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OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

DIOCESE OF TRENTON
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May 3, 2021

Feast of St. Philip and St. James, Apostles

To All Diocesan Pastors, Principals and Catechetical Leaders

My Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Following the adoption of the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People* by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops in June 2002, the Diocese of Trenton has worked tirelessly to implement the *Charter* with dispatch and integrity.

I write today to inform you that the Diocese of Trenton is adopting an additional Safe Environment Program for our K to 8 children and youth. This program, "*Growing with God*" published by Loyola Press exceeds the requirements of article 13 of the Charter and will foster safe environments for children and young people. This program now joins the previously adopted "*RCL Family Life*" (*adopted 3/19/14*) as an official safety program of the Diocese of Trenton. Beginning July 1, 2021, Religious Education Programs and Catholic Schools must choose one of these two programs for use with K-8 students. One of these two programs will be taught in all of the Religious Education Programs and Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Trenton.

"Teen Lures" will continue to be the official safety program for high-school aged youth in the Diocese (*adopted 10/15/15*). I will continue to endorse the VIRTUS, Protecting God's Children Program for Adults as the Safe Environment program for all our employees and volunteers who have significant contact with children.

Thank you for all you do to pass on the beauty of our Catholic faith and to protect our children.

Respectfully yours in the Lord,

Most Reverend David M. O'Connell, C.M., J.C.D.
Bishop of Trenton

