

Dr. Paul Ward
Director of the NY Diocese Safe Environment Program,
NYC VOTF East and West Side Chapters
Summary of meeting 2/09/04

Dr. Paul Ward was appointed in August 2003 as Director of the Archdiocesan Safe Environment Program, **A.S.E.P.** Dr. Ward's job is to establish this program in the New York Archdiocese for lay people to communicate the standards of conduct to prevent sexual abuse, for clergy and other persons who deal with our Catholic youth - in fulfillment of Article 12 of The Bishops' Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People. His job is three fold:

1. **To provide criminal background checks on ALL Church ministers, employees and volunteers who work with our Catholic young people.** The Archdiocese has contracted with ChoicePoint, the nation's leading provider of identification and credential verification services, to do this; records for all such people will be kept in the ASEP office. If some conviction turns up, it will be reviewed by the Archdiocesan General counsel against NYS and federal law, reported to the convicted with a notice to respond and a determination will be made. The goal is to complete these checks by the summer of 2004 and thereafter the records will be updated and new records will be created for all new employees and volunteers.
2. **To establish codes of conduct for clergy and adults working with Catholic youth.** This has been done. The codes appear on www.ny-archdiocese.org. Illegal actions under both codes must be reported to Civil Authorities and the Chancery except in the case of confidential information obtained in the confessional.
3. **To provide sexual abuse awareness training and appropriate civil and Church reporting procedures** The Archdiocese has contracted with VIRTUS to train 40 trainers to go out and train employees and volunteers parish by parish. It is up to the parishes to educate the parents. The training will be conducted in March and the training of employees and volunteers in the 411 parishes throughout the rest of the school year 2003-2004.

Any questions regarding the Safe Environment Program can be directed to Dr. Paul Ward, Safe Environment Program 1011 1st Ave., NY, NY 10022. Phone: 212-371-1000x2810.
Jennifer McLaughlin, MA, Program Coordinator, x 2811.