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From the Clergy Assistant

Safeguarding God's Children

In the Diocese of Newark, we are fortunate to have access to *Safeguarding Online*, an internet-based child abuse awareness training, which is free of charge and can be completed online in about 1-1/2 hours. This program provides information helpful in protecting the children we know and care for in our personal lives as well as the ministries in which we all serve. Child sexual abuse and misconduct are difficult subjects, but in gaining better awareness of signs of possible abuse and other factors which can allow such abuse, we can create safe and nurturing environments for the children in our families, parish, neighborhoods, schools, or other organizations such as sports teams or scouts. Prevention is the best way to ensure a secure community of any type.

As the leadership of our diocese states: "Let us remember that we are called to receive, nurture and treasure each child as a gift from God. As a diocese with its congregations, schools, programs and many activities, we are called to provide a safe and nurturing environment for our children and youth to learn and grow in the love of Jesus Christ. To that end, we are committed to making every effort to keep our children and youth safe from sexual abuse."

St. Elizabeth's is happy to make this training available to all parishioners. Please contact me at jconley@stesridgewood.org if you are interested in participating in this program; I will provide you with a username and password.

If each of us can protect even one child, we each have the opportunity to change one life. Together we can make a difference in a generation of children.

The Rev. Joan F. Conley