



OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

DIocese OF BRIDGEPORT

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February 25, 2015

My brothers and sisters in Christ:

In light of our sacred obligation to protect children, youth and vulnerable adults, the Diocese of Bridgeport is renewing its commitment to and strengthening of our Safe Environment programs. To that end, I enclose the Safe Environment Handbook 2015 ("Handbook"), which contains the Diocese of Bridgeport's revised policies, procedures and guidelines for the implementation of the *U.S.C.C.B. Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*.

There are certain important changes in the revised Safe Environment program of which you should be aware. These changes are summarized in the document attached entitled "Key Changes in the Diocese of Bridgeport 2015 Safe Environment Program." These changes took effect on January 1, 2015.

I write to you today specifically to emphasize the two critical steps you will need to take as a member of the clergy, religious sister or brother, employee or volunteer in our Diocese to meet the requirements of the Safe Environment Program. Please note that you must complete both of these steps by **April 1, 2015**.

1. First, you must read the Handbook, paying particular attention to the sections that apply to your work and ministry, acknowledge your receipt and understanding of the Handbook by signing the attached form, and return the form as directed; and
2. Access your VIRTUS account online at www.virtusonline.org in order to renew your criminal background check and complete your VIRTUS re-certification. Detailed instructions from the Office of Safe Environment are attached and can also be found at www.bridgeportdiocese.com under "SAFE ENVIRONMENT."

Thank you for all that you do for the Church, and for helping to ensure that our parishes, schools and ministries are safe environments for children, youth and vulnerable adults in our community.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Frank J. Caggiano

Most Reverend Frank J. Caggiano
Bishop of Bridgeport