

J.M.J.f

OUR LADY QUEEN OF PEACE
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION PROGRAM
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Email: reled@olqbbranchville.org
FATHER ED RAMA, PASTOR

To: Parents of Children in Religious Education grades 1 and 4

From: Diana Rimshnick, CRE

Subject: Opportunity to “opt your child out” of the *Teaching Touching Safety Program*

Date: October 9, 2017

The job of ensuring children’s safety is a challenging undertaking. The prevention of child sexual abuse requires more than adult awareness, education and training about the nature and scope of the problem. We must also give our children the tools they need to overcome the advances of someone who intends to do them harm. The *Teaching Touching Safety Program* is a program designed to assist parents and teachers in this important task. The *Touching Safety Program* helps give children the tools they need to protect themselves from those who might harm them.

On October 28th, 2017, students in our 1st and 4th grade religious education classes will be attending *Teaching Touching Safety*. This program is from the creators of Protecting God’s Children, the program which is required of all parish volunteers and employees who regularly work with children and is part of our ongoing efforts 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 child participates. We encourage you to read the attached “overview” so you will be aware of the nature of the *Touching Safety Program*. If you have questions about the program or would like a copy of the actual lesson, please contact Mrs. Diana Rimshnick, CRE at 973-948-3185 ext. 3. 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 Mrs. Diana Rimshnick, CRE at the address in this letterhead no later than October 20th, 2017. Thank you.

Opt-out form for use with the *Touching Safety Program*:

Our Lady Queen of Peace Religious Education Program does not have my permission to present the *Touching Safety Program* to my child whose name is: _____

Parent’s name (printed): _____

Parent’s signature: _____

Date: _____

Our Lady Queen of Peace pray for us~

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“TEACHING TOUCHING SAFETY” PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The job of ensuring children’s safety is a challenging undertaking. The prevention of child sexual abuse requires more than adult awareness, education and training about the nature and scope of the problem. We must also give our children the tools they need to overcome the advances of someone who intends to do them harm. The *Teaching Touching Safety Program* is a program designed to assist parents and teachers in this important task. The Touching Safety program helps give children the tools they need to protect themselves from those who might harm them.

In accepting this responsibility, the parishes of the Diocese of Paterson provide for collaboration among parents, educators and catechists who teach in our parish religious education programs.

Teaching Touching Safety is a program we are using in our parish religious education programs that requires parents and other caring adults to help children learn appropriate relationship boundaries and how to protect themselves from violators. Through *Teaching Touching Safety*, we can empower children to respond in the best possible ways when those boundaries have been violated. *Teaching Touching Safety* is **NOT** a sex education program.

The Diocese’s Teaching Touching Safety Program Synopsis:

Children in grades 1 will be trained each year in Lesson #1 of the *Virtus Teaching Touching Safety Program*. There are age appropriate versions of the lesson for grades 1 and 4.

Students in Grade 1 will receive lesson 1, and students in Grade 4 will receive lesson 2. Lesson One is entitled “Touching Safety Rules”. Students will learn simple rules about what to do and how to react when someone’s touch is confusing, scary, or makes the child or young person feel uncomfortable. Lesson 2 is entitled “Safe Friends, Safe Adults, and Safe Touches”. Children, young people and their parents establish basic guidelines for working together to make certain which friends and other adults in their environments can be trusted to act safely and in the best interest of each child or young person.

For more information, please go to the Diocese of Paterson website at www.patersondioceses.org and click on the link for Teaching Touching Safety. You may also visit www.virtusonline.org. If you have any additional questions, please feel free to contact Joan Valk at the Diocesan Office of Child Protection at 973-777-8818 ext.277