

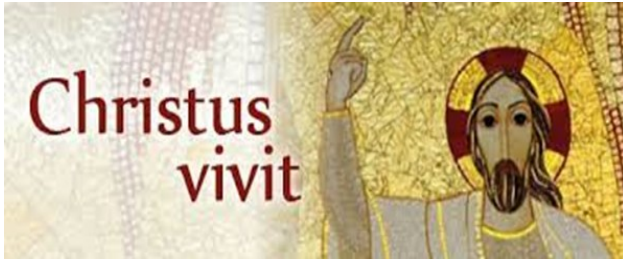


SAFEGUARDING NEWSLETTER

January 2021

Issue No. 2

Opening Reflection



If we journey together, young and old, we can be firmly rooted in the present, and from here, revisit the past and look to the future.

To revisit the past in order to learn from history and heal old wounds that at time still trouble us.

To look to the future in to nourish our enthusiasm, cause dreams to emerge, awaken prophecies and enable hope to blossom.

Together, we can learn from one another, warm hearts, inspire minds with the light of the Gospel, and lend new strength to our hands.

***Pope Francis, Christus Vivit,
No 199 (25 March 2019)***

MSC Safeguarding Committee Members

Chairperson

Ms. Sandra Neville

Committee Members

Fr. John Bennett, Spirituality Ministry

Fr. Manus Ferry, Chaplain

Ms. Mary Tallon, Safeguarding Manager/DLP

The Safeguarding Committee met on three occasions during 2020 and due to Covid-19 restrictions, all meetings were held via Zoom. However, the work of the Committee continued and a number of required tasks are completed and or ongoing as follow:

- ♦ A review of the Safeguarding Committee's Terms of Reference
- ♦ All Community Audits have been completed for 2020
- ♦ The relaunch of the Safeguarding Newsletter, Issue 1 circulated to all MSC personnel in May, 2020
- ♦ Garda vetting for all MSC personnel is up-to-date and the current focus is on the completion of Garda vetting for staff and volunteers engaged in relevant work in accordance with vetting legislation
- ♦ To engage with MSC overseas communities re safeguarding
- ♦ Consideration of delivery of online training options

Supports for Survivors / Complainants

Towards Peace



Towards Peace (www.towardspeace.ie) is a service offering spiritual support for anybody who has been abused, physically, emotionally, sexually, spiritually, in a religious/church environment. It is a pathway, a safe space where people who have been hurt can connect with their own spirituality, their sense of God and their own journey Towards Peace. The service is free and is also available to the families of those who have been affected.

Towards Peace understands spirituality as a way of being in, and relating to the world, connected to God and to one's deepest self. Through one to one meetings with a trained and qualified spiritual companion, Towards Peace offers safe spaces for people to attend to their own spiritual life.

Towards Peace continues to operate during the current restrictions as a result of the Covid-19 crisis. While, face to face meetings are on hold for the moment, if anyone wishes to access the Service, via telephone or SKYPE or seek further information, they can contact the office at (086) 7710533, office hours are Monday and Tuesday 9am-4pm and Wednesday 9am - 12 noon.



Towards Healing



(www.towardshealing.ie) is a Counselling and Support Service for Survivors of Institutional, Clerical and Religious abuse, funded by the Catholic Church.

Towards Healing provides a counselling helpline, individual face to face counselling for survivors, telephone counselling, workshops and advocacy service.

It provides services to clients regardless of where they currently live.

The Helpline operates as follows:

Monday - Thursday from 11am to 8pm and Fridays from 11am to 6pm.

Freephone Number (Ireland)
1800 303416

Freephone number (UK) 0800
0963315



Overseas Report - UK Perspective by Alan Whelan, MSC

Safeguarding within the Catholic Church here in the UK has seldom been out of the news headlines for the past two years. Findings of interim reports published by the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse [IICSA] focused on the English Benedictine Congregation and their schools in Ampleforth, Downside and Ealing all of which made very uncomfortable reading. It also included the Archdiocese of Birmingham which had generated a lot of media coverage due to the number of child sexual abuse cases that came to light and the concerns expressed about the way they were managed by the then former Archbishop of Birmingham, Cardinal Vincent Nicholas. As I write this overview of recent developments in the UK, victims and survivors are calling for his resignation with his response to date being that he is in the best position to oversee the radical reforms that are being called for as a consequence of the IICSA reports.

IICSA makes the observation that, "...faith organisations are marked out by their explicit moral purpose ... that moral purpose was betrayed over decades by those in the Church who perpetrated this abuse and those who turned a blind eye to it". It continues, "The Church's neglect of the physical, emotional and spiritual well-being of children in favour of protecting its reputation was in conflict with its mission of love and care for the vulnerable."

The IICSA report states that they are not optimistic that the Church are up to speed on safeguarding matters and notes that the Church is not yet an example of best practice in the prevention of child abuse and needs to improve its practice of auditing. Church leadership is criticised for the lack of good practice in safeguarding matters and speaks of the "laboriously slow pace of change ... lack of empathy and understanding towards many victims and survivors ... uncertainty as to whether a culture of safeguarding is fully embedded across the entire Church".

The Holy See were not spared from criticism from the Inquiry, being accused of institutional lethargy, and the failure on the part of the then Apostolic Nuncio to appear before IICSA or to respond to some perfectly reasonable requests from them: "the Holy See's response was contrary to the spirit of its public statements" and it "missed the opportunity to demonstrate its engagement and leadership on the issue of child sexual abuse".

In preparation for the findings of the IICSA Report, the Bishops of England and Wales commissioned a Report led by Mr. Ian Elliott, a well-known safeguarding consultant, and previous CEO of the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland, (NBSCCCI) to undertake an independent review of the Church's safeguarding structures and arrangements. I suspect the episcopate were well aware that engaging Elliott was going to result in a critical report on past failings and any proposed recommendations would be challenging, if not radical in setting a course for the future. On this, he did not disappoint.

The published Review Report launched in July 2020 lists fifteen recommendations which envisages a new professional standards agency under the acronym, CSSA [Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency] who would provide a central point of accountability, policies, procedures and support. Within this new body a Case Consultation Committee would operate, similar to that of the National Case Management Committee structure, operated by the NBSCCCI.

The Elliott Report sees as imperative that the voice of those that have been harmed through their involvement with the Church, is heard and learnt from. "The contribution of each person is more easily supported through personal conversations and opinions shared. Therefore, we recommend that a reference panel made up of survivors, who would wish to contribute their views to proposed policy and practice developments, should be developed within the CSSA"...

The Review also recommends the establishing of a National Tribunal Service to address canonical matters, offences and clergy discipline.

From the perspective of religious congregations, the Report recommends the separation of the current alignment between them and Diocesan Safeguarding Offices. While the 'One Church' strategy would still be pursued, a separate organisation would cater to the direct needs of religious with a separate organisation being created to oversee safeguarding. The 'one size fits all' approach was seen by many as not appropriate and in reality, it did not work.

So, what happens next? The IICAS interim report was critical that in the past the Catholic Church was slow to follow through on recommendations. At their most recent meeting in November 2020 the Bishops of England and Wales adopted all the recommendations and appointed Ms Carol Lawrence to lead the changes in safeguarding in the Church. However, the establishing of a new body to cater solely for the safeguarding requirements for religious will come at a financial cost, the details of which have yet to be discussed and accepted by individual congregations. But what are the alternatives? For in reality there are few other options available if the Church is to be seen to be implementing the recommendations of the Elliott report and thus responding to the criticisms of the IICAS inquiry.



**INDEPENDENT INQUIRY
CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE**

News Board Items

NBSCCCI National Conference, 2021. "Theology of Safeguarding".

- ⇒ In preparation for the postponed National Conference, the NBSCCCI has invited a number of theologians from across the world to prepare and present short (10 minute) video addressing particular questions which will assist in developing conversations around "A Theology of Safeguarding".
- ⇒ The videos will be placed on the NBSCCCI's website commencing in January 2021, with a new video being uploaded every month thereafter until September 2021.
- ⇒ Presenters include: Fr Hans Zollner, Dr Ethna Regan, Dr Marcia Bunge, Sr Nuala Kenny, Fr Paddy Boyle, Dr Jesse Rogers and Mr. Alan Kearns.

The December edition of the NBSCCCI Newsletter is available at [www. Safeguarding.ie](http://www.Safeguarding.ie) (news section)

IICSA Report available at: www.iicsa.org.uk/publications

Book reference

The Burden of Betrayal. Non offending Priests and the Clergy, Child Sexual Abuse Scandals. Barry O'Sullivan (Gracewing)

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

Email: 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 or contact Tusla local Social Work Department



For all life's blessings that are free,
For good things that we hear and see,
And most of all for loving me,
Thanks a bundle, Lord.

For Mums and Dads who've put us right,
For sisters to play and brothers to fight,
For homes where we live, for beds at night,
Thanks a bundle, Lord

For all the different things we do,
For lovely people, friendships true,
Because I'm me and you are you,
Thanks a bundle, Lord.

For life's long road that we all tread,
For giving us our daily bread,
For days gone by, and years ahead,
Thanks a bundle, Lord.

For health and strength each day to face,
For giving us a little place
within the world, our own small space,
Thanks a bundle, Lord.

For being there to help us through
those days when we are feeling blue,
Times when we don't know what to do,
Thanks a bundle, Lord.

For those we love who've gone before,
We long to see them all once more.
One day we will, of that we're sure,
Thanks a bundle, Lord.

For giving us this lovely day,
Please give us many more, we pray,
But just before 'AMEN' we say
Thanks a bundle Lord.

**Thanks a Bundle, Lord by Daphne Askew
[Banner Cross Methodist Church, UK]**