

Statement from the Irish Province of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart

2nd December 2022

The Irish Province of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart wishes to renew our unreserved apologies to any child or young person who was sexually abused by a member of our Province. That such abuse occurred is a cause of great shame and immense regret to us. We acknowledge and accept the lasting impact of such abuse on the lives of victim survivors.

We continue to invite any person who was, at any time, abused by a member of the Irish Province of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart, and who has yet to come forward, to make contact with us via safeguarding@mscmissions.ie and to contact Tusla, Child and Family Agency and An Garda Síochána. We are committed to working with survivors and engaging with them in ways which meet their needs.

We have employed a lay Safeguarding Manager since 2012 and we commit to ensure ongoing compliance with all statutory requirements and agencies. We work closely with the statutory authorities and the National Board for Safeguarding of Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland. Accordingly, we have the required Safeguarding Policies and Procedures in place and regular safeguarding training is provided. Safeguarding of Children in all of our ministries and communities is an absolute priority for us.

In the course of our history, the Irish Province of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart have received 108 allegations of sexual abuse of children made against 18 members.

One member was convicted before the criminal courts and is now deceased.

Of the complaints of sexual abuse received, 51 relate to a school in the south of Ireland of which we were Trustees up to 2008. These complaints refer to 4 of our members, one of whom is now deceased and two of whom have departed from the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart.

Since 2000 the Province has paid €2.8 million in settlements to victims/survivors. In addition, the Province has met legal fees for all parties involved, totalling €2.669 million. The Province covers the costs of counselling, therapy and victim support where requested.

The Missionaries of the Sacred Heart were audited by the Health Service Executive in 2009 (the findings of which were published by Tusla, Child and Family Agency in 2018) and by the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland in 2012.

We are always willing to meet, listen to and support any person who wishes to come forward with a complaint about one of our members.

On behalf of the Irish Province of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart (MSC).

Ends.

For contact: office@mscmissions.ie