

# Office of Faith Formation and Youth Ministry

Blessed Sacrament Parish

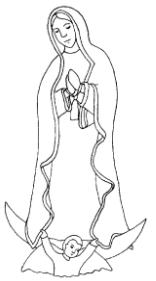
## The Shrine of Our Lady of the Americas

Shrine Entrance: 273 Central Avenue  
Albany, NY 12206

Mailing Address: 274 Sherman Street  
Albany, NY 12206

Telephone: (518) 465-3685 Ext.11 (Bilingual)

E-mail: [ale.ourladyoftheamericas@gmail.com](mailto:ale.ourladyoftheamericas@gmail.com)



August 30, 2015

Dear Parent(s),

Our Catholic tradition has always affirmed the dignity of the human person as created in the image and likeness of God. Every person with whom we come in contact deserves to be seen by us with the eyes of God. We know that ministry with children and youth, in particular, is a sacred trust. We, at *The Shrine of Our Lady of the Americas* are committed to preserve, at all times and in all places, this sacred trust which is rooted in our faith in Jesus Christ

In 2002, the United States Bishops approved The Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People in an effort to protect children and youth from sexual abuse at all levels of church life and to restore 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 will take 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 *The Shrine of Our Lady of the Americas*, including Independent Study students. There are short, appropriate DVDs which will be shown during class time to grades 1 and 2, as well as 3 through 5, and 6th grade through high school, followed by the opportunity for discussion so all students feel comfortable and have a good understanding of the intent of this important training. Make-up session will be offered before December 2015 for students who are absent on the scheduled dates. Parents are always welcome to contact us with questions or concerns, and can attend the program with your child(ren) or view the DVDs on the Albany Diocesan website at: [http://rcda.org/Offices/OECFL/protection\\_of\\_children.html](http://rcda.org/Offices/OECFL/protection_of_children.html)

**IMPORTANT - IF YOU DO NOT WANT YOUR CHILD TO PARTICIPATE IN THE SAFE ENVIRONMENT PROGRAM.**

Please fill out and return the bottom part of this letter to the Faith Formation Office with your registration packet. If we do not receive the opt-out slip by October 1st, 2015, we'll assume that you have given permission for your child(ren) to participate in the Safe Environment training. We look forward to working with you to give our youth the safest possible environment to grow in faith, both in our church community and in our homes.

Sincerely,

*Alejandra Saucedo* Faith Formation Coordinator

*Maria Stella* Faith Formation Assistant



**ONLY COMPLETE AND RETURN THIS FORM IF YOU ARE OPTING-OUT OF**

**The Safe Environment Training for Children and Youth – The Shrine of Our Lady of the Americas**

I request that my child(ren) **NOT PARTICIPATE** in the Safe Environment Program for the 2015-2016 school year. I understand that I can contact the Faith Formation Office for resources to discuss with my child(ren) at home.

Child(ren)'s name(s) and grade(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_