



Missionary Society of St. Columban

Safeguarding Office, Region of Ireland



Safeguarding Newsletter, Region of Ireland

Issue 10: July 2024



Loving Father God,
We come to you in the
knowledge that you hold all
your children in unconditional
love. We lift to you those who
are vulnerable and in need of
protection. Give them your
safety, comfort, and peace.
We cry to you for those who
are hurting and whose trust
has been broken. Give them
your healing, restoration,
and justice.

We bring to you those who
seek to forgive others who
have hurt them. Give them
your strength, courage, and
hope. For those who have
caused your children to
stumble, lead them to seek
your forgiveness and to enter
into true repentance.

Thank you for all who give their time, knowledge, and skills
to make our communities safer.

Give them your wisdom, guidance, and grace.

For ourselves, we ask you to give us your heart for the vulnerable,
the oppressed, the voiceless and the forgotten.

Help us to see them as you see them; to value them as you value them,
and to nurture and protect them as you desire.

Help each one of us play our part in creating safer places for all your
people. In the name of Jesus, we pray.

Safeguarding Committee News

Welcome

Since our 2023 newsletter we have continued to keep safeguarding a priority in the Region. We have overseen the 2023 annual report, the ongoing renewal of the vetting process for our members and staff, the provision of safeguarding awareness sessions and attending the various sessions/meetings provided by the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic church.

We wish to express our thanks to all those who assist in anyway on our safeguarding journey.

Policy and guidelines of the Missionary Society of St. Columban on the Abuse of Minors and Vulnerable Adults 2023

In July 2023, the General Council launched the revised Society policy to all RMU

Fr Tim Mulroy (Society Leader) wrote in his introductory letter; *“these guidelines will only bring about the desired goal when each RMU updates its own policies, and then proactively promotes a culture of abuse prevention, which includes transparency, and accountability to those policies by each person and by the entire RMU community.”*

Vos Estis Lux Mundi (VELM), 30th April 2023

On April 30th 2023, Pope Francis by decree replaced the 2019 VELM and confirms the Church’s desire to continue to combat crimes of sexual abuse.

The most significant change introduced in the new version concerns the provision which lay out responsibilities of bishops, religious superiors and clerics in charge of a particular Church or Prelature.

Regarding vulnerable adults the following was updated; ‘a crime against the Sixth Commandment of the Decalogue committed with a minor, or a person who habitually has an imperfect use of reason, or with a vulnerable adult’.

The document includes not only abuse and violence against children and vulnerable adults, but also covers sexual violence and harassment resulting from the abuse of authority. The obligation to report also includes cases of violence against religious women by clerics as well as cases of harassment of adult seminarians or novices.

A Safe and Welcoming Church- Child Safeguarding Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland, 2024

In December 2023, The Irish Bishops Conference (IEC) and the Association of Missionary and Religious Leaders of Ireland (AMRI) agreed to adopt the revised safeguarding policy that the National Board with others had been working on over 2023. The revised policy is embedded in Catholic social teaching and in

Children's Rights.

The policy contains all the core elements of the previous 2016 policy, now captured under three Standards:

- Governance and Leadership
- Embedding a culture of Safeguarding
- Responding with care and compassion



Each standard has a number of indicators to assist in guiding us towards the implementation of the standard.

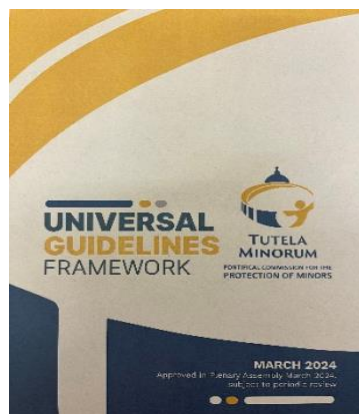
The revised policy was launched on June 11th 2024 and was formally signed by the Regional Council on July 18th 2024

Tutela Minorum

Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors

The Commission was directed by the Holy Father to strengthen the existing Safeguarding Guidelines (2011) throughout the Church to ensure that the Church is a safe environment for children and vulnerable persons, among others.

The Commission is driven by Gospel teaching on the centrality of children in the life of the Church; our need to care for the wounded and love of Jesus who showed by his words and actions how to care safely for everyone, particularly the lost and vulnerable.



Universal Guidelines Framework

The Commission launched its Universal Guidelines Framework in March 2024.

Given the vastly different cultural contexts in which safeguarding policies and procedures are required to operate, the Commission will now engage in a target series of pilot programs to evaluate their effectiveness especially in those parts of the Church that have little experience of implementing and evaluating the effectiveness of safeguarding guidelines.

Notice Board

All members are required to attend a safeguarding refresher course every three years.

Next session is on

Friday 16th August at 10.30am; Mission Awareness Room



If you have a safeguarding concern please contact:

Sandra Neville, Designated Liaison Person

Email: sandra.neville@columban.ie

Mobile: 087 9844779

You can report your concern(s) directly to:

An Garda Síochána Helpline, Tel: 1800 555 222,

TUSLA (Child and Family Agency): www.tusla.ie

or contact the Tusla local Social Work Department