



# Safeguarding Children Newsletter



CLOYNE DIOCESAN SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN COMMITTEE

Issue 1

Committed to safeguarding children and vulnerable adults

Spring Edition 2012



**Most Rev, Dermot Clifford, DD**

## WELCOME

If history is to record the first decade of the twenty-first century as a deeply humiliating time in the Church in Cloyne Diocese, then let history also record that this was a time when the Church in Cloyne used every available opportunity to learn from past mistakes, rectify past wrongs, and move forward in faith

with a renewed purpose and vigour especially with regard to the safety and well-being of the young and most vulnerable.

And so, I am delighted to welcome the first edition of the Safeguarding Children Newsletter published by the Cloyne Diocesan Safeguarding Children Committee. The newsletter outlines the structure for safeguarding children in the Diocese, it gives a brief insight into some of the actions that the diocese has taken to safeguard children, and it provides information on upcoming training, working with vulnerable adults and on plans for a new website.

Communicating the Church's Safeguarding Message is one of the seven standards laid down by the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church and it is a key requirement of diocesan policy – Safeguarding Children in the Diocese of Cloyne.

Following on the successful Safeguarding Children Conference in Blarney in October 2011, the publication of

the Newsletter is yet another initiative for providing adults, children and other organisations with useful information about safeguarding children in the diocese.

I am very pleased to see articles by Michelle who is an altar server and by Patricia who is a parent. I warmly commend the work of Cloyne Diocesan Safeguarding Children Committee, which has set a high standard for the safety and wellbeing of children in the Diocese. God bless the work and all who work for the safety and wellbeing of children. At the recent symposium Towards Healing and Renewal in Rome, Fr. Desmond Nair from South Africa, concluded his contribution as follows:

"Sexual abuse of minors (and adults) by clergy and religious has caused great scandal and done inestimable damage to the Church. Failure to take decisive action and to implement preventative measures and opportunities for education would create even greater damage and indicate great irresponsibility. This scandal is a call to vigilance and transparency, to honesty and justice, to humility and holiness. If this call is heeded then the Church can continue to grow and be renewed into a loving, vibrant, caring and faith-filled community rooted in gospel values and authentic to its mission to serve God and humanity. We commit to living in an even greater way the values of Jesus our Lord and Saviour who said "Let the little children come to me; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of Heaven belongs." (Matthew 19:14)."

**Most Rev, Dermot Clifford, DD**

Archbishop of Cashel & Emlly, Apostolic Administrator of Cloyne

## SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN STRUCTURES IN THE DIOCESE

Our aim is to make our diocese a vigilant caring community for the safety and wellbeing of children. To achieve this, safeguarding structures, comprehensive policies and detailed monitoring mechanisms have been put in place.

### Safeguarding Structure at Diocesan Level

- (i) **The Apostolic Administrator** has overall responsibility for safeguarding children
- (ii) **The Diocesan Designated Officer** handles concerns disclosures or allegations of abuse.
- (iii) **Cloyne Diocesan Safeguarding Children Committee (CDSCC)** - is providing training and creating, maintaining and monitoring a safe environment for children in all aspects of Church life.
- (iv) **The Advisory Panel** advises and assists the Bishop at all stages of the investigative process.
- (v) **The Support Person** assists the child or adult making an allegation of abuse.

- (vi) **The Adviser** is available to help the respondent.

### Safeguarding Structure at Parish Level

- (i) **The Parish Priest** has overall responsibility.
- (ii) **The Parish Safeguarding Representatives** promotes the safeguarding of children.
- (iii) **All Church personnel** including employees, volunteers, group leaders are obliged to abide by the safeguarding procedures and guidelines.
- (iv) In some parishes **The Parish Safeguarding Children Committee** promotes safeguarding children and helps ease the safeguarding workload of the Parish Priest.

**- Con Lynch**

Chairman Cloyne Diocesan Safeguarding Children Committee

# PROVIDING A HELPING HAND By Denis Ring

In the Autumn of 2009 Msgr. Ned Goold P.P. Midleton asked me would I serve on the Diocesan Committee for Child Protection as it was then called. I had recently retired as Principal of Midleton C.B.S. Secondary School Msgr. Goold had supported me and the school for many years. How could I refuse?

At my first meeting in Mallow I was not quite sure what was ahead of me. What I found was a well established committee who had done good work over a number of years. Con Lynch was chairing his first full meeting on the day that I joined and so we developed the bond that people do when they begin a journey together. It became clear to us all that we had to maintain the momentum that had been established by our predecessors.

We were lucky to have most of them continuing in the committee, including Fr. Brian Boyle, Sr. Nuala

O'Gorman and Una Relihan from the original 2004 committee.

Our first major task was to draft a new Policy for Safeguarding Children. I undertook a research role in this, seeking out best practice among other dioceses. A policy sub-committee was formed and after many debates and many subsequent drafts, a fine document emerged - *"Safeguarding Children in the Diocese of Cloyne"* - which will hopefully be a strong support for all who work to make the Church a safer place for children.

The Audit of 46 Parishes carried out by committee members in 2010/11 gave us the opportunity to meet with many people - priests, sacristans, parish representatives and others who had been implementing safeguarding measures in their communities. This experience as much as anything else reinforced my belief that the Holy Spirit, as always, renews the church through its members.



The work goes on  
- it is a privilege  
to be part of it.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

The first point of reference in the search for answers should be *Safeguarding Children in the Diocese of Cloyne*. This policy document is designed not only to provide procedures and guidance but to provide information as well. It is available on the diocesan website [www.cloynediocese.ie](http://www.cloynediocese.ie) and it may be downloaded.

**Q.** Must ministers of the Eucharist and Readers who are in the sacristy with children and who process out to the altar be Garda vetted.

**A.** Yes! Many parishes have ceased the practice of having ministers of the Eucharist readers etc process out with the priest. They now come to the altar from the body of the church. Please refer to Sacristy Procedures issued to parishes in November.

**Q.** Is it necessary to notify the bishop's office if a non-incardinated priest takes up residence in the parish?

**A.** Yes! Section 3.1.6 of the diocesan policy, *Safeguarding Children in The Diocese of Cloyne* states:  
"Parishes are required to inform bishop's/diocesan office if a non-incardinated priest takes up residence in the parish (excluding in a religious community)."

## VULNERABLE ADULTS By Una Relihan

The vast majority of older people live full and active lives, enjoying good health, happiness and independence. Most older people play a valuable role in their communities and in society generally. This is a cause for celebration. However, a small number of older people may experience mistreatment, neglect or abuse and may experience more than one form of abuse at any given time.

There are several types of Elder Abuse which may include some or all of the following:

- Physical abuse
- Financial abuse and also material abuse
- Psychological abuse
- Neglect and acts of omission
- Sexual abuse
- Discriminatory abuse

If the vulnerable adult needs to talk to someone about a worry or a problem, they should call their G.P., Public Health Nurse or the Gardai. Or, if you are over 65 and afraid, phone the social worker on duty at **087 2632928**.

**If there is an immediate and serious risk notify the Gardai.**

# SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN OFFICE

I have been employed by the Diocese of Cloyne since March 2009. My role as the Child Protection Training Co-ordinator entails overseeing training for all priests and parish representatives across the 46 parishes in the diocese. This role includes maintaining accurate and updated databases on all training, along with an administrative role giving effect to the decisions of the Committee.

As well as being an employee, I was appointed as a member to the Cloyne Diocesan Safeguarding Children Committee and I now serve as the committee's executive secretary.

My work is dictated largely by the decisions of the committee but I am also engaged in communication with parishes and many other agencies and individuals. Along with four other people, I am in the process of being trained as a trainer to deliver our new Child Safeguarding Training Programme. Meanwhile training of priests and parish representatives is being done by Claire O'Mahony. Later in 2012, a more comprehensive programme will be provided once the training of trainers is complete. I have always played a role in Garda Vetting and that role is evolving

on an ongoing basis.

I am based in Cloyne Diocesan Safeguarding Children Office which is located in Mallow Community Youth Centre, New Road, Mallow.

The office hours are as follows:

**Monday to Thursday 9am – 3pm.**

Contact details: **Cloyne Diocesan Safeguarding Children Office**  
Tel: **022-21009**

Mobile: **0872277274**

Email: [safeguardingchildrenoffice@cloynediocese.ie](mailto:safeguardingchildrenoffice@cloynediocese.ie)

**– Rosarie O'Riordan**



## THE STORY OF ONE OF OUR ALTAR SERVERS

**M**y name is Michelle I am an altar server. I was in fourth class when I started altar serving.

Now I am eleven years old .

One day the Priest came to my school and asked us would we like to start altar serving. My best friend and I discussed it and we decided that we would give it a go. We filled in the application forms.

There was an information night in the church where we got to know each other, the other priests and the rules. Deirdre and Joe showed us around the sacristy and altar. After three training sessions we started. The priests were really helpful while we were learning. Our parents

help us before and after Mass. We have an enrolment ceremony every year to welcome new altar servers.

For my first Mass I was very nervous. The priest announced that we were new and people were delighted as there were no altar servers for a few years.

I have served for Weddings, Funerals, Confirmations and Holy Communions. We get special training for all the different ceremonies at Christmas and Easter. We also get treats after these occasions. This year about 15 have signed up and it is our turn to help them how to do the different jobs at Mass. I love altar serving, it is great fun. I am definitely going to keep it up.

## SAFEGUARDING OUR CHILDREN –

A Parent's Perspective: Patricia Redmond, Fermoy.



**A**s a mother of three children, I feel it very important that all parish activities be safe environments for all children, especially those in a vulnerable state. The horror

stories of the past years relating to child sexual abuse have put the heart cross ways in parents and forces us all to question the situations in which our children find themselves. We all want our children to be involved in activities which will help them further themselves mentally, physically and socially. The exposition of failures in so

many organisations beholds every parent to question the safety procedures of all organisations where children participate. I have been involved in organising the Children's Liturgy in Fermoy Parish for the past ten years. All leaders underwent Garda Vetting and completed Volunteer Forms. The implementation of the Safeguarding of Children Guidelines at parish level is a challenging job. However, once they are put into place, it gives us at Leadership Level the confidence that we operate in an environment that is child friendly yet vigilant. As a parent and a leader these guidelines give me the peace of mind and confidence that children involved in parish activities are given attentive protection and care.



# SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN INFORMATION

If you, or anyone you know, has a child safeguarding concern, or wishes to report an allegation of child abuse directly to Church Authorities, please contact:

**Diocesan Designated Officer:**  
Phone Number: 086 036 8999

**Diocesan Deputy Designated Officer:**  
Phone Number: 086 795 0437

If you, or anyone you know, has a child safeguarding concern or, wishes to report an allegation directly to the Statutory Authorities, please contact the **Garda** or the **Local HSE** and ask to speak to the **Duty Social Worker**.

**Mallow / Fermoy**  
Phone Number: 022 54100

**HSE Offices**

**Cobh / Middleton / Macroom**  
Phone Number: 021 492 7000

## Statement to all who suffered child abuse

There is in our hearts a profound sorrow and grief over the abuse which you suffered. We are resolved to do all in our power to ensure that the awful deeds of the past will not occur in the future

We are inspired in our work by your courage in suffering and because of it our resolve is firmer and stronger. Our vision is a community of vigilant Christians where children are nurtured caringly in an environment free from abuse in all its forms. We are working very hard to achieve this.

– Cloyne Diocesan Safeguarding Children Committee

## CLOYNE DIOCESAN SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN COMMITTEE (CDSCC)

Cloyne Diocesan Children Safeguarding Office,  
Mallow Community Youth Centre,  
New Road,  
Mallow, Co. Cork.

Email: [safeguardingchildrenoffice@cloynediocese.ie](mailto:safeguardingchildrenoffice@cloynediocese.ie)

Phone: 022 21009

Office Hours: 9.00am – 3.00pm Monday – Thursday.



Left to Right, 1st row: Una Relihan, Con Lynch, Chairman, Rosarie O'Riordan Administrative Secretary, 2nd row Canon Gerry Casey, Fr Eugene Baker, Denis Ring.

**CDSCC is currently developing its own Safeguarding Children website.. More on this in the next issue**