

Diocese of Kildare and Leighlin

Spring 2021



SAFEGUARDING BULLETIN

Diocese Welcomes New Director of Safeguarding



Along with Bishop Denis, the Safeguarding Committee would like to extend a warm welcome to Kathleen Sherry who has been appointed as Director of Safeguarding for the Diocese of Kildare & Leighlin and the Diocese of Ossory. Kathleen took up her position on April 12th and we wish her every success and happiness in her new role.

Based in Bishop's House, Carlow, Kathleen's responsibilities concern the protection of children and vulnerable adults – a key priority in our diocese.

Kathleen qualified as a social worker in 1996, initially working in child-protection in Kildare, followed by medical social work in Dublin. In August, 1999, she returned home to Kilkenny to join SOS Kilkenny clg – a service for adults with intellectual disabilities – where she worked in a number of roles including social work and management. The safeguarding of vulnerable adults and children has always been at the core of her career. Kathleen, who is married with three children aged 20, 18 and 15, continues to live in Kilkenny.

Her vision is based on the belief that every child and vulnerable adult has the right to protection and to be in safe environments, regardless of their age, gender, ability, religious beliefs, ethnicity, political association or sexual orientation. Kathleen sees it as the responsibility of the diocese to ensure the protection of children and vulnerable adults with whom we come into contact. She believes that clear responsibilities, auditing, risk management and training are important for the delivery of a responsive safeguarding approach, in which prevention, monitoring and accountability are at the core. Central to this is clear, respectful, effective communication with all stakeholders within the diocese and those external to it.

As Kathleen takes up her new role, Bishop Denis would like to take the opportunity to thank Michelle Hughes for her work as Safeguarding Co-Ordinator in recent years. Michelle will continue as one of the Deputy Designated Liaison Persons for Diocesan Safeguarding. Kathleen is looking forward to working alongside all those who have already invested in safeguarding in the diocese and aims to support the work in progress in the promotion of the safety and well-being of all children and vulnerable adults going forward.

Director of Safeguarding

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*We believe that every
child should be cherished
and affirmed as a gift
from God with an
inherent right to dignity
of life and bodily
integrity which shall be
respected, nurtured and
protected by all.*

Online Ministry With Children & Young People

In spite of the pandemic and its impact, we have had to forge ahead with this important safeguarding ministry. While children and young people are absent from Church buildings, they are certainly not absent from our thoughts and prayers. We look forward to engaging safely with them through online ministry and when it is safe to do so, we will welcome them back to participate in liturgies, sacraments and Church youth ministry throughout our diocese. The National Board for Safe-guarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland offered training which a number of Diocesan representatives attended. Arising from this, a training programme was developed at Diocesan level for those who wish to engage with young people online. The training helps Parish and Diocesan leaders to consider the opportunities offered by online ministry with young people. It helps to identify possible risks involved, and outlines ways in which Parishes can manage those risks. Topics covered include:

- Diocesan/Parish Risk Assessment for working online;
- Joint consent form which is mandatory;
- An outline Code of Behaviour for participants;
- Safe use of the Zoom platform as well as providing participants an opportunity to ask any questions they may have about either the Zoom platform or how to engage with young people online.

This training is appropriate for all those who are engaged with children and young people in our Parishes who wish to connect with them through Zoom, for parishes who would like to explore the possibility, and for any Parish or Diocesan groups, such as Meitheal, Pope John Paul II Award Leaders, Prayer Groups or any others for whom safeguarding is a consideration. It builds on the general safeguarding training that is required for all who minister with children and young people and/or vulnerable adults. This training can be accessed by contacting Trish O'Neill on (087) 6594858 or Charlotte Vard on (087) 2582616 to book an informative evening of training.

Safeguarding Training

With the prospect of face to face ministry with young people returning later this year the Diocesan Safeguarding Committee believes that now is the perfect time to prepare for that by offering the necessary Safeguarding Training. We ask that any parishes who have people to be trained would register with Bishop's House so that an appropriate programme can be drawn up. We hope to be able to provide the

- * full day training,
- * information evenings and
- * updated refresher training for those who need it over the coming months.

This will enable Parishes to restart Youth Ministry and Children's Programmes as soon as it is possible to do so. We are currently looking at adapting our training to bring it online over a number of evenings if necessary. Please do contact Bishop's House as soon as possible with your expression of interest.

2020 Parish Audit Returns

All the parish Audits for 2020 have now been returned. Many thanks for your co-operation. The findings of the audit will help guide the work of our new Safeguarding Director. In order to align ourselves with the National Board's audit framework a fuller 2021 audit will take place in the Autumn.

Theology of Safeguarding...

The National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland wants to contribute to the development of a Theology of Safeguarding. Every month for nine months beginning January 2021, the National Board will place a short video (approx. 13 minutes) on some aspect of a Theology of Safeguarding on their webpage. Nine new videos have been commissioned from theologians, scripture scholars and ethicists who live and work in Ireland, Italy and the United States.

The first four are now online at:

<https://www.safeguarding.ie/national-conference-2021>

Fr Hans Zollner SJ, a member of the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors, answers the question: "What areas would a comprehensive theology of safeguarding need to address, and how can church safeguarding personnel contribute to its development ?

Nuala Patricia Kenny, a Sister of Charity of Halifax, answers the question; How can the catholic church, with integrity, minister healing to those whom it has abused?

Dr. Ethna Regan, CHF, Associate Professor in Theology and Ethics in Dublin City University, answers the question: How can a theology of safeguarding encompass human rights, including children's rights ?

Fr. Paddy Boyle, Archdiocese of Dublin, tutor with NBSCCI: "How to put a theology of Safeguarding in to practice".