



Safeguarding Development Newsletter

(April 2019 – Issue 9)



SDG Members (from left to right) Pauline Ní Dhubhir (Ballyboden), Joan Donovan (Drogheda), Annette Comiskey (SDG Chair) & Keynote Speaker at the Safeguarding Network (23 March 2019), Colette O'Doherty (Ferns Diocesan Safeguarding Co-ordinator).

Safeguarding Network
23 March (10am – 3.45pm)
Horse & Jockey Hotel
‘Safeguarding Our Future
– Moving Forward’

Twenty-six participants attended the 3rd annual gathering of the OSA Safeguarding Network comprising 16 lay people and 9 friars. The Keynote Speaker was Colette O’Doherty (Ferns Diocesan Safeguarding Co-ordinator) who chose an intriguing title for her input namely, *‘Let Go & Let God: Moving from Maintenance to Mission’*.

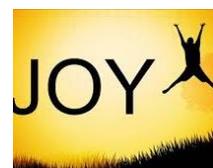
Colette told a story of hope and JOY overcoming fear in the Diocese, notwithstanding its dark history of child abuse. The initiative called ‘SPIRIT’ offers personal and spiritual development opportunities to Transition Year Students with all the attendant Safeguarding procedures. The latter was likened to how normal it is for us to put on our safety belts when driving a car. It’s second nature. It doesn’t get in the way. The journey and the destination take centre stage with that inbuilt safety throughout. Just click and drive!

The fear of possible rejection or hostility might put most of us off starting a new ministry with children or young people. SPIRIT illustrates that hope wins out. Parents are supportive and reassured by the care and attention given to their

children’s wellbeing through safe recruitment of volunteers, Garda Vetting and induction training, among other procedures. Young people in Ferns are eager to be involved in this faith-based our programme and want to give of their talents and skills in the community.

Some of Colette’s Key Messages included:

- ✓ Once we start to look at Safeguarding through the lens of JOY, the energy & motivation begins to change.
- ✓ The real focus of our work is Church, enabling our young people to be involved: journeying through faith safely & with joy.
- ✓ With all the Safeguarding measures in place we need to place trust in God at the base of our work.
- ✓ God is present & to experience God we must be present; we must just be. Yahweh, I AM.
- ✓ Young people are waiting & eager to engage, it just takes us to open that door for them to the possibility of God. We need to step out of the maintenance and into the mission.
- ✓ We need to let go and let God lead the way.



How was Colette's input received? Here is one person's feedback that is representative of the completed Evaluation Sheets:

"Colette was an excellent speaker & had a lot to say which was both relevant & inspirational on what can be achieved by groups working with young adults."



Catherine Callinan, Pauline & Peter Masterson
(John's Lane LSG Members)

New Resources Launched

The Safeguarding Development Group (SDG) has, over the past year, considered how to support a more consistent approach to the recruitment of lay volunteers across the Province. Some real challenges under consideration included:

What preparation would go into holding an Open Meeting on volunteer ministry and what would those attending need to know before leaving the meeting?

What's to be done when Ministry Coordinators source new people but do not inform the Prior/P.P.?

How can outdated records be brought up to date and maintained?

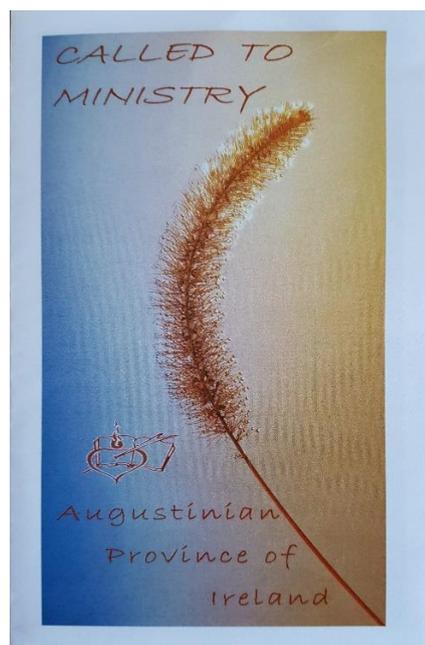
How should one deal with a query about a person's past involvement?

At what stage should some people who help informally be asked to formalise their involvement?

How should you respond to a new church goer at the 11 O'clock Sunday Mass when s/he asks, *"What would I have to do if I wanted to help-out with the children's liturgy?"*

The SDG believe the following two resources will help.

OSA Ministries Leaflet



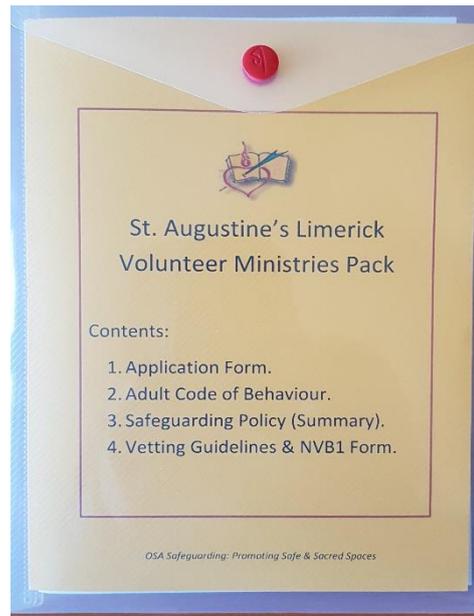
This nicely produced trifold leaflet speaks of *Welcome: "If you are willing to share your gifts and serve in ministry, please consider the following roles and give some thought to how your talents might shine as part of our faith community."* The leaflet can be customised to reflect the various ministries that apply in each church location. New initiatives can also be included with a view to testing levels of interest and garnering volunteer support.

The idea is that such leaflets will be made available in each church setting for a church goer to take home and after some reflection, should s/he so wish, to then contact the Prior/P.P. to have a chat and source additional information about the recruitment process. The leaflet can become one route among many other routes for taking a step towards active ministry, if approved.

Volunteer Ministries Information Pack

Each pack, again customised by a letter from the Prior/P.P. and Vetting information for the appropriate diocese, will include:

- Application Form
- Adult Code of Behaviour
- Safeguarding Policy (Summary)
- Vetting Guidelines & NVB1 Form



Clear expectations are laid out, including the OSA Vetting Policy. In the case of those wishing to work directly or have occasional contact with children or young people, additional information is required as well as the names of character referees (2).

Implementing this approach will require some pre-planning involving, in the first instance, the Safeguarding Officer (SO), the Prior/P.P. and Local Safeguarding Group (LSG) members, and then local Ministry Co-ordinators. Planning meetings will be arranged shortly with each Prior/P.P. & LSG Group.

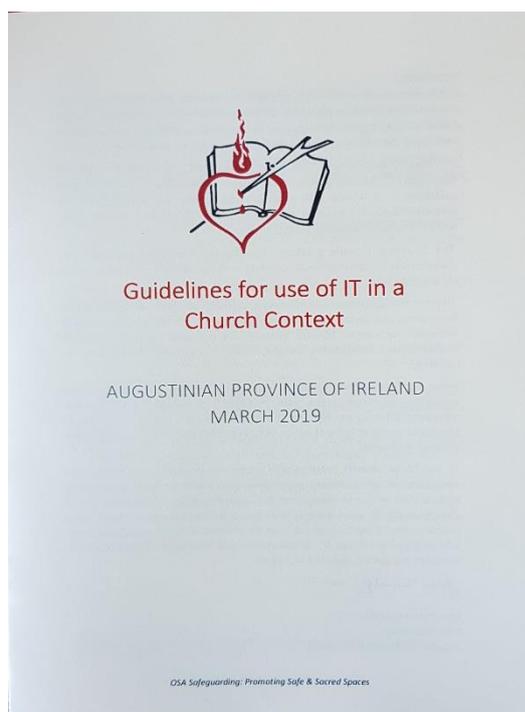
The pack could also include a 'Consent Form' to retain personal data under GDPR.

Some responses to the Volunteer Ministries Information Pack included:

*“Pack & Leaflet very good.
Practical & useful.”*

IT Guidelines for Use in a Church Context

This document provides guidance regarding the Province’s data protection obligations in the areas of email and texts, webcasting, CCTV, social media and photographs/film.



Whether through laptop or mobile device, all friars, volunteers and staff must use the internet appropriately and protect others, particularly children, from sites or materials that contain harmful, pornographic or illegal materials. The core responsibility is safeguarding

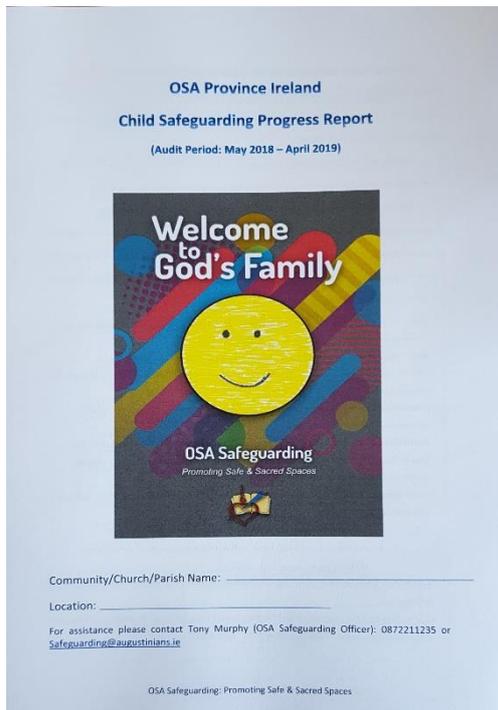
children, taking care of oneself and one’s co-workers.

To respect the privacy of other we must not publish or cite personal details and photos of children, young people, co-workers, volunteers and friars without their written permissions or that of their parent/guardian in the case of children under 16 years. From a Safeguarding perspective parents must be consulted before children or young people under 18 years of age can become involved in church activities. Overall safe and secure storage of contact details and completed Permission Forms should be the guiding standard of practice.

While our Safeguarding principles and values are not to be compromised irrespective of circumstances, each Prior/P.P. in consultation with the LSG members and Ministry Co-ordinators/Leaders should look to put in place best practices to meet local needs. In short, local practice should reflect Province guidelines with assistance from the Safeguarding Officer.



OSA Child Safeguarding Progress Report May '18 – '19



A change of title applies with the format now structured around 8 Goals, whether reporting on work done or outlining plans for the coming year.

Hardcopies and soft copies have been made available to all Priors/P.Ps. and LSG members with a preference for completed reports to be returned to the SO before 3 May.

A new 'Audit Visit Checklist' is being designed by the SDG to double-check that Safeguarding procedures are backed-up by evidence (e.g. relevant notices displayed; sign-in book in sacristy; attendance & Vetting records are up to-date). The SO will visit this coming Sept./Oct. to

offer support and prepare a report for the SDG in identifying room for improvements, prior to the Provincial inviting the National Board for Safeguarding Children being invited to undertake an external review in 2020.

'SDG 3 Yrs. On: What's Achieved & Where to Now?'

Geraldine Carey van Dam (Limerick) spoke of her positive experience as an SDG member over the past 3 years and was well please with the supports and resources provided to LSGs during that period. Being treated equally and having one's contribution valued around the SDG table were hallmarks for her of very satisfying team approach.

As the current members move on over the next year, she encouraged others to come forward to ensure the continuation and development of the Safeguarding structure within the Province.

'Owning our Safeguarding Ministry'

The Provincial encouraged and thanked all present for their invaluable work. He believed this gathering was a sign of an active church; a calling to ministry beyond the mere maintenance of Safeguarding procedures.

“Like the father in the story of the Prodigal Son, God waits expectantly for each of us to come home. God’s agenda is unexpected: there is no holding back; no judgement; no hesitation. He has gone out every morning to look for you, rushing towards you to welcome you home.”

“May it encourage you to reach out to your older and younger brothers and sisters to release them from their isolation and their fear. To assist them in discovering their deepest calling. To discover the ‘JOY that Colette spoke about so passionately this morning and in doing that, to allow the fruits of our Safeguarding ministry become a routine and vital part of the journey of JOY.”



Colette O’Doherty
(Ferns Safeguarding Co-ordinator) &
Fr. John Hennebry, OSA Provincial.

Participants Feedback

A selection of participants comments is given below:

- *Very enlightening & encouraging to be mixing with likeminded people who have the interests of children & vulnerable people at heart.*
- *The information & leaflets provided from the podium was very informative. The new format of the ‘Progress Report’ is very good & should keep us all committed to this ministry of safeguarding.*
- *The role of digital media needs to be explored more deeply & will be I feel even more relevant in the coming years.*
- *As a new volunteer I have enjoyed the day & found it very informative.*

Ratings (1 = Poor/5 = Excellent)	
Prior Notification	4.7
Documentation	4.8
Programme Content	4.8
Venue	4.5
Food	4.5
Overall Value	4.8

“Our generation will show that it can rise to the promise found in each young person when we know how to give them space. This means that we have to create the material and spiritual conditions for their full development; to give them a solid basis on which to build their lives; to guarantee their safety and their education to be everything they can be; to pass on to them lasting values that make life worth living; to give them a transcendent horizon for their thirst for authentic happiness and their creativity for the good; to give them the legacy of a world worthy of human life; and to awaken in them their greatest potential as builders of their own destiny, sharing responsibility for the future of everyone. If we can do all this, we anticipate today the future that enters the world through the window of the young.”

(Pope Francis 2014)

