



3510 Carman Road, Schenectady, New York 12303
(518) 355-3080 ☩ Fax: (518) 355-3106 ☩ www.smsschool.org

Dear Friends,

We are sending this letter to all who volunteer to work in some capacity with the youth of our parish. As you probably know, on November 19, 2002, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops revised the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*. The Bishops also developed Norms to provide procedures for addressing the issue of child sexual abuse in the Church. The Charter and the Norms focus on the development and maintenance of safe Church environments for children and young people, and providing compassionate, generous, just treatment for victims of child sexual abuse.

In response to the *Charter* and the *Norms*, the Albany Catholic Diocese is providing ongoing training for all those who work with youth. The diocese has adopted the *Protecting God's Children* program, which is the **VIRTUS** child sexual abuse prevention program. **All those who work with youth in the Albany diocese will be required to take part in this program.** In order to find the available VIRTUS training dates, please log onto the diocesan website at virtusonline.org. Click on Registration, then Albany, NY and a list of available sessions will pop up. Please register for one of these sessions.

As part of the compliance process, anyone wishing to work or volunteer in a Diocesan school must attend Virtus training, sign a Code of Conduct and consent to a background check. Those persons who are not in full compliance with these mandates will not be to continue working and/or volunteering in Diocesan facilities or programs. We hope that you will understand that the purpose of these compliance mandates is to create the safest possible environment for our children. We want to do all that we possibly can to protect the children who are entrusted to our care.

Should you have any questions regarding the above information, please contact the school office at 355-3080. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Sincerely,
Kelly Sloan
Mrs. Kelly Sloan
Principal