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Faith Formation Program – 2019/20 Safe Environment Training

Dear Parents,

Our Catholic tradition has always affirmed the dignity of human beings as created in the image and likeness of God. Every person has the right to be treated with dignity and respect all times and in all places. We believe that our ministry with children and youth, in particular, is based on a sacred trust - one that we at St. Gabriel the Archangel and St. Madeleine Sophie Parishes are committed to preserving.

In 2002, the United States Bishops approved *The Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People* to protect children and youth from sexual abuse at all levels of church life, and to begin restoring trust in a Church scarred by the scandal of clergy sexual abuse. Article 12 of the Charter directs all dioceses to create programs and processes to teach children and youth about sexual abuse and its prevention. In the Diocese of Albany, this training takes place in all parishes each year in age-appropriate ways.

In response to this directive, a Safe Environment Program will be offered during October to all Faith Formation classes at St. Gabriel's and St. Madeleine Sophie Parishes. These short, age-appropriate trainings will be presented by grade during class time; there'll also be time for discussion so students can feel comfortable and have a good understanding of the intent of this important training. If your child isn't attending a scheduled class at the parish or is completing an Independent Study at home, we invite them to participate in this program as well. Parents can also go to the following links to view these videos and to get other Safe Environment resources: <https://www.rcda.org/offices/safe-environment/parent-resources> and <https://www.netsmartz.org/Home>.

- **IMPORTANT: Please complete the tear-off at the bottom of this letter and return it to the Faith Formation Office with your registration packet ONLY if you do not want your child to participate in the 2019-2020 Safe Environment program or if they are participating in a home class or the Independent Study program.**

If your child is attending Faith Formation sessions at either SMS or SGA, and we do not receive the Opt Out slip by October 1, 2019, we'll assume that you give permission for your child to participate in the Safe Environment training. As always, you are welcome to contact us with questions or concerns. We look forward to working with you to give our children the safest possible environment to grow in faith, both in our church community and in our homes.

Peace and Blessings ~ The Faith Formation Staff of St. Madeleine Sophie and St. Gabriel the Archangel Parishes

DO NOT COMPLETE THIS FORM UNLESS YOU ARE OPTING OUT
of the 2019-20 Safe Environment Training for Children and Youth
at St. Gabriel's and St. Madeleine Sophie Parish

My child(ren) will **NOT PARTICIPATE** in Safe Environment training during the 2019/20 Faith Formation program year. I am aware that I can contact the Faith Formation Office or the Diocese of Albany to get more information or receive additional resources to discuss with my child(ren) at home.

Child(ren)'s name(s) and grade(s): _____

Parent/Guardian's Signature: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____