

## ***SAFEGUARDING: AN OPEN CONVERSATION***

When Pope Francis met with the Presidents of Episcopal Conferences in February this year, he called for ‘an all-out battle against abuse’. Scotland has been at the forefront of this battle.

Keeping children and vulnerable adults safe in our parishes and wider communities is the responsibility of ALL of us. Our Safeguarding Manual ‘In God’s Image’ directs the approach to safeguarding children and vulnerable adults at every level of the Catholic Church in Scotland. While an important tool in our continued efforts to keep our church community safe, the Archdiocese of Glasgow is clear that this manual is only one part of this battle.

That is why we are very happy to join with the Independent Review Group, established by the Bishops’ Conference of Scotland, to meet with people to hear how they have been affected by these issues and how we improve and move forward. The Archdiocese of Glasgow is committed to the highest standards of safeguarding. Archbishop Tartaglia said recently: “The abuse crisis has been a terrible sadness and an immense shock for us all. In addressing it, we are determined to get it right and make sure nothing of the kind ever happens again.”

**You are invited to a special conversation event to reflect on these issues on Saturday 7th September 2019, 12 – 3pm, at the Archdiocesan Office 196 Clyde Street G1 4JY. Even if you have not been directly and personally affected by issues of abuse, you have an opinion which matters.**

**Please telephone the Safeguarding Team on 0141 226 5898 or email [safeguardingadministrator@rcag.org.uk](mailto:safeguardingadministrator@rcag.org.uk) to book a place.**

### ***AN OPEN LETTER ON SAFEGUARDING FROM THE INDEPENDENT REVIEW GROUP***

Dear friend,

This letter invites you to an open meeting with members of the Independent Review Group (IRG) and the Diocesan Safeguarding team.

You may be aware that the IRG was established by the Bishops’ Conference of Scotland following the publication of the McLellan Commission Report which reviewed Safeguarding policies, procedure and practice.

The IRG was tasked with scrutinising the progress of McLellan’s recommendations in the Catholic Church in Scotland. Its first report has just been published. It shows that a good start has been made but that there is much still to do to ensure that safeguarding is understood as a core part of the mission of the Church.

As part of its ongoing work the IRG has, therefore, approached all Dioceses to collaborate in hosting some open meetings. These will provide information about the work of the IRG and, more important, hear ideas from all parts of the Church about how to progress a shared understanding of safeguarding and improve the Church’s approach to all aspects of safeguarding. This includes the Church’s response to those who have been hurt by abuse.

These are short gatherings, which, we hope, will be a listening exercise in which everyone can have a voice. With that in mind they may not be the best place for you to air specific grievances or concerns. If you do wish to attend, however, there will be information about sources of advice and help. Diocesan staff and members of the IRG we will do their best to respond separately to any individual concerns or issues.

There will be a mechanism for leaving comments and feedback for those who do not want to speak.

Finally, these meetings are a small part of the work of the IRG. It is the responsibility of the Church to continue the work of making the Church safe for all. It is our fervent hope, however, that your part in these conversations will provide much wisdom and impetus to help that journey.

We look forward to meeting with you.

Lisa Markham (on behalf of Baroness Liddell, Chair, and IRG members)