

Annual Safeguarding Announcement for use in Parishes
[STATEMENT TO BE READ OUT BY PARISH PRIEST THIS YEAR].

Safeguarding in the Catholic Church means doing everything in our power to try and prevent abuse; firstly, by having a safe system of recruitment for clergy, religious, employees and volunteers; which includes PVG checks, references and training; and secondly, by having a reporting system so people can come forward with disclosures and concerns, be listened to and have their disclosures acted upon. Here in St. Charles' Parish our Parish Safeguarding Coordinator is Josephine Macgregor. During the current COVID restrictions, online training is being developed, and all of our stewards and sanitisers have been carefully recruited to enable our church to be open.

A central part of safeguarding is care for survivors so that their wounds are tended and they are kept safe from further harm while we try to accompany them to safe paths of healing. This weekend we have been pleased to welcome to the Diocese Fr Dominic Allain of 'Grief to Grace' who has made two presentations, one to clergy and one to the public on his outreach healing ministry to abuse survivors. Many survivors who have attended Grief to Grace have told us how helpful they found it. We are hoping to run a retreat in Scotland next year for any abuse survivors who would like to attend.

It is the responsibility of all of us, whether clergy or lay to try and reach out to those who have been harmed or abused by members of the Church, their families or any other person, whilst respecting that many will understandably feel unable to engage with us. Nevertheless, we can still pray for and care about them. It is also our responsibility to remain vigilant and to do everything in our power to keep our communities safe. We have kept this announcement short this year because of the Covid restrictions. The full Safeguarding Annual Report will be uploaded to the Diocesan Website as soon as possible.

END OF STATEMENT