

FRANCISCAN BROTHERS SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY STATEMENT

The Gospel teaches the importance of ensuring that the Catholic Church Community is a warm, welcoming and safe place for children.

Let the little Children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the Kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Truly I tell you, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will not enter it. (Mark 10:14-15)

Children are gifts from God, to be cherished and recognised for the joyful contribution they make as valued members of the Church. Our challenge is to follow the example of Jesus in cherishing them. Safeguarding is key to this important task and should be seen, not as a burden, but as an opportunity to embrace and encourage children's ministry, following the example of Jesus Christ.

The Franciscan Brothers pledge to safeguard children and young people from harm and to support them in their development as valued and integral members of the Catholic Church in Ireland. The Church's ministry will be inclusive and will uphold their rights.

Consistent with Gospel values, and with civil and criminal law, those who minister will do so with dignity and integrity, honouring their calling to ensure that children and young people are welcomed, cherished and protected, following the example set by Jesus.

This Safeguarding Children Policy will be honoured and complied with by all ordained clerics, by vowed female and male religious, and by all lay staff and volunteers in the Catholic Church in Ireland.

We, Franciscan Brothers, apologise unreservedly to any child or young person who was abused whilst in our care.

We invite any person who was, at any time, abused by a Franciscan Brother, and who has yet to come forward, to make contact with our Designated Liaison Person (DLP) Br. Peter Roddy, Email: peterroddy2015@gmail.com Mob. 087 9970760 or Deputy DLP Br. Conal Thomas, Email: conalpthomas@gmail.com Mob. 087 226 9426 and also to contact TUSLA, Child and Family Agency: www.tusla.ie and An Garda Síochána:(Free Confidential Number): 1800 666 11 or any Garda Station. Email: GNPSB@garda.ie

COUNSELLING AND SUPPORT SERVICES

Counselling for anyone abused by a Franciscan Brother is available from:

Towards Healing: an independent organisation providing professional support for people who have experienced institutional, clerical or religious abuse in Ireland. Tel. 1800 303 416 www.towardshealing.ie Email: info@towardshealing.ie

Towards Peace: Spiritual support for survivors of abuse by Catholic Church personnel in Ireland (01) 505 3028 www.towardspeace.ie Email: towardspeace@iecon.ie

The Franciscan Brothers' procedures to support this policy are contained in: **A SAFE AND WELCOMING CHURCH - Safeguarding Children Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland, 2024.** (See below)