

Diocesan Safeguarding Day, 2020 Letter from Archbishop Martin

Sunday 27 September is Diocesan Safeguarding Day. The safety and protection from abuse of the children and vulnerable members of Archdiocese is a particular priority of all of us. This year we face a different set of challenges and we do so in a situation of considerable uncertainty.

You will be aware that it has been necessary to reduce the number employed by the Diocese including a number of people employed in the Child Safeguarding and Protection Service. However, our commitment to Safeguarding and to the support of victim/survivors of abuse remains undiminished. We need to consider the implications of working with less and the opportunities this presents to look at how we share what we have.

Given the uncertainty surrounding bringing people together, we will have to consider how best we approach things like delivering safeguarding training. Information technology presents us with new opportunities, while also presenting challenges for those not used to using computers.

There is a third uncertainty which I wish to address. I cannot say for how much longer I will serve as your Archbishop. As I near the end of my time with you, I want to say a particular thank you for all of the work you have been doing to make the Church in Dublin a safer place for children and for vulnerable adults. Our parish clergy, already under pressure due to declining numbers, have had to accept additional responsibilities in this area, such as ensuring that those involved in public ministry are vetted. I wish to thank also the hundreds of parish safeguarding representatives and the thousands who have attended safeguarding training. I wish to thank all of our parishioners who have kept faith with us through this difficult time.

I wish to especially acknowledge the courage of those who have spoken of their experiences of abuse in the Church. Their stories have been difficult for us to hear but they have helped us to face up to the truth and we must honour their contribution by making our parishes, not just safe places, but also welcoming and nurturing places for all children and vulnerable persons.

I ask you to remember those who were abused and to pray for them.

**+ Diarmuid Martin
Archbishop of Dublin**

Prayers for Safeguarding Sunday

Celebrant: Lord God, we thank you for all the people in our parish. Let us now pray that they be safeguarded and protected especially our children, young people and the vulnerable. We pray that they may grow in faith and love.

Lord, we pray for those who have suffered the trauma of abuse: may they grow towards healing and be confirmed in their integrity, their purity and their giftedness.

Lord hear us.

Lord, bless all those who care for our children and vulnerable adults, especially parents, guardians and carers. May the Holy Spirit guide and inspire them.

Lord hear us

Lord, we pray that our parishes be continuously made safe so that children and vulnerable adults can grow and learn with our faith communities.

Lord hear us.

Lord, show us new ways of including children in our parish liturgies. Empower our active parish members to think up new activities that make children and their families welcome.

Lord hear us.

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Lord, we thank you for all those who ensure that the highest standards of safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults are in place in our parish. We thank especially our parish clergy, safeguarding representatives, staff and volunteers.

Celebrant: Lord God, we thank you for the leading ministry of Pope Francis. May he continue to be inspired by the Holy Spirit and lead us to reform our church community in the Spirit of Christ our humble and merciful Saviour.

We make these and all our prayers through Christ, Our Lord, AMEN