



## *Office for Safe Environments*

*Diocese of Norwich  
199 Broadway  
Norwich, CT 06360*

Since 2004, the Office for Safe Environments of the Diocese of Norwich used VIRTUS, a best practices program designed to help prevent wrongdoing and promote "rightdoing" to empower priests, deacons, ministry leaders, employees and volunteers to be aware of risks and improve the lives of all those interacting with the Church. Currently, the Diocese of Norwich uses Called to Protect, a video-based and discussion-oriented program, and Armatus, online training. Both these programs provide a foundational understanding of the risks, warning signs, and appropriate responses to child sexual abuse. It also discusses preventive strategies and how to implement them.

All volunteers who interact with children and teenagers on a regular basis, as well as all priests, deacons, ministry leaders, and employees, have an obligation to attend this program. To date, more than 17,287 adults have been trained in the VIRTUS or Called to Protect and Armatus programs. Yearly, on average, 15,000 children and young people received abuse prevention education from kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade. More than 16,323 adults have been background screened utilizing FBI fingerprint analysis, State of Connecticut Department of Public Safety background checks, multistate court and database searches, as well as Department of Children and Family background checks and National Sex Offender registry checks.

Anyone wanting to report suspected abuse and/or sexual misconduct in the Diocese of Norwich should call the Diocesan Reporting Line **(1-800-624-7407)** and provide basic information about the incident. Then the Bishop's Delegate for Internal Investigations, along with the Assistance Coordinator, work together to create a safe and compassionate environment. They coordinate and provide access to counseling and support for victims affected by sexual misconduct and/or abuse by a priest, deacon, or others who minister, work, or volunteer in the Diocese of Norwich to help in the healing process. All clergy, employees and volunteers are informed on a regular basis, about the process for reporting suspected abuse.

For more information on the Diocese of Norwich's policies, protocols, and training concerning abuse prevention and the protection of children and young people, visit the website of the Office for Safe Environments:

<https://www.norwichdiocese.org/Find/Diocesan-Offices/Safe-Environments>