



# SAFEGUARDING NEWSLETTER

## May 2020

### MSC Safeguarding Committee Members

**Chairperson**  
Sandra Neville

**Committee Members**  
Fr. John Bennett, Spirituality Ministry  
Fr. Manus Ferry, Chaplain  
Mary Tallon, Safeguarding Manager/  
DLP

**Safeguarding is everyone's  
responsibility**



**Pope Francis, Apostolic letter –“  
Motu Proprio” on the protection of  
minors and vulnerable persons  
(March 26<sup>th</sup>, 2019)**

*"The protection of minors and vulnerable persons is an integral part of the Gospel message that the Church and all its members are called to proclaim throughout the world. Christ himself, in fact, has entrusted us with the care and protection of the weakest and defenceless;" whoever receives one child such as this in my name receives me" (Mt 18:5).*

### Welcome from the Provincial

I am very pleased to introduce this relaunch edition of the MSC Safeguarding Newsletter, albeit in such uncertain and surreal times. The Newsletter first appeared a few years ago but then fell into abeyance.

I welcome its return as an important channel for communicating information about safeguarding in the Irish Province. The Safeguarding Committee plans to issue a Newsletter twice yearly to keep us all updated.

I would like to particularly thank the Safeguarding Committee for taking this initiative and for preparing the Newsletter.

Mary Tallon, our Safeguarding Manager, has been with us almost a year now and had managed to visit most of the communities in Ireland before the lock-down came into place. She will resume her visits as soon as possible. She is always available for advice or consultation about any pastoral activity you may be planning which has safeguarding implications, so please don't hesitate to contact her.

We have come a long way over recent years in refining policies and procedures which enable us to keep the safeguarding of children at the heart of our mission and ministry. But this is an on-going journey, which requires all of us to keep informed and updated, and focussed on our absolute commitment to make the Church, and the Irish Province of the MSC a safe place for children.

I am sure this Newsletter will play its own part in helping us to achieve that.

**Carl Tranter MSC  
Provincial**

## Role of Safeguarding Committee

The role of the Safeguarding Committee is primarily focused on creating, maintaining and monitoring a safe environment for all aspects of life and activity across MSC communities, churches and centres and advising all communities in implementing best safeguarding practices. Its role is also to promote, develop and support child safeguarding as follows:

- ◇ Developing a three-year child safeguarding plan which includes a training and communication strategy and the establishment of local child safeguarding policy and procedures.
- ◇ In conjunction with the Provincial, ensuring that appropriate safeguarding personnel are in place.
- ◇ Co-ordinating activities related to child safeguarding, e.g. training, safe recruitment of staff and volunteers with the MSC.
- ◇ Ensuring the completion of an annual safeguarding audit of each community.
- ◇ Ensuring the completion of training needs assessments across the various safeguarding roles.

## Safeguarding Manager/DLP

The Safeguarding Committee would like to express their thanks to Saoirse Fox for her excellent commitment and contribution to the Safeguarding Committee in her role as Safeguarding Manager/DLP over the past seven years.

Mary Tallon took over the role of Safeguarding Manager/DLP from Saoirse in June 2019 and works one day a week. The Committee is pleased to welcome Mary in her new role with the MSC.

As a registered Social Worker, Mary has worked in the statutory and voluntary sector for the past thirty years, in the area of abuse prevention, child protection and supporting vulnerable families. She currently has DLP/Safeguarding roles with the Dominicans, Franciscans, ofm and the Carmelites, o.carm.

Her role/general duties are as follows:

- ◆ To act as the designated liaison person for the MSC which involves receiving and responding to abuse allegations/disclosures in accordance with civil and church law.
- ◆ To act as the Safeguarding Manager for the MSC.
- ◆ To fulfil all duties outlined in the Safeguarding Children Procedures Document, 2018 including acting as secretary to the MSC Advisory and Safeguarding Panels and also to the Integrity in Ministry Committee.

## Safeguarding Training



### Safeguarding Refresher Training

- A. **MSC Members** who attended a full day safeguarding training in 2017 will be required to attend a refresher training session later this year.

It is intended that this training will take place in each community at a time and date suitable to ensure the maximum attendance.

- B. **MSC staff & volunteers**, working with children/young people will be required to attend a full day safeguarding training if they have not already done so and/or to attend a safeguarding information session.

If you would like to request specific safeguarding training, please contact the Safeguarding Committee via Mary Tallon,



## Vos Estis Lux Mundi 2019

On May 7<sup>th</sup> 2019, Pope Francis issued an apostolic letter, entitled "*Vos Estis lux mundi*, ("You are the light of the world".) T

The structure of the document is broken into the following:

- a) **An introduction** which focuses on all crimes of a sexual nature committed within the Church by clergy and religious and the devastating consequences for those who suffered the abuse and for the wider faithful community. It also considers the responsibility of Bishops, and other ministers of the Church in such matters.
- b) **Title 1 (Articles 1-5)**. The first few Articles details the general provision of the law clarifying the type of behaviours which constitute the crime and indicating how reports are to be received and dealt with. It introduces a new offence of trying to interfere with or avoid investigation of allegations. This section also introduces a helpful definition of a "vulnerable adult" into Canon Law.
- c) **Title 11 (Article 6-19)**. This section details the procedures to be followed and the actions to be taken when the person at the centre of a report is a Bishop or someone considered to have the same responsibility in Canon law to that of a Bishop.

In the Motu Proprio, Pope Francis highlights that a principal responsibility of all ecclesiastical authorities is the appropriate care of those who have been harmed in any way by the behaviours detailed in Article 1.

**For further information, please see:**

- \* [www.safeguarding.ie](http://www.safeguarding.ie) GAP Paper No. 6, Shedding Light on Vos Estis Lux Mundi, February 2020.
- \* <https://www.vaticannews.va/en/pope/news/2019-05/pope-francis-motu-proprio-sex-abuse-clergy-religious-church.html>
- \* "Vos Estis lux Mundi": A Canonist reads the Motu Proprio of Pope Francis, Fr. Aidan McGrath, ofm, March, 2020.



## **Mandatory Reporting/Mandated Persons**

### **What is Mandatory Reporting?**

The Children First Act, 2015 places a legal obligation on certain persons, known as **mandated persons**, to report child protection concerns at or above a defined threshold to Tusla, the Child and Family Agency. The reporting requirements apply to information that a **mandated person** received or became aware of since the Act came into force in December 2017. However, if you have a reasonable concern about abuse prior to this date, and there is a possibility of continuing risk to a child, you should report this to Tusla under Children First National Guidance 2017.

### **Who are Mandated Persons?**

Mandated persons are people who have contact with children, families or parents/carers in the course of their employment or profession, and who, because of their role, qualifications or training, are in a key position to help protect children from harm. Mandated persons include employees/professionals working in the areas of health, education, justice, youth and childcare and members of the clergy, pastoral care workers and safeguarding or child protection officers employed by a religious body or organisation.

### **What are the obligations of Mandated Persons?**

Mandated persons are required by law to:

- a) report the harm of children above a defined threshold to Tusla
- and
- b) assist Tusla, if requested, in assessing a concern which has been the subject of a mandated report.

### **What must be reported?**

Mandated persons must report any knowledge, belief, or reasonable suspicion that a child has been, is being, or is at risk of being harmed. This includes retrospective disclosures of abuse, where adults disclose that they were abused as children.

If your concern does not reach the threshold for mandated reporting, but you still have reasonable grounds for concern about the welfare or protection of a child, you should report that concern to Tusla. As a mandated person, you should be aware that the legal obligation to report mandated concerns rest with you and no one else. However, you may make a report jointly with any other person who has concerns about the same child, or with Mary Tallon, Safeguarding Manager/DLP.

### **Is there anyone else that I need to notify?**

Yes, any child protection concern that relates to the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart, its activities, or related personnel, must be reported to the DLP as soon as possible.

### **Where can I go for advice or assistance?**

Mary Tallon, Safeguarding Manager/DLP, for the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart provides advice and support in deciding what needs to be reported and in submitting reports. You can also contact your local Tusla Social Work Office and ask to speak with the Duty Social Worker.



## **GARDA VETTING**

### ***Safeguarding Children Procedures, MSC, 2018 Theme 1: Safe Personnel***

**"Aim:** The Missionaries of the Sacred Heart do everything possible to avoid giving access to children to someone who should not be in a position of trust. Hence, safe recruitment procedures and practices are applied to all personnel who are a Member of the MSC, staff and volunteers."

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***Garda vetting renewals*** - All MSC Members are required to complete Garda vetting every three years and/or in accordance with local Diocesan requirements. In addition, it is important to note that if planning to minister for more than three days in a Diocesan Church and not the Diocese where you currently reside, it is important to check the safeguarding requirements with regard to vetting for that particular Diocese.

***Garda vetting disclosure*** - A copy of your vetting disclosure (the terminology for the vetting form returned by the Garda Vetting Unit which details Tá or Níl with regard to any offence to be disclosed) is stored securely by the Safeguarding Office and a copy is available for anyone who wishes to have their own personal vetting disclosure.

***Garda Vetting Disclosure Policy*** - The Provincial Leadership Team (PLT) is due to consider a draft MSC Garda Vetting Disclosure Policy. This Policy provides for a process in the event of offences being disclosed in respect of a Garda vetting applicant and the MSC response to such disclosures. This Policy will be available from the Safeguarding Office when signed off by the PLT.

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Garda vetting is an important part of the recruitment process in how we go about assessing someone's suitability to work with children and vulnerable adults.

However, it should not be relied upon as the only measure and must include an interview, reference checks and induction process.

(See Appendix 2, Safeguarding Children Procedures, Missionaries of the Sacred Heart, 2018 for further details re safe recruitment practices)

## Frequently Asked Questions

Questions	Answers
<p><b>Can a Parish/Church live stream its activities/ministries?</b></p>	<p>Live streaming is allowed in all parishes/churches once the correct data protection requirements and safeguarding practices are applied at all times.</p> <p>For example, Section 2 (1) c (111) of the Data Protection Act requires that any data is "adequate, relevant and not excessive" and fit for the purpose for which it is collected.</p> <p>Camera shots (images) of the congregation should be wide shots - minimising the possibility of easily identifying individuals with close-up images.</p> <p>Consent should be obtained of altar servers and others taking part in liturgies and in the case of children/young people, it is essential to have the consent of parents/carers and/or guardians.</p>
<p><b>I have had an enquiry from a local woman who wants to help out with the altar servers.</b></p> <p><b>As the Parish Priest, what do I need to do?</b></p>	<p>Welcome and introduce her to the child safeguarding measures in place in your Church.</p> <p>Advise her re the following steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⇒ Completing a Garda Vetting application</li> <li>⇒ Completing declaration/application forms <b>and</b></li> <li>⇒ The requirement to attend a safeguarding training event.</li> </ul> <p>(See Appendix 2/3/4/5 - Safeguarding Children Procedures, MSC, 2018 for further details)</p>
<p><b>A local youth club wants to rent the Church Hall. What do I need to do?</b></p>	<p>Welcome the youth club/leaders and advise re the procedures for use of MSC property and completion of the "Use of MSC Property by External Groups Form".</p> <p>This requires all external groups to confirm they have Child Safeguarding Policies and Procedures in place and have the appropriate (public liability and/or employers' liability and professional indemnity, if appropriate) insurance cover for the activity.</p>

*If you have a safeguarding concern, please contact Mary Tallon,  
Safeguarding Manager/DLP*



*Email: [safeguarding@mscmissions.ie](mailto:safeguarding@mscmissions.ie)*



*Mobile Number: (087) 3819515*

**OR**

*You can report your concern/s directly to:*

*An Garda Síochána Helpline: 1800 555 222*

*Tusla, Child and Family Agency: [www.tusla.ie](http://www.tusla.ie) or contact Tusla local  
Social Work Department*

### **Safeguarding Prayer**

**Lord Jesus**

**We thank you for calling us for the service of others.**

**We pray for a generosity of spirit to ensure children are  
protected.**

**We pray for a compassionate heart so that we can reach  
out to those who are wounded by abuse.**

**We pray for courage and determination as we seek the  
safety of everyone in our parishes.**

**We pray that you will help us to do your will at all times  
and in all places.**

**Amen**

## **SAFEGUARDING NEWS BOARD**

The PLT is currently reviewing an Interim Safeguarding Vulnerable Adult Policy which will be circulated to all members/staff and volunteers in the coming months.



***Wishing you all a lovely Summer!***