-from-Virtus-English.pdf>

<https://www.ceorockford.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Program-Overview-from-Virtus-Spanish.pdf>

Website links to: Teaching Boundaries-and Safety Guide-English and Spanish

<https://www.ceorockford.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Teaching-Boundaries-booklet-from-Virtus-English.pdf>

<https://www.ceorockford.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Teaching-Boundaries-Booklet-from-Virtus-Spanish.pdf>

These booklets are an in-depth resource for parents to assist you in effective conversations with your children about the dangers of child sexual abuse.

We have attached an Opt-Out form or you can click on the following link in English

<https://stjamesbelvidere.files.wordpress.com/2020/12/opt-out-1-3.pdf> or in Spanish

<https://stjamesbelvidere.files.wordpress.com/2021/01/opt-out-form-2020-spanish.pdf> should you

decide to have this discussion on your own. If you like to opt-out, please complete and return the form to us no later than **October 30 for Sunday classes, October 24 for Monday classes, and**

November 2 for Wednesday classes.

If you do not have access to a computer and would like a copy of any of the forms, or if you have any questions please contact the Religious Education Office.

Thank you for your cooperation as we all work together to protect our children!

Yours in Christ,
Barbara Graybiel, DRE

TO: Parents
FROM: Religious Education Office
PARISH or SCHOOL: St. James Parish, Belvidere
SUBJECT: Opportunity to “opt your child out” of the *Teaching Safety – Empowering God’s Children* program
DATE: October-November 2022

St. James RE will present a sexual abuse prevention program, the *Teaching Safety – Empowering God’s Children* program, to our students. The creators of the *Protecting God’s Children*® program developed the *Teaching Safety – Empowering God’s Children* program. **This program is provided to us by the Diocese of Rockford** and is a part of our ongoing effort to help create and maintain a safe environment for children and to protect all children from sexual abuse.

As a parent, you have the right to choose whether your student participates. We encourage you to read the program Overview, so you’ll be aware of the nature of the *Teaching Safety – Empowering God’s Children* program. If you have questions about the program or the lesson, please contact Barbara Graybiel at 815-547-7633.

If you determine that you DO NOT want your child to participate, please complete the “Opt-Out” form at the bottom of this page and return it to your child’s teacher no later than October 30, 2022 for Sunday classes, October 24 for Monday classes, and November 2 for Wednesday classes. **ONLY complete this form if you Do Not want your child to participate in this lesson.**

For more information on the *Teaching Safety – Empowering God’s Children* program, visit the VIRTUS Online™ website at www.virtus.org.

Opt-Out form for use with the *Teaching Safety – Empowering God’s Children* program:

St James Religious Education DOES NOT have my permission to present the *Teaching Safety – Empowering God’s Children* program, to my child (ren) whose name is written below:

request training materials to be sent home I do not request training materials to be sent home

Parent’s name (printed): First and Last Names	
Parent’s Signature:	
Child (ren)’s Name (s): First and Last Name	
Date:	