

Diocesan Safeguarding Day, 2019

Letter from Archbishop Martin

Sunday 22 September is Diocesan Safeguarding Day. I wish to take this opportunity to address you on this vital matter and to thank you for all of the work you have been doing to make the Church in Dublin a safer place for children and for vulnerable adults.

This year marks the tenth anniversary of the publication of the Murphy report and we are reminded of that dark and pain-filled chapter in our history. For many of those who were abused as children in the Church and for many of their loved ones that pain is a constant reality, one which will endure for the rest of their lives. We cannot undo the past. We can, however, honour the courage of those who have spoken of their experiences of abuse by doing all in our power to ensure a better and safer Church for the children of today and of tomorrow. As Pope Francis has instructed us in his recent Apostolic Letter, *Vos Estis Lux Mundi* we have an equal responsibility for the welfare and protection of vulnerable adults.

I wish to acknowledge with gratitude all the work that has been done in our parishes to make the Church a safer place for children and vulnerable adults. Our parish clergy, already under pressure due to declining numbers, have had to accept additional responsibilities in this area, such as ensuring that those involved in public ministry are vetted. I wish to thank them all for this. I wish to thank also the hundreds of parish safeguarding representatives and the thousands who have attended safeguarding training. I wish to thank all of our parishioners who have kept faith with us through this difficult time. I do not underestimate the dilemma of parents who want their children to grow strong in the faith but hesitate about allowing their children to become involved in parish activities. I say to you: your children are dear to us, as they are to you, and we will do all in our power to ensure their safety and protection from abuse.

Since the publication of the Murphy Report there has been a decline in the number of child abuse allegations coming to the attention of the diocesan Child Safeguarding and Protection Service. However, a decline does not mean that such allegations have ceased, only that there are fewer of them. There are no grounds for complacency. It is important that we remain committed to this vital work.

I ask you also to remember those who were abused and to pray for them

+  .

+ Diarmuid Martin
Archbishop of Dublin

Archdiocese of Dublin