

# **VIRTUS® PROTECTING GOD'S CHILDREN PROGRAM™ TOUCHING SAFETY FOR CHILDREN**

## **What is the *Touching Safety* Program?**

The creators of the *Protecting God's Children*® program developed the *Touching Safety* program. This program is provided to us by the Diocese of Charleston 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. The program is directed to the children and is taught on an age specific basis (Kindergarten through High School) and will help them with their own personal safety. If you care to view the programs they are accessible by clicking the National Catholic Risk Retention Diocese of Charleston Lesson link, [www.nationalcatholic.org/touchingsafety/Charleston.htm](http://www.nationalcatholic.org/touchingsafety/Charleston.htm).

There is also a Teaching Touching Safety Guide provided to all parents with children in the St. Francis Religious Education Program or the Catholic School. It is accessible at [www.nationalcatholic.org/touchingsafety/Charleston.htm](http://www.nationalcatholic.org/touchingsafety/Charleston.htm). The programs for the children were developed from the guide and parents can use it to reinforce the program at home.

The Charleston Diocese also has an extensive policy regarding the handling of allegations of child sexual abuse. All volunteers and employees are provided a copy of the policy. To access the policy click on Diocese of Charleston web page, [www.catholic-doc.org](http://www.catholic-doc.org).

## **WHEN IS IT TAUGHT**

It is taught each year, in the fall as a part of the Religious Education or St. Francis Catholic School curriculum. It is a three year program. The first part was offered in 2005 and again in 2007. Subsequent programs will be offered in the next two years/

## **MUST MY CHILD ATTEND**

This is an excellent program, and taught at an age specific level. While we recommend that all children attend, parents who do not wish their child to be covered must sign a form to opt their children out from attendance.