

ARCHDIOCESE OF BALTIMORE

OFFICE OF CHILD & YOUTH PROTECTION

October 31, 2017

Dear Parents and Guardians,

In 2014 the Archdiocese of Baltimore contracted with *Shield the Vulnerable* to provide online child protection training based on the Archdiocese of Baltimore's *Code of Conduct for Church Personnel* and *A Statement of Policy for the Protection of Children and Youth*. For the first time, people serving in our parishes and schools were able to complete online all of the requirements for volunteer service. Late in September, *Shield the Vulnerable* announced that its platform will not be available after October 31, 2017. We had no control over this decision or the timing of the changes it requires.

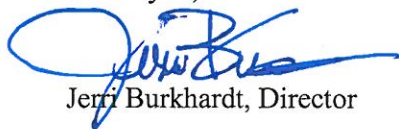
We are glad to announce that as of November 1, 2017, the Archdiocese of Baltimore will join more than ninety dioceses using VIRTUS as a training and compliance management system. VIRTUS has worked with us to customize training tailored to our policies and to Maryland law.

The Archdiocesan policies updated in 2014 remain unchanged. Thanks to the transfer of data from *Shield the Vulnerable*, most volunteers and employees will not be required to access the system at this time. Church personnel, including volunteers, who have not already registered in *Shield the Vulnerable*, will be required to register using VIRTUS. VIRTUS will direct volunteers to review the *Code of Conduct for Church Personnel* and *A Statement of Policy for the Protection of Children and Youth*. The Archdiocese of Baltimore will continue to work with Employment Screening Resources (ESR) to conduct online criminal history screening; as part of the registration process, VIRTUS will direct volunteers to the ESR website where they will be asked to submit to an online criminal history screening. VIRTUS can be accessed at: <https://www.virtusonline.org>.

If you have questions about registration process, you may speak with the school's Screening Coordinator. Also, feel free to contact the Archdiocese of Baltimore, Office of Child and Youth Protection at (410) 547-5348.

Thank you for your commitment to the policies that promote child protection in the Archdiocese of Baltimore. With your support we will continue to create and maintain safe environments where our children will thrive.

Thank you,



Jerr Burkhardt, Director