



# Safeguarding Development Newsletter

(Issue 14 – May 2020)



*“Into each life some rain must fall.”*

*Henry Wadsworth Longfellow*

*(1807 – 1882)*

## Greetings to All,

As you well know it was not possible to host the Safeguarding Network (28 March) in Horse & Jockey due to COVID-19 Safety Restrictions. We were looking forward to sharing progress and developments in Child Safeguarding over the past year and to discussing ideas about future plans.

The same restrictions applied to the Safeguarding Development Group (SDG) meeting scheduled 23 May. However, there was and is a strong desire among SDG members to connect and discuss 'normal' business and, in turn, communicate with LSG members.

That is how a Zoom meeting came about (19 May: 2 – 4pm) to explore how SDG members can support Priors/PPs & LSGs in these changing times.

With churches closed and LSGs unable to meet, any return to ministry will more than likely take place in different circumstances (e.g. social distancing; smaller congregations; possibly pre-booking limited places in church). What the future will look like is unclear and these combined factors will present significant challenges for all.

Some of the questions posed during the chat included:

- *What planning is required so that churches can re-open?*
- *How will ministry and worship adapt to these new circumstances?*
- *How will safe practices apply to each ministry?*
- *What is going to be different when children return to church?*



(Starting with the top row from left to right: Fr. John Hennebry, Tony Murphy - holding mobile phone camera, Geraldine Carey van Dam, Fr. Michael Collender, Br. Stephen Shields, Joan Donovan, Nuala Fahey, Pauline Ní Dhuibhir, Lorraine Collins & Mary Byrne).

## **Some Decisions**

The following decisions relate to the SDG workplan and are shared here to keep you in touch with our best thinking for now. These plans can be reviewed in light of any new guidance, and/or unforeseen developments.

### **Safeguarding Network (rescheduled to Spring 2021)**

The Safeguarding Network Meeting has been deferred for a second time until Spring 2021. Details of how the event is organised will depend on COVID-19 circumstances at the time. If the gathering is held in a hotel venue, for instance, sufficient room space will be required to accommodate social distancing, even for a group of 30 participants or less.

Alternatively, the use of a centrally organised video link could be considered. This would facilitate Local Safeguarding Groups gathering separately in each Church location to hear and view inputs from a 'Guest Speaker' and SDG members. 'Questions & Answers' could be facilitated in the round.

### **'Child Safeguarding Development Plan 2020 – 2023'**

Though intended to happen last March, it was agreed to submit the *Child Safeguarding Development Plan June 2020 – May 2023* (revised to reflect months lost due to COVID-19 restrictions) to the Provincial Council at its meeting 28 May.

### **Safeguarding Progress Report '19 – '20**

Normally these reports would be completed by each LSG and submitted before the end of May 2020 for review by the SDG. Though LSGs have been unable to meet to complete the task to-date, it was felt that to leave the job undone would be a missed opportunity. Allowing for different circumstances locally, it was agreed:

*To invite LSGs to come together (where possible) following July 20 (Phase 4) to prepare & submit the completed Progress Report to the Safeguarding Officer on or before the end of September 2020.*

In completing this work helpful conversations may, by whatever safe means possible, begin to consider how and in what ways future ministering in church will be different and will need to adapt to new circumstances. The safety needs of children, vulnerable adults and the entire community of faith being considered.

### **Safeguarding W/End Promotion**

The annual weekend designated to *Child Safeguarding* will be deferred as a return to church services is expected to be slow. Therefore, the forthcoming Sept./Oct. period may be too early to introduce any such input.

### **LSG Feedback**

SDG members would welcome any thoughts and/or feedback on the above content via [Safeguarding@augustinians.ie](mailto:Safeguarding@augustinians.ie) or 087 2211235. Finally, the SDG will meet via Zoom again 16 June (2 – 4pm). Go you well & thanks to all for your on-going support of friars and each other.  
**End.**