



What is Safeguarding Sunday?

Safeguarding Sunday is a time for the Diocese of Kildare & Leighlin to remind our communities and parish personnel that protecting children and vulnerable people is at the heart of the Christian message. It is an opportunity for all the parishes to pray together as one and acknowledge the dedication of all Church personnel and volunteers who serve in the ministry of Safeguarding across the Diocese.

During the celebration of the Safeguarding Sunday liturgy, we will also renew our commitment to the pastoral care of victims and survivors of abuse, as well as their families.

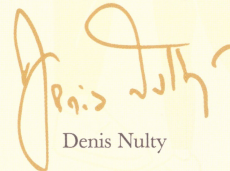
Message from Bishop Nulty

I warmly welcome the holding of 'Safeguarding Sunday' once again in our diocese. The fact that 'Safeguarding Sunday' has become such a regular part of our Diocesan and Parish life, demonstrates how safeguarding has been so well embedded into every area of our diocese and its fifty-six parishes. Since Safeguarding Sunday last year, we have undergone a robust review conducted by the NBSCCCI which commended the diocese for our safeguarding practices. I thank all involved in this review and particularly priests and local safeguarding representatives at parish level who ensure best practice in safeguarding is adhered to in all parishes.

I welcome the appointment of our new Director of Safeguarding, Ailish Higgins.

'Safeguarding Sunday' allows safeguarding to rest at the heart of every parish activity, it is part of the culture that prevails across the diocese. This Sunday I thank all who ensure safeguarding is so well embedded, our Director of Safeguarding, the Diocesan Safeguarding Committee, the Designated Liaison People, our Parish Safeguarding Representatives and very much our priests and people. Our parishes are safe places for young people to be part of, I pray that more will engage in the life of our fifty-six parishes over the coming year.

Every blessing on this great work,



Denis Nulty

A Message from Ailish Higgins, newly appointed Director of Safeguarding & DLP

I am delighted to have joined the safeguarding team in Kildare and Leighlin, having officially taken over the mantle from Kathleen Sherry as of 24th October 2023. Let me take this opportunity to thank Kathleen again for all her hard work in the Diocese.

As a Co. Down native, now living in the Diocese, I would like to also say thank you for the warm welcome I have kindly received since taking up the role. I know I still have many more people to meet, and I look forward to visiting parishes over the coming year.

While Safeguarding Sunday is one day in the year to highlight the importance of safeguarding and for the Church to

publicly recommit to best practice, it is important to note that safeguarding is at the forefront of the Diocese's concerns every day and that we take this responsibility seriously.

And while I, as Safeguarding Director, along with Bishop Nulty and the Safeguarding Committee, may take a lead role in outlining the key aspects of what needs to be in place to protect children, young people, and adults from harm, safeguarding is very much a shared community responsibility in which each one of us has a part to play. So, I thank you for your continued hard work and commitment to creating and maintaining a safe environment for all in the Diocese.

If you have any queries or concerns regarding safeguarding of children or of vulnerable adults, please do not hesitate to contact me.



Update from the Safeguarding Office

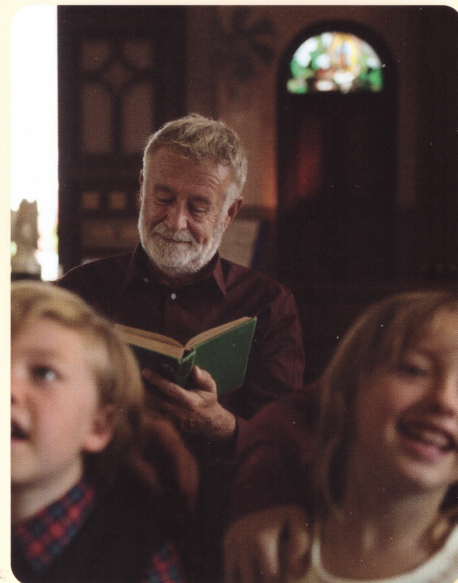
Safeguarding Evening at Mt St. Anne's

Bishop Nulty & the diocesan safeguarding team was delighted to host a safeguarding information evening in Mt St. Anne's on Thursday 25th January 2024 for all local safeguarding reps and parish priests.

Dr. Jessie Rogers of Maynooth University spoke to the topic of "Theology of Safeguarding", highlighting how scripture tells us - Children need to be at the centre of the Church.

Youth Leaders from the Diocese also gave an informative and motivating presentation on "Creating Youth Participation."

Thank you to all who attended and enriched the evening with great engagement and discussion.



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. You will remember that the Diocese of Kildare & Leighlin was reviewed in December 2022 and their final report subsequently released and published on the Diocesan website in 2023.

Main conclusions from the report;

- From meetings and discussions with Bishop Nulty, his safeguarding team and the Local Safeguarding Representatives in the parishes, the Reviewer is

satisfied with the safeguarding arrangements in Kildare and Leighlin Diocese, and with its levels of compliance with the National Board safeguarding children standards.

- There is evidence of a strong commitment and dedication by everyone to creating and sustaining a safe environment for all those involved in Church ministry. This is a diocese that strives to reach out to and engage with its parishioners and local communities.

- The Diocese of Kildare and Leighlin is in a good place to take these developments forward.
- Under Bishop Nulty's leadership, and with the support of those around him, an open culture has been fostered that is focused on learning and improvement, so that everyone in the diocese can feel safe, valued, and cared for.





Annual Parish Audits

- The Local Safeguarding Rep in each of the 56 parishes carry out an annual safeguarding self-audit on behalf of the parish Priest.
- The audits are collated by the Director of Safeguarding who compiles a report for the Diocesan Safeguarding Committee.
- This information is valuable to the Diocesan Safeguarding Committee when formulating their three-year strategic plan.
- It also helps advise the committee on how best to re-engage young families, children, and young people with the Church.
- Parish Self-Audits for 2023 are now in progress.
- 2022 Parish Audit Reports available on Diocesan website.

Safeguarding Training

Kathleen Sherry kindly completed the training schedule for 2023 along with the Diocesan Safeguarding Trainers with the last events being held in November 2023 in Newbridge Parish Centre and in Portlaoise Parish Centre.

A training schedule for Spring 2024 is currently being drafted by Ailish Higgins. Feedback from the parish self-audits will be vital in establishing the training needs of parishes going forward.

Youth Participation

Jesus said “Let the little children come to me, and do not prevent them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.”

Matthew 19:14

If your child/young person is interested in becoming an altar server, joining the parish youth choir, engaging with youth ministry or indeed, you would like to learn more about youth participation in the church, please contact your Parish Priest or Local Safeguarding Rep. or you can contact **Ailish Higgins**, Director of Safeguarding – **085 802 1633**



Testimonials from Young People in Parishes of Naas, Sallins & Two Mile House.

I enjoy being able to share the different stories from the Bible and about the SAINTS. They mean something to me and I like to share them with others.

I enjoy helping with the Confirmation kids, because I remember what it is like to make my Confirmation.

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.

I hope that I can encourage the young people to take their faith seriously.

It's really important to grow our beliefs, especially in advancing towards the years of the Leaving Certificate

In My opinion, there is no better way of nourishing our faith than the Pope John Paul II and Papal Cross awards

Support for Survivors of Abuse

Towards Healing

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 303 416.

Hearing-impaired Text Line

Number: 085 8022 859.

Email: info@towardshealing.ie

Web: 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.

Tel: 01 505 3028 / 086 771 0533.

Email: towardspeace@iecon.ie

Web: www.towardspeace.ie

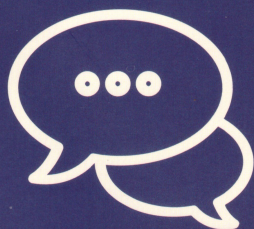


Vetting

Information and forms for Garda Vetting can be found at:

www.kandle.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 **vetting@kandle.ie**



If you have a safeguarding concern, please contact:

Diocesan Designated Liaison Person (DLP): Ailish Higgins

Tel: 085 802 1633 **Email:** dlp@kandle.ie.

Deputy DLPs: Ms. Michele Hughes

Tel: 086 171 0643 / Fr. Michéal Murphy **Tel:** 057 867 9302

Contact details for all civil authorities are on display at the back of all churches in the diocese and available on the website **www.kandle.ie**