

Diocese of Ossory Safeguarding Newsletter

Safeguarding is
Everyone's
Responsibility



Message from Bishop Nulty

This weekend here in Ossory we celebrate Safeguarding Sunday. It's an opportunity to thank the many volunteers who under the direction of our Director of Safeguarding and our Diocesan Safeguarding Committee ensure safeguarding is embedded in the culture of this diocese. 'Safeguarding Sunday' acknowledges mistakes in the past that remain an 'open wound' while publicly recognising the huge strides that continue to be made. We remember all those who have experienced abuse in our diocese and remind them of the support services of Towards Healing and Towards Peace.

Safeguarding is at the heart of the Christian message. I wish to acknowledge the work of the many people throughout the Diocese who promote the welfare of children and provide assurance to their families. I thank all those who are committed to ensuring that parish activities are run in a safe and welcoming way. These include our safeguarding

representatives, our sacristans, our choir leaders, our youth leaders, the priests, religious, administration staff and all volunteers in our parishes. Creating opportunities to include children and young people in parish life is fundamental for their development and central to safeguarding.

We all realise the pandemic was very tough on parishes and particularly the involvement of young people. On this Sunday I encourage all our 42 parishes to re-engage with altar servers, youth readers and youth choirs. Young people give our Church great promise and hope. It is important to have our young and our vulnerable at the heart of parish life once again. All of us together can make this happen in the confidence that the parish is a safe and good place for all to be involved in. Thank you again for all you do. Every blessing,

+*Denis Nulty, Apostolic Administrator*

Supports for Survivors of Abuse



TOWARDS HEALING is an independent organisation providing free professional support for people who have experienced institutional, clerical or religious abuse in Ireland. They provide counselling for survivors and their families. Their helpline is open: Tuesday to Friday 9am-5pm. Freephone 1800 303416. Hearing-impaired Text Line Number: 085-8022859. Email: info@towardshealing.ie Website: www.towardshealing.ie



TOWARDS PEACE provides spiritual support in a safe supportive space, where people who have been affected by abuse in a Church context can be accompanied as they seek their own experience of spiritual peace, one step at a time. Phone: 01 5053028 / 086 7710533. Email: towardspeace@iecon.ie Website: www.towardspeace.ie

Ossory Youth pilgrimage to the Taizé Community, France, June 2022



If anyone would like to discuss any of the topics in this Newsletter or find out more about Safeguarding in the Diocese or how you can get involved, please contact: Kathleen Sherry on 085 8021633, email: safeguarding@ossory.ie.

What has been happening over the past year?



THE NATIONAL BOARD FOR
SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN
IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN IRELAND

REVIEW BY THE NATIONAL BOARD FOR SAFEGUARDING OF CHILDREN IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN IRELAND (NBSCCCI)

Safeguarding Practices within the Catholic Church are reviewed independently, by the NBSCCCI. The Diocese of Ossory was last reviewed in 2013, so it was our turn again in 2022. Parishes, priests, safeguarding representatives, the safeguarding committee, DLPs and diocesan staff had been working very hard since the last review to ensure that all safeguarding policies and procedures were in place and that no stone was left unturned to ensure that young people are safe and secure when participating in parish/church activities.

The review was carried out in March 2022. The reviewers, reviewed all our documentation, carried out visits to parishes, talked to Safeguarding Representatives, sacristans, DLPs,

volunteers, parents, young people, priests, the safeguarding committee and from this they gleaned a comprehensive picture of safeguarding practice in the diocese.

The reviewers reported that they were assured regarding the Diocese's compliance with the Safeguarding Children Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland, 2016. The report is currently being finalised and once it is available it will be published on the Diocesan Website www.ossory.ie.

The Diocesan Safeguarding Committee welcomed this review and viewed it as a real learning and development opportunity. Our many thanks to all who participated in this review.

Theology of Safeguarding

The NBSCCCI held their conference in Monaghan in May entitled 'Exploring a Theology of Safeguarding.' In preparation for this they uploaded videos by nine different speakers on this topic. These are available to view or to download the transcripts from <https://www.safeguarding.ie/national-conference-2022>.

The keynote speech, on the opening evening, was given by Cardinal O'Malley, Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors through a live Zoom link to the conference. The following day there was a full programme of very interesting input and sessions exploring the theology of safeguarding. This focus was not exclusively about policy and procedures, but about how safeguarding is rooted in theological context.

A key message throughout the conference and the greatest challenge

for those present was how to include children and young people in parish life and church ministries, when competing with so many other activities that children and families are engaged in.

To remind people of the value of creating these opportunities and persevering with inclusion of children and young people, Dr Niall Moore from the National Board referenced the following from Pope Francis: 'Our generation will show that it can rise to the promise found in each young person when we know how to give them space. This means that we have to create the material and spiritual conditions for their full development; to give them a solid basis on which to build their lives; to guarantee their safety and their education to be everything they can be [...]'. *Pope Francis*.

Safeguarding Prayer

Lord Jesus, may we welcome the Kingdom of God anew into our hearts and lives, embracing discipleship and openness to others. You call us to walk with integrity in the service of others. May our service be filled with kindness, and respect for all God's people, giving special protection to children and the vulnerable. May we seek the truth, listen to those wounded by abuse, and choose to act with compassion and justice. Give us the strength, to serve humbly and faithfully, and to love one another as we are so loved by You. Amen.

If you have a safeguarding concern, please contact: Diocesan Designated Liaison Person (DLP) Kathleen Sherry 085 8021633, Email: dlp@ossory.ie. Deputy DLPs: Ms Rose Brophy 087 331 4330 Mr Cathal Cullen 0567762448 (Diocesan Office). Contact details for all civil authorities are on display at the back of all churches in the Diocese and available on the website www.ossory.ie.

Annual-Audits

All parishes completed their safeguarding audit for 2021 and will soon complete their 2022 audit. This audit examines compliance with the National Safeguarding Standards. The 2021 audit report reflected the impact of Covid-19 on parish activities, with many choirs and altar serving suspended for the year. This audit process provides an opportunity for those involved in safeguarding in parishes to reflect on what is working well and what further may need to be done.

Testimonials from Parishes

ALTAR SERVERS FROM CAMROSS PARISH ON WHY THEY LIKE SERVING AT MASS:

- "I like to serve because I feel good about myself and I like being with my friends. The people in the Church are fun to be with". *Mollie*
- "I like to serve for God". *Cayden*
- "You get to serve God and help Fr Griffin and the people at Mass". *Donnacha*
- "I just enjoy it". *Kadi*
- "Because I get to see my friends and go to Mass". *Millie*
- "I want to be holy". *Joseph*
- "It makes me feel I'm doing good and we are helping other people". *Diarmuid*

CHOIR MEMBER ST PATRICK'S PARISH:

- "I have been a part of St. Patrick's church choir for many years. I have always felt well looked after and it has enabled me to be the person I am today by being part of the choir and going to practice every week in the parish centre, I have always felt safe, and it encouraged me to become more confident in my ability in dealing with people and I have always felt very supported". *Caoinhe*

YOUTH READERS MOONCOIN PARISH

- "I enjoy doing the church readings, it boosts my confidence in public speaking and makes me feel part of the community". *Emily*
- "Volunteering in the church is beneficial to me in many ways. Reading in the church is a step forward in my progression towards my school Gaisce Award". *Olivia*

Vetting

Information and forms for Garda Vetting can be found at: www.ossory.ie/safeguarding under the Garda Vetting Resources section. If you have a query in relation to completing a vetting application, you can email your query to Sr. Ena Kennedy at vetting@ossory.ie.

Safeguarding Training

Safeguarding training was put on hold during 2020 and 2021. However, from February 2022 we resumed online safeguarding training providing information sessions and refresher sessions via Zoom and in-person training in June. We recently distributed our training calendar for Autumn 2022 and look forward to seeing people who need refresher training and those who are new to parish roles attending. We are continuing with a blend of in-person and online training to accommodate people's preferences and availability.

