

Union of Saints

Protection Without Harm

Autonomy, Learning, and the Misuse of “Safeguarding”

A Common but Unspoken Dynamic

There is a pattern we see across families, workplaces, churches, and communities:

Sometimes women—or men—often older, position themselves as **protectors of men** by **diminishing women**, frequently younger women.

One person is safeguarded, while another is quietly harmed.

This is often justified as:

- “Concern”
- “Experience”
- “Knowing better”
- “Protection”

But protection that **requires the diminishment of another** is not protection.

It is imbalance; Even maligned abuse.

When Protection Becomes Control

This dynamic tends to show up as:

- Talking down to younger women
- Infantilizing language (“dear,” “sweetheart”)
- Framing women as naïve, reckless, or disruptive
- Elevating men as fragile, precious, or in need of shielding
- Withholding learning opportunities “for their own good”

This does not create safety.

It creates **dependency**, **resentment**, and **stunted growth**—for everyone involved.

The Union of Saints Position

The Union of Saints affirms:

People do not learn strength by being shielded from life.
They learn strength by being given **tools**, **space**, and **respect**.

True protection:

- Does not humiliate
- Does not silence
- Does not require hierarchy
- Does not pit women against women
- Does not freeze men into fragility

On Language and Autonomy

A boundary statement, spoken calmly and clearly:

“I am not your dear.
I am an autonomous, personal-choice-making, self-harmonizing, and outwardly-harmonizing human being.
I appreciate safety, boundaries, and protection.
And my personal goal is to learn how to protect myself.”

This is not rejection.

It is **self-definition**.

Learning Requires Space

Growth requires:

- The freedom to make mistakes
- The dignity of being taken seriously
- The opportunity to develop discernment
- The right to set one’s own boundaries
- The ability to protect one’s own energy

When people are over-managed, over-corrected, or spoken down to, they are denied these essential conditions.

Protection vs. Empowerment

Protection says:

“I will handle this for you.”

Empowerment says:

“I trust you to learn, and I will support you without undermining you.”

The Union of Saints chooses empowerment.

A Balanced Closing

Live and let live—**with boundaries**.

Care for one another—**without hierarchy**.

Offer guidance—**without harm**.

Protect—**without control**.

Strength, courage, independence, and wisdom arise not from being guarded forever, but from being trusted to grow.
