



THE NATIONAL BOARD FOR  
**SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN**  
IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN IRELAND

**Second Review of Child Safeguarding Practice in  
the Redemptorist Congregation undertaken by**

**The National Board for Safeguarding Children in the  
Catholic Church in Ireland (National Board)**

**Date of Review Report: March 2022**

## CONTENTS

	Page
Background: .....	3
Introduction: .....	4
Process of Review: .....	5
Standard 1: Creating and Maintaining Safe Environments: .....	9
Standard 2: Procedures for Responding to Child Protection Suspicions, Concerns, Knowledge or Allegations: .....	16
Standard 3: Care and Support for the Complainant: .....	19
Standard 4: Care and Management of the Respondent: .....	21
Standard 5: Training and Support for Keeping Children Safe: .....	23
Standard 6: Communicating the Church's Safeguarding Message: .....	26
Standard 7: Quality Assuring Compliance with the Standards: .....	28
Conclusion: .....	29

## Background

The National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church Ireland (National Board) was established in 2006 to provide advice, services and assistance in the ongoing development of safeguarding children within the Roman Catholic Church on the Island of Ireland; to monitor compliance with legislation, policy and best practice; and to report on these activities. This is comprehensively set out in the Memorandum of Association of the Company.

Church Authorities who have entered into an agreement with the National Board through signing a memorandum of Understanding have committed to following Safeguarding Children 2016, Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland.

In order to assess compliance, the Provincial of the Redemptorist Congregation has invited the National Board to undertake a review of practice in 2022.

The congregation was previously reviewed in 2014 under the *Safeguarding Children - Standards and Guidance for the Catholic Church in Ireland 2008*. The report of the first Review can be found on the Redemptorist website <https://www.redemptorists.ie/>, and on the National Board website [www.safeguarding.ie/publications](http://www.safeguarding.ie/publications).

The recommendations from this first Review were:

1. That the Dublin Province of the Redemptorists, through its Safeguarding Committee develop comprehensive safeguarding guidance on the use of all types of information technology and electronic media.
2. That the Dublin Province of the Redemptorists, through its Safeguarding Committee develop a Province-wide Training Strategy based on a thorough review of all of its training activities.
3. That the Dublin Province of the Redemptorists through its Safeguarding Committee develop a standardised monitoring system that will allow it to generate an annual Child Safeguarding Monitoring Report for the Provincial and Council.

The purpose of this second round of Reviews is to assess Child Safeguarding practice against the Catholic Church in Ireland's current standards as detailed in *Safeguarding Children- Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland 2016* and make statements based on evidence, which provide:

- Public confidence that the Church body is safe for children;
- Affirmation to Child Safeguarding personnel that they are doing the right things well;
- Confirmation to the Church authority that what they want to be done is in fact being done;
- Independent verification of Self-Audit – or correction and/or improvement of Self-Audit;
- Opportunities for learning.

## Introduction

The Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer, popularly known as The Redemptorists, was founded by an Italian, Alphonsus de Ligouri in 1732 in southern Italy to work among the poor and marginalised. The congregation has been active in Ireland since 1851 and it has ministries in both the Republic of Ireland and in Northern Ireland.

On the island of Ireland there are at present, 81 professed members of the Redemptorists who make up the membership of the *Dublin Province*, one of the 14 Provinces in the European Conference of the Redemptorist Congregation. There are four other Conferences of the Redemptorist Congregation across the world: North America; Latin America and the Caribbean; Africa and Madagascar and Asia- Oceania.

The Dublin Province is headed by Provincial Fr. Dan Baragry who is in his final year of his second four-year term. He is assisted in his management role by his Ordinary Provincial Council. A new Provincial and Provincial Council will be elected in autumn 2022 as the four-year term of office draws to a close.

The members of the Dublin Province live in nine (9) communities across the island of Ireland. Approximately seventy-six (76) members of the Dublin Province are ordained priests, with the remaining members being Religious Brothers. Four (4) members are currently based in Europe, two (2) members are on leave of absence, and one (1) member is on sabbatical leave. One (1) member is currently seeking incardination into a northern diocese. There is one non-professed student. The average age of the members of the Dublin Province is 74.1 years.

The following table shows where the Redemptorists in Ireland live. As well as the number of each resident in each location.

Name	Location	Number of members
Clonard Monastery	Belfast	18
St. Gerard's Parish	Belfast	2
St. Joseph's Monastery and Parish	Dundalk	13
Griffith Ave.	Dublin	5
Assumption Parish	Ballyfermot, Dublin	3
Most Holy Sacrament Parish	Ballyfermot, Dublin	1
Esker Community	Athenry, Co Galway	12
Mount Saint Alphonsus Community	Limerick	15
Scala Community	Cork	5

## Review of Safeguarding Practice in the Redemptorist Congregation - March 2022

---

There are twenty-five (25) Irish Redemptorists affiliated to other units of the congregations abroad. This number includes eight (8) members affiliated with the Province of Cebu in the Philippines; one (1) member in Bangalore, India; and sixteen (16) members in the Vice-Province of Fortaleza, Brazil.

The Provincial Offices of the Dublin Province are located at St. Joseph's Monastery in Dundalk having relocated there from their Rathgar Dublin base in 2016.

The work of the Redemptorist Congregation is based on a commitment to preach the Gospel, especially to marginalised people. This is done through an ongoing cycle of large nine-day Solemn Novenas, such as those in Limerick, Dundalk, Belfast and Galway, as well as parish based Missions, and work in Mission Churches.

The Redemptorists run parishes in Dundalk, Dublin and Belfast, three of which have their own dedicated websites - <http://www.redemptoristsdundalk.ie/parish> ; <http://www.cherryorchardparish.com>; and <http://www.stgerardsparish.com>. Child Safeguarding in these parishes is undertaken within the structures and policies of the respective Archdioceses of Armagh and Dublin, and the Diocese of Down and Connor.

The Redemptorists carry out significant Youth Ministry activities, and Youth Ministry Teams are based at their communities at Clonard in Belfast, Esker in Athenry, Co. Galway and Scala in Cork – further detailed information on the Redemptorists' Youth Ministry can be obtained on the respective websites for these three centres, at <http://www.clonard.com/youthministry1.html>; <http://www.redemptoristsesker.ie>; and <http://www.scala.ie>.

The Redemptorists maintain interest in and some responsibility for St. Clement's College in Limerick where they are the Trustees, and are represented on the Board of Management. The Redemptorists operate a publications and communications undertaking, *Redemptorist Communications* from the Provincial headquarters, where a large number of quality publications are produced on prayer and meditation, scripture guides, pastoral guides to the sacraments, resource materials for children's religious education, parish newsletters and booklets, Mass cards and other themed religious cards. The Redemptorist Monastery Community of Clonard in Belfast has been active over the past five decades in reconciliation work and has played a very important role in the peace process in Northern Ireland.

In February 2022, the Provincial announced that the Esker Monastery and Community in Co. Galway would cease to operate towards the end of 2022.

### Process of Review

The process of review was initiated through a letter of invitation from Provincial Fr. Dan Baragry to the National Board and the signing of an MOU and data processing deed. The latter allowed the National Board reviewers to access all material held by the Congregation relating to safeguarding and case management. There were two pre-fieldwork video meetings with the DLP and the Safeguarding Coordinator to agree parameters of review and gather background information, all of which is detailed in this report.

Fr. Dan Baragry, Provincial took responsibility for ensuring access to all records and relevant personnel in the Congregation, and with children, complainants and respondents. Fr. Baragry has confirmed that the reviewers have had access to all case material available in the Congregation.

The on-site fieldwork took place on 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> March 2022 across two locations; (a) St Gerard's Centre, Dundalk, the location of the Dublin Province headquarters, and where case management files are located; and (b) at Clonard Monastery Belfast, the location of the office of the Safeguarding Coordinator where safeguarding materials are maintained. A third location, Mount St. Alphonsus, Limerick was visited to attend a Youth Ministry event.

The following were either met, either in person or via Zoom or spoken to by telephone by the reviewers during this time, or in the days following:

- The Provincial, Fr. Dan Baragry
- Designated Liaison Person (DLP) who also has responsibility for vetting in Republic of Ireland and complainant support/outreach
- Safeguarding Coordinator, also a trainer and holds responsibility for vetting in Northern Ireland; and Chair of safeguarding Committee
- Safeguarding Committee
- Director of Youth Ministry
- Youth Ministry Coordinator Team
- Human Resources Delegate for the Redemptorists
- Two Complainants
- Priest Advisor
- Two groups of young people engaged in Redemptorist youth ministries.

The executive functions of child safeguarding within the Redemptorist congregation in Ireland is undertaken by two role holders: The Designated Liaison Person (DLP) who has overall responsibility for case management; and the Safeguarding Coordinator, whose role is to oversee the implementation of policies and procedures in safeguarding practice across all Redemptorist ministries. Each role is carried out independent of the other, while both role holders are directly accountable to the Provincial who has overall responsibility for ensuring that all standards of *Safeguarding Children 2016* are met.

As part of the Review process, case management records were examined and any clarifications required were provided by the Designated Liaison Person.

In addition, all relevant child safeguarding material was reviewed - in either soft or hard copy - and discussions with the Safeguarding Coordinator assisted the reviewers to achieve clarity about and understanding of safeguarding practice in the congregation.

## **Review of Safeguarding Practice in the Redemptorist Congregation - March 2022**

---

The period covered by this Review regarding case management issues is from September 2014 to March 2022, and so it has considered all child protection cases reported to the congregation during this time, as well as cases reported earlier and still being managed at the time of the Review.

Child safeguarding practice is assessed against the revised Church's *Safeguarding Children - Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland 2016*.

This Review took place at a time when Ireland was emerging from an extended period of lockdown or partial lockdown because of Covid-19. The disruption to normal life had severe effects on Church activities across the country, resulting in the closing down of all ministries for significant periods. During 2020 and 2021, ministry with children and young people was significantly reduced due to COVID-19. Children's liturgy, altar servers' ministry, and school retreats were suspended in all Redemptorist Churches and Centres; this was done in order to comply with government guidelines, and to protect the health of the Redemptorist community. Key personnel were furloughed, for example, Youth Ministry Co-ordinators/teams. There were two periods of furlough: March 2020 to 3rd August 2020, and 26th December to Easter 2021. These factors are factored in by the reviewers in their assessment of compliance with the standards.

The Meitheal Youth Leadership programme resumed on-line in 2021 in a much-reduced capacity.

At the time of the Review, most ministries - especially those involving altar servers and children's liturgies - had yet to be re-activated. The Youth Ministry team resumed their work with young people at the commencement of Lent when they inaugurated Day Retreats held at St. Clements, Limerick. The reviewers had the opportunity to meet with two groups of young people engaged in Youth Ministry with the Redemptorists and to learn a little of the work of the Youth Ministry team in different settings. The reviewers attended a *Cross-Border Youth Forum*, a pilot programme run by Youth Link NI in partnership with Redemptorists Youth Ministry Ireland, held in Dundalk. The second group visited was a school day retreat group held at Mount St. Alphonsus Monastery, for boys from St. Clement's College. Attendance at both groups gave the reviewers an invaluable insight into how the Youth Ministry teams engage with young people, and to observe a little of their group process, as well as hearing the views of the young people in relation on safeguarding topics.

The reviewers would like to express their sincere thanks to Fr. Dan Baragry, Provincial, his safeguarding staff and volunteers, priests, lay persons, and young people for their welcome hospitality and assistance provided during the fieldwork for this Review.

## **STANDARDS**

Each standard contains a list of indicators, by compliance with which the standard is met. To support implementation of the Standards, the National Board has produced detailed Guidance, which is accessible on its website (<https://www.safeguarding.ie/guidance>). The Redemptorist Congregation has adopted in full the guidance of the National Board.

This Review concentrates on practice, through evaluating written records, interviews with Church personnel, communication with young people, and information from complainants, and from respondents. Where applicable, supporting documentation is referenced.

An assessment of practice under each standard is set out below:



## **Standard 1 - Creating and Maintaining Safe Environments**

*Church bodies provide an environment for children that is welcoming, nurturing and safe. They provide access to good role models whom the children can trust, who respect, protect and enhance their spiritual, physical, emotional, intellectual and social development.*

The procedural and practical requirements of ensuring safe environments through safe recruitment is demonstrated by the existence of a Human Resources Advisory Panel (HRAP) for the Redemptorist Dublin Province. This panel was set up in 2019 at the request of the Provincial and the Ordinary Provincial Council of the Redemptorists. The overall aim of this Panel is to provide advice and guidance in relation to good governance and best Human Resource practice in matters of employment for the Redemptorists and its staff. The HRAP is made up of a group of lay people with experience in human resources or with management experience, one or more Redemptorists, and the Human Resources delegate, who is an employee of the Dublin Province and who has responsibility for the day-to-day provision of employment advice to the Province. The Panel meets at least quarterly, but can opt to increase its meeting schedule if the need arises.

The HRAP is putting in place a recruitment checklist based on the template of the National Board Standards, 1.1A, 2016. This will then be completed and signed off by the interview Panel chairperson at the end of a Recruitment and Selection process and returned to the HR Delegate for retention.

Work is being undertaken by the HR group to put in place an appraisal process for the Redemptorist staff. Occupational health arrangements are in place.

There were no whistle blowing reports/investigations since the last Review. A stand-alone whistle blowing guidance is being developed by the HR Delegate in accordance with the National Board Standards, 2016.

A Bullying Policy is currently under review by the HRAP.

A complaints policy is in place, and this has not needed to be activated.

Redemptorists, co-workers and volunteers whose work or ministry brings them into contact with children must be vetted. Vetting is completed every 3 years to coincide with refresher child safeguarding training – this information is held on a database maintained and updated by the DLP and Safeguarding Lead. Vetting is coordinated in the Republic of Ireland by the DLP for the Dublin Province who is the liaison person with the National Vetting Bureau, and in Northern Ireland by the Safeguarding Co-ordinator, through Access NI. Vetting of all relevant personnel is up to date. The database in respect of each location was seen as part of the review fieldwork.

The following information was provided to the reviewers:

Redemptorist, Belfast, Northern Ireland

Vetting Records January 2016 - March 2022 - Access NI Checks

Thirty-two (32) clergy

One (1) seminarian

Twenty-six (26) lay co-workers and volunteers working directly with children and young people Six (6) Eucharistic ministers who visit the sick and housebound in their homes

Twenty-five (25) youth Centre Staff

Total: 89

Redemptorists, Republic of Ireland

Garda Vetting Records completed for Redemptorists and their employees 2019-2021

2019 – Fifteen (15) Redemptorists and twenty-nine (29) employees

2020 – Thirteen (13) Redemptorists and twenty (20) employees

2021 – Thirty-eight (38) Redemptorists and twenty-one (21) employees

Total: 136

All volunteers whose work brings them into contact with children and young people are police vetted, and they all receive safeguarding training.

Eucharistic ministers are not normally vetted, but those who visit an individual's home to bring Communion are always vetted.

All visiting clergy - including Redemptorists returning from overseas - are required to be vetted and to complete safeguarding training.

Visiting clergy to Redemptorist churches must produce a *celebret* in order to say or concelebrate Mass, or to administer any of the sacraments. This is co-ordinated by the Chairperson of the Provincial Safeguarding Committee and the DLP, and a database is maintained, which was made available to the reviewers during the Review fieldwork.

Redemptorists have a Safeguarding Policy Guidance document (available on their website at <https://www.redemptorists.ie/about/child-safeguarding/>) and this is provided to and signed for by all clergy and lay workers following induction/ safeguarding training.

The Redemptorists Novenas and parish Missions held in their various churches are important and major events for Redemptorists, and between them they attract many thousands of people annually. The reviewers saw evidence of the significant planning that takes place for these events, which are held at different times during the year across the Dublin Province. Safeguarding is a priority at the pre-planning stage, and all relevant vetting is completed and supervision arrangements are put in place for all young people involved. A duty safeguarding support person is on site at all times during a Novena.

## Review of Safeguarding Practice in the Redemptorist Congregation - March 2022

---

The need to report and record incidents is promoted as part of preparation of volunteers and staff involved in a Novena. There was also evidence of the completion of hazard risk assessments provided to the reviewer during the fieldwork visit to Clonard Monastery.

The fieldwork visits assured the reviewers of safeguarding in action, such as glass screens in all doors of interview and meeting rooms in all three sites visited.

Clearly displayed information about safeguarding (including child-friendly information), with up to date named person and contact details provided, is in all appropriate areas, for example, in the Sacristies. Web-cam notices are displayed at church entrances.

The reviewers saw registration forms for altar servers and participants in children's liturgy in the Sacristies.

Supervision arrangements are in place for altar servers and for children's liturgy, where these have returned; and physical safeguards - such as separate changing area for children - were observed.

Arrangements for external bodies using Redemptorists' buildings are in place, including evidence of insurance being required. The Provincial Safeguarding Committee have developed a standardised booking form for outside groups to ensure that safeguarding arrangements and good practice are in place.

There is a youth centre on the Clonard site, which is funded by the Education Authority and which has a separate staff team; and comprehensive safeguarding procedures are in place for this.

A policy and procedure has been developed in 2017 for internet use, and for mobile and electronic communication, and its implementation was confirmed in discussions with the Safeguarding Coordinator and the Director of Youth Ministry.

Good examples of Codes of Behaviour for different areas of service were provided to the reviewers, a full list of which is available in supporting documentation below. For example, all employees must agree to the safeguarding policies and Code of Behaviour contained in the *Redemptorist Employee Handbook (2016)*. Hard copies of the *Volunteer Code of Behaviour* and *Code of Conduct for Clonard Lourdes Pilgrimage Staff with Children and Vulnerable Adults* were examined by the reviewers and found to be suitable.

Contracts/agreements on behaviour are developed for each initiative within Youth Ministry with the involvement of participants. The YM team engage with young people to develop an agreement/contract, which includes reporting worries - including about bullying - at the start of missions/retreats/training etc. During their fieldwork visits to the two groups, the reviewers saw this practice first hand and were confident that, in addition to rule setting or *Building Blocks*, which is the preferred term in Youth Ministry, discussion around safeguarding amongst the young people in both groups was open and participatory.

At the completion of a programme, feedback is sought from young people about their views/experience of involvement in the programme.

Parental consent forms are completed for the range of YM activities, including residential retreats.

### **Youth Ministry**

Youth Ministry is a priority of the Irish Redemptorists who are one of the largest providers of ministry to young people on the island of Ireland, with a dedicated youth ministry community in Cork (Scala), and teams in Clonard, Belfast and in Esker, Co. Galway. St Clements's College in Limerick is another Redemptorist ministry.

The Redemptorist Youth Ministry is led by a Director and a dedicated team of co-ordinators who met with the reviewers during the course of the Review. The programme plan for 2019 – 2023 was severely impacted by COVID-19, co-ordinators were placed on furlough, and most ministry with young people was curtailed. The Meitheal Youth Leadership programme based in Scala Centre Cork continued on line in 2021, albeit in a somewhat scaled back form.

The team is now back in place, and it has started to re-build and to connect with schools on a phased basis. The Youth Ministry Strategic Plan 2019 to 2023 is an expansive and enthusiastic plan, and the following three strategic objectives are contained in its Operational Plan for 2021: (reference: Youth Ministry 2019 to 2023 Programme; Youth Ministry Operational Plan 2019)

<b>STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE A</b>	<b>STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE B</b>	<b>STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE C</b>	<b>STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE D</b>
Sustain, further develop and undertaking regular evaluations of the current range of school programmes with a view to working in at least 50 different schools each year, and touching the lives of at least 12,000 young people, yearly.	Initiate at least two new Redemptorist outreaches to youth /young adults, with a view to developing possibilities of more sustained contact with that generation.	Sustain and further develop our current work of building connections, formation and services in initiatives such as SERVE, volunteering, Accompaniment / discernment and vocations work and in (lay) ministerial formation e.g the YMSP (Youth Ministry Studies programme	Optimal Structures for sustainability

## Review of Safeguarding Practice in the Redemptorist Congregation - March 2022

---

Trips/Residential retreats are pre-planned, and arrangements include parental consent forms, codes of behaviour, supervision arrangements including ratio of adults to children and young people, and emergency contacts.

Youth Ministry in the Esker Centre mainly takes the form of school retreats, which until March 2020 were held at frequent intervals throughout the year. Some retreats have involved overnight stays, but most are primarily day events. Schoolchildren are accompanied by teachers who remain on site for the duration of the retreat.

It was reported by the Safeguarding lead that any personal / physical care of children and young people with special needs involved in trips / activities is considered on an individual basis, and it includes parental consent, and identifying a suitable adult to undertake personal care, along with the provision of personal space. The announcement was made in February 2022 by Provincial Fr. Dan Baragry that, with much regret the Esker facility will be closed towards the end of 2022. This will leave a void in the provision of school retreats.

The Scala Youth Ministry team has been involved in youth ministry in the Cork area since 1988, and it has contact with many schools through Meitheal, a school leadership course, school retreats and parish Missions. It is a collaborative team of Redemptorists and lay people. A Redemptorist is the coordinator of the Scala Project. The Meitheal Youth Leadership Training Programme is a significant youth ministry in Ireland, which is run with the support of the local Diocese, is subsidised by Redemptorist Youth Ministry, and is open to young people of all faiths and none. Each year over 3,000 students from Cork and other Munster counties participate in Scala's retreat, leadership and volunteering programmes.

The Meitheal registration form deserves particular mention for its clarity and the requirements for participants in relation to adherence to the Code of Conduct and the Health and Safety Plan outlined on the form. Continuing with the safeguarding theme, the <https://www.scala.ie/> website states:

*Making sure young people are safe and respected in society is an integral and essential part of our work and mission. As such, Redemptorists and co-workers operate out of a clear and non-negotiable safeguarding policy.*

One of the many projects Youth Ministry in Dundalk is involved with is a Cross-Border Youth Forum, which is a pilot programme delivered in partnership with Youth Link Northern Ireland. The aim of the project is to bring together young people in the border region of the island of Ireland to engage in a Youth Forum with shared island and reconciliation themes. Young people have the opportunity to develop their skills in critical thinking, communication, public speaking and confidence building through teamwork activities and interactive workshops. Each school that participates recruits a group of students between the ages of 14 – 18 who are keen to take part in this project. A Youth Link staff member delivers the programme in person, together with a Redemptorist Youth Ministry team member, either during the school day or as an after-school session.

During the Review fieldwork, the reviewers had the opportunity to visit two separate youth ministry programmes and to meet with the participants along with the youth leaders. In each case, parental consent forms were completed allowing this to take place.

The reviewers met with a group of young people from a local secondary school in Dundalk who were participating in the Youth Forum project (described in the previous paragraph). The young people were aware of the safeguarding arrangements for the project, and of whom to speak to if they had any worries. A teacher accompanied the young people, and registration arrangements were in place.

The reviewers were informed that a group contract, similar to a code of behaviour, was developed and agreed by all participants at their first project meeting. This contract is in place during the course of all sessions in the overall programme. In this way, the code of conduct is 'owned' by all engaged in the project, which was evident in discussion with the reviewers. There is restricted access to the facility while the session is taking place. During the session, the young people presented as relaxed and enjoying participating in the group work exercise. The teacher reported that the young people look forward to coming to the St. Gerard's Centre and are willing and happy to be involved in the project.

A second fieldwork visit took place at Mount Alphonsus Centre, Limerick, where a day retreat programme for each class year at St Clements College was taking place during the five weeks of Lent. On the day of the fieldwork visit, a large group of 14-15 year-olds was escorted to the Centre by a class teacher who remained with the group. At the commencement of the session, an exercise entitled *Building Blocks* was initiated, which fully engaged the young people. This exercise essentially involved the creating of group rules and boundaries. The atmosphere was respectful and courteous, and at the same time, it was apparent that the young people were happy to be there and they participated fully in discussion. They displayed a firm understanding of safeguarding, and of what it means to feel safe in such an activity.

Both onsite visits demonstrated good practices in promoting safe environments in which to conduct the different ministries that took place. Evidence of hazard assessments, and good examples of Codes of Behaviour were seen at both meetings with the young people. The reviewers were assured that the safeguarding message is very much in the minds of the young people and of the leaders of their groups.

The Youth Ministry Team are to be commended for their work with children and young people, and for their obvious enthusiasm and commitment to this work in providing good role models in a safe environment. The reviewers are confident that work with young people within Redemptorist Youth Ministry is managed and conducted to a high level, with safeguarding as a fundamental requirement.

**This standard is met.**

### Supporting Documentation

- Redemptorists Ireland Best Practice Guidance in Working with Children and Young People – for all visiting Redemptorists, other clergy and co-workers in Ministry with Redemptorist Communities.
- Redemptorists Clonard Best Practice Guidance in Working with Children & Young People – Code of Conduct for all Redemptorists and Co-workers
- Redemptorist Code of Conduct Children & Young People, 2015

## **Review of Safeguarding Practice in the Redemptorist Congregation - March 2022**

---

- Clonard Youth Ministry Code of Conduct
- Hazard Risk Assessment Form
- Code of Conduct for Clonard Solemn Novena
- Clonard Solemn Novena – Stewarding Code of Conduct and Guidelines General Code
- Code of Conduct for Extraordinary Eucharistic Ministers at Clonard
- Altar Server and Children's Liturgy Registration forms – placed in Sacristy
- Clonard Volunteer Application Form
- Clonard Monastery Application Form for New Volunteers (Under 25)
- Altar Server Application Form
- Clonard Youth Ministry and Young Adults School Retreat Programme
- Licence for the Use of Parish Premises by External Groups Particulars – Down and Conor Diocese
- Clonard Summer Outreach Incident/Accident Report Form
- Esker Youth Ministry Registration Form – Re-Connect
- Clonard Youth Ministry Retreat Registration Form
- Clonard Taize Pilgrimage Parent/Guardian Information Letter/Consent/Medical Information
- Clonard Lourdes Pilgrimage Code of Conduct
- Youth Ministry Cross Border Forum (Dundalk Group) Contract - developed by young people/Attendees registration form/sessions four and five programme
- Youth Ministry Meitheal (Cork) application form/registration form/welcome pack, 2022/23
- Redemptorist Employee Handbook, ROI – introduction includes information about safeguarding and child protection/Appendix 8 Employment and Safeguarding Minors
- Human Resources Advisory Panel Terms of Reference
- Redemptorist Employee Contract, ROI – sample
- Redemptorist Job Application – sample
- Director of Youth Ministry Job Description
- Reference Request Form
- Occupational Health Referral Form

## Standard 2 - Procedures for responding to Child Protection Suspicions, Concerns, Knowledge or allegations

*Church bodies have clear procedures and guidance on what to do when suspicions, concerns, knowledge or allegations arise regarding a child's safety or welfare that will ensure there is a prompt response. They also enable the Church to meet all national and international legal and practical requirements and guidance.*

The Redemptorist Congregation has received eight (8) child abuse allegations or concerns since the last National Board Review in September 2014. Four (4) allegations were made against three (3) named Redemptorist priests, of whom one (1) priest was deceased at the time of the complaint; and a second (1) of whom was living at the time of the complaint, but the allegation against him was deemed not to have met the threshold for reporting to the statutory authorities. Having examined the casefile, the reviewers agree with this decision.

Of the four (4) remaining allegations,

- One (1) allegation relates to an unidentified Redemptorist priest;
- One (1) relates to an ex- Redemptorist priest:
- One (1) relates to an ex -Redemptorist brother; and
- One (1) matter concerns a case against a lay volunteer, which only became known to the Dublin Province following the reporting of a court case in the media.

In the majority of cases, the abuse is reported to have occurred in the 1970's with some in the 1980's, with one report relates to the 1960's. No incident of abuse is reported to have occurred in the period since the first National Board Review and the fieldwork for this Review in March 2022.

The following table represents an overview of the notifications of the allegations to the authorities and the status of the accused.

**Table 1- Allegations reported to the Redemptorist Congregation since 2014**

Cleric	Current Status	Number of Allegations	Gardai notified	Tusla notified	The National Board notified	Appropriate and timely Canonical action taken
1	Living  Semi-retired; Restricted ministry	1	Yes - within three months	Yes – within three months	Yes - within three months	Under restriction
2	Living  Former CSSR Brother	1	Yes - within three days	Yes - within three days	Yes - within three days	N/A  Address unknown



### Review of Safeguarding Practice in the Redemptorist Congregation - March 2022

3	Unidentified CSSR	1	Yes - within six months	Yes - within one week	Yes - within one week	N/A
4	Living In ministry in an overseas Province	1	Did not meet threshold for reporting	Did not meet threshold for reporting	No	N/A
5	Deceased	1	Yes - within one week	Yes - within one week	Yes - within one week	N/A
		1	Yes - within one week	Yes - within one week	Yes - within one week	N/A
6	Deceased - had been laicised	1	Yes - within one week	Yes - within one week	Yes - within one week	N/A CDF was informed on advice of NB

**Table 1.a -Allegations reported to the Redemptorist Congregation since 2014 in respect of lay personnel**

1	Living - address unknown	1	Became known following media coverage of a court case	Unknown	N/A	N/A
<b>Total number of allegations received</b>				<b>8</b>		

Timely notifications were made in four (4) of the six (6) cases relating to members of the Congregation. There were two (2) cases however where delays occurred.

In the case of Cleric 1, there was a delay in making formal notification to statutory authorities. The initial report was made by the complainant to the National Board, and the National Board referred it on to the Redemptorists. The Redemptorists engaged in detailed enquiries. In good faith, they were attempting to obtain sufficient details of the alleged abuse in order to establish if the threshold for reasonable grounds to suspect that a child may have been abused had been met. They brought the matter to the NCMC for clarification about what steps to take.

<sup>1</sup> Safeguarding Children 2008, Resource 15: Roles and responsibilities of Church personnel – pages 84 – 86.

In the case of Cleric 3, the respondent could not be identified. Based on the inconclusive information provided, it was possible that more than one member of the Order could have been the person complained of, in terms of the times and places of the alleged abuse provided. It was clear however that if the respondent was one of those potentially suspect, they were dead some years before the complainant came forward. In this situation, as the respondent was deceased, there was no risk to children and the delay in reporting to An Garda Síochána, to enable further clarification around identity is seen as reasonable. The Order did not want to make a notification without a better idea of the identity of the respondent, to avoid committing an injustice. The DLP discussed the difficulties with the complainant and with the Gardai, and subsequently made a notification.

The National Board accepts that the Order acted sincerely in both of these cases. However, earlier contact with the statutory agencies to agree how to proceed with notifications would have been possible.

Two (2) other case files examined recorded activity that took place since the last Review in September 2014.

One (1) of these matters relates to a Redemptorist priest living abroad under restriction -because of matters which predate this Review - and who remains the responsibility of the Dublin Province.

The final (1) case file examined relates to a third-party allegation. No formal complaint was forthcoming from the person who, it was suggested, had been abused, despite this being requested by the Redemptorists. No respondent was identified. The person making the third-party allegation has however received pastoral care and financial support for personal counselling because of their concern for the family member they believe suffered abuse.

The DLP has sought advice from the National Board in a number of matters and this is recorded in case files. Copies of notifications were placed on the case files.

The reviewers suggested that the same outer file cover be used for all case management files, with dividers in place for specific information, as outlined in an index page. The files were otherwise well managed, with good chronological narrative facilitating ease of understanding of circumstances and of actions taken in all cases. (Reference to files relating to priests currently under restriction is made under Standard 4 below).

All case management files are stored securely.

The National Board has met with the Order since the Review fieldwork to confirm the criteria for statutory notifications.

**In one case, the reviewers assess that the standard was not met, an explanation by the Order is referenced above. The Reviewers assess that the standard is met in all other cases.**

---

<sup>2</sup>ibid

### **Standard 3 - Care and Support for the Complainant**

*Complainants who have suffered abuse as children receive a compassionate response when they disclose their abuse. They, and their families, are offered appropriate support, advice and pastoral care.*

The reviewers had the opportunity to speak separately with two complainants, and to seek their views regarding the response they received from the Redemptorist after making their complaints. Both agreed to speak of their experiences, having been invited to do so by the DLP.

Both complainants spoke of the willingness of the DLP to meet with them and to listen to their stories. One complainant spoke of the sense of relief of knowing their story was believed. Both complainants referred to being provided with further information regarding how their complaints were being managed, in terms of notifications made. Relevant information, such as dates and location of the appointments of the relevant respondents was researched by the DLP and passed unto complainants, giving validity to their complaints. The opportunity to meet with the Provincial was offered to both and taken up by one of these complainants. In both cases, the offer of counselling support was made, but this was declined in each case. Some engagement with a Support Person was detailed in one case, where follow-up support was provided on two occasions. In the other case, the reviewers understood that the offer of a Support Person was declined by the complainant.

In each of these cases there was a prompt response by the Redemptorists to the complainants; their stories were listened to and believed, which for both people held significant importance. Updated information regarding the processing of their complaints was provided to them, and appropriate supports were offered. Both parties reported being generally happy with the response that they received from the Redemptorists following disclosure of their complaints, and said that their contact was helpful and respectful.

In addition to the two complainants already referred to above, six other complainants have made allegations in relation to Redemptorists Church personnel during the timeframe covered by this Review. The case files in four of these cases indicate that the DLP and/Provincial have had direct contact with these complainants at the point of them making their complaint, with appropriate supports offered, and availed of in some circumstances. Of these four cases, one complainant requested anonymity going forward, and one person asked for no further contact with the Redemptorists.

In the remaining two cases, there has been no direct contact with the complainant. One matter, involving a lay volunteer had been dealt with by the criminal court system. The complainant became known to the Redemptorists through media coverage, but the Congregation had no direct involvement with the complainant. The reviewers suggest that the possibility of making contact with this complainant be considered.

In the other, more recent case, the complaint was made to the Redemptorists through a solicitor acting on behalf of the complainant. The case management file records that a written offer of pastoral support was made to the complainant via their solicitor.

The Provincial and DLP indicated that where requests regarding financial compensation are made, the complainant is always informed of the importance that for their own benefit, they should be represented by a solicitor, for the sake of transparency and fair representation.

Most complainant support is currently being provided by the DLP, and the files detail courteous and prompt contacts in this regard. It was noted that the Designated Liaison Person has had good engagement with a number of complainants over the years, and this is positive practice.

There is no nominated Support Person at present following the retirement of the previous post holder. A Redemptorist priest has been offered as Support Person in at least one case. The reviewers discussed the possibility of having at least one laywoman available should the need arise; this was agreed and being considered by the DLP. The National Board believe that it would improve matters to recruit, train and appoint a woman and a man as Support Persons for complainants, neither of whom should be a member of the Order.

In relation to a separate case, where no formal complaint has been made but where a third party made contact with the Redemptorists, the reviewers note that a pastoral and supportive response has been made to this person.

Offers of Towards Healing counselling support have been made in the majority (7) of cases; and the Redemptorists are aware that counselling has been accessed by others, but because of the confidential nature of that service, the number and identity of those who do so is unavailable.

The reviewers consider that all appropriate steps have been taken by the Redemptorists in providing an appropriate, compassionate and respectful response to complainants and in doing so fulfil the criteria in meeting this standard.

**This standard is met.**

#### **Standard 4 - Care and Management of the Respondent**

*The Church Authority has in place a fair process for investigating and managing child safeguarding concerns. When the threshold for reporting has been reached, a system of support and monitoring for respondent is provided.*

There are two priests in restricted ministry who are the responsibility of the Dublin Province of the Congregation and who require care and management. One man is elderly and does not enjoy good health. An allegation was made against him since the last Review; he is confined to his community and is semi-retired, with some restricted ministry. The file indicates that he was informed of the allegation by his Provincial. A priest advisor was appointed to him and remains involved. He is considered not to be a risk to children. A six-point *Safety Plan* dated September 2014 is recorded within the file. There are no details of a formal review or revision of the safety plan contained within the file. The reviewers were informed by the Provincial and DLP that reviews of safety plans take place on a needs basis – as and when required – and in this case, the need for a formal review of the safety plan was not deemed necessary.

During the course of this Review, the Priest Advisor spoke with the reviewers by telephone and described his role and his understanding of his responsibilities. He has acted as advisor to the elderly priest for a number of years, and as well as providing advice and support to the man, he maintains a monitoring role, as he resides within the same community as him.

As well as being appointed priest advisor to this man, he has previously supported two other men, and as such is experienced in this role. He has received role-specific training in the past. The reviewers are satisfied that the responsibility to care for respondent priests is taken seriously by the Dublin Province

The decision resulting in the second man being in restricted ministry predates the timeframe of this Review. The Congregation followed advice from the National Case Management Committee and he was not taken out of ministry, but he voluntarily agreed at the time to have no access to minors, which is a condition of his safety plan. The last written agreement on file is dated 2013. A priest advisor who lives in the same overseas community as the respondent supports and monitors him. The file contains a written progress report, dated January 2022 from his priest advisor to the DLP, confirming that this man has no contact with minors, and that no concerns about him have arisen. Recent correspondence on the file from the Provincial to this priest respondent clearly outlines the need for police vetting, safeguarding training, and the possession of a *celebret* should he wish to celebrate Mass in Ireland on visits.

The reviewers received one questionnaire from a respondent priest who is out of ministry and against whom an allegation was made. That allegation predates the timeframe of this Review. He believes that at the time of the allegation, he was dealt with 'compassion and care' by the Provincial and DLP. He was informed on more than one occasion of his right to have independent legal advice and support. His recorded response indicates that he was kept informed of the progress of his case and of the availability of a named priest to support him if necessary. He was assured of the support of the Congregation in general. He did not recall a safety plan being put in place in his case.

The reviewers were informed that reviews of a priest's management plan are conducted on an *as and when needed* basis, and that in the cases of both of these respondents, there were no perceived changes to their status or issues arising since their management plans were agreed to. The DLP checks the monitoring their status with the relevant local Superior. These Superiors are aware of the need to report to the DLP if any issues arise. It is considered that there is no risk in either case. It is noted that there is good overall knowledge held by the Province and DLP in relation to each man's situation and level of risk posed.

The reviewers suggest that even if it is the case that no material changes take place in a man's situation, it is good practice to review a man's status and management plan formally, and to record on their case file that such a review has taken place. The creation of a case monitoring form to be used annually would aid file maintenance and updating. This form should contain a synopsis of important information, to reflect the fact that the case is a live and open case.

Risk management plans should be reviewed annually to ensure that they reflect current risk. While we were informed that reviews are held 'when and where necessary', it makes for good practice and effective preparation for succession planning to have this information updated regularly.

The overall assessment of this standard suggests that the responsibility and management of respondents is taken seriously by the Provincial and his DLP, which fulfils the requirement for compliance with this standard. While there is a gap in the *recorded* detail of formal reviews of safety plans this deficit is accepted and will be addressed by the Provincial in due course.

**This standard is met.**

## **Standard 5 - Training and Support for Keeping Children Safe**

*Church personnel are trained and supported in all aspects of safeguarding relevant to their role, in order to develop and maintain the necessary knowledge, attitudes and skills to safeguard and protect children.*

A centralised database is maintained of clergy and co-workers / lay people who have completed one-day safeguarding and refresher training, and this database was examined as part of the Review. Training records for 2018/19 and 2020/21 were provided to the reviewers.

Training Returns for 2018-2019 are as follows:

April 2018: Information Session for Clonard Volunteers, delivered by the Safeguarding Coordinator, who is a National Board accredited trainer.  
Fifteen (15) people attended.

May 2018: Information Session for Youth Ministry Volunteers in Cork, delivered by the Safeguarding Coordinator  
Sixteen (16) volunteers attended.

June 2018: Full day training in Clonard, delivered by the Safeguarding Coordinator  
Four (4) Redemptorists attended

September 2018: Session with Youth Ministry Workers and Volunteers in Esker Monastery - delivered by the National Board – (number of attendees not provided).

November 2018: Information session for Clonard Volunteers, delivered by the Safeguarding Coordinator.  
Fourteen (14) people attended.

March 2019: Full day training at Redemptorist Centre of Music, Limerick, delivered by Safeguarding Coordinator  
Four (4) Centre staff attended, as well as five (5) youth ministry volunteers.

Redemptorists and Redemptorist co-workers attended information sessions in all Redemptorist Communities. These sessions were delivered by local Safeguarding representatives in their respective communities.

Redemptorists and co-workers in parishes have also attended training delivered by safeguarding trainers in the Archdioceses of Dublin and Armagh, as well as in the Diocese of Down and Connor. The numbers attending are included in the returns for each of the above Dioceses. The Redemptorists have linked appropriately with safeguarding training resources in the dioceses in which Redemptorist churches are located, as well as with National Board training events.

## Review of Safeguarding Practice in the Redemptorist Congregation - March 2022

---

Because of Covid-19, training events were severally curtailed in 2020/21; but some events did take place as indicated below:

During 2020/21, one full day safeguarding training was delivered; and five refresher sessions - involving forty-nine (49) participants - were held.

Ten (10) people attended training for online ministry in 2020 delivered by the National Board.

All local Safeguarding Committee members attended a Redemptorist safeguarding training / information session in 2021, delivered by the National Board via Zoom ( Ref: Redemptorist Safeguarding Report 2022.)

All Redemptorists have attended a safeguarding training / information session in 2021 (Ref: Redemptorist Safeguarding Report 2022).

Redemptorist Youth Ministry provides ongoing professional development for all team members, which includes annual in-house training.

Redemptorists and co-workers attend specialised safeguarding training and conferences organised by the National Board. The National Board have also provided training to the Youth Ministry team in the areas of online safety (2018).

*A Safeguarding Focus Day* has taken place bi-annually (since March 2020 this has reduced significantly). This day is attended by Redemptorists and co-workers, safeguarding representatives, committee members, children's liturgy leaders, and people with responsibility for altar servers, and provides the opportunity to come together to discuss safeguarding practice in various settings. Guest speakers are involved, and reflections and workshops are part of the structure of the day. It is designed to *encourage, reassure and affirm* understanding and implementation of good safeguarding practice in the Dublin Province.

This is a good example of a positive safeguarding strategy, and it is commended.

The reviewers are satisfied that there is a fundamental knowledge of child safeguarding requirements amongst the Redemptorists, volunteers and those responsible for Youth Ministry.

There is currently one National Board registered trainer for the Dublin Province. The trainer holds a number of significant roles within the Redemptorist structure. To help address the deficit in training resources, all local safeguarding representatives have been trained by the trainer to deliver safeguarding information sessions in their locality. The restarting of ministries and Church activities will create a demand for training events, placing pressure on training resources, and a Training Plan will be required to ensure that all relevant staff and volunteers will receive appropriate and timely safeguarding training. The Chairperson of the Provincial Safeguarding Committee together with Committee members have undertaken to progress the putting in place of additional accredited trainers.



## **Review of Safeguarding Practice in the Redemptorist Congregation - March 2022**

---

There is no comprehensive Training Plan that covers *all* types of training, nor a centralised database to record those who have completed different training courses, for example, in addition to diocesan training events or training accessed through Junior Ministry.

The Provincial is willing to progress the development of a comprehensive Training Plan as part of the three-year Safeguarding Plan, with the assistance of the Safeguarding Committee.

The Safeguarding Committee submits an annual training return to the National Board, including evaluation and feed- back

**This standard is met.**

### Supporting Documentation:

- Redemptorist Training Returns 2018/19 and 2020/21
- Redemptorist Central Training Database for one-day and refresher Safeguarding

## **Standard 6 - Communicating the Church's Safeguarding Message**

*Church Bodies appropriately communicate the Church's child safeguarding message*

The Redemptorist Province website [www.redemptorist.ie](http://www.redemptorist.ie) contains a dedicated comprehensive and accessible section on Safeguarding. Contact numbers for statutory agencies in both the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland are included.

The *Policy and Standards for the Redemptorists in Ireland - Safeguarding Children A One Church Approach* 2016 booklet is available on the website. This is a summary document developed by the Redemptorists, which all Redemptorist confreres and co-workers engaged in ministry with children are required to commit to and to confirm their commitment by signing the back page.

The Redemptorists Province website also contains a link to the Policy and Guidance section of the National Board.

The Child Safeguarding Statement of the congregation - required for Children First compliance - is contained on the website. There are a number of other Redemptorist websites related to the local Redemptorist communities, which have dedicated comprehensive safeguarding sections. These include for example:

[www.clonard.com/safeguarding](http://www.clonard.com/safeguarding)

[www.redemptoristsdundalk.ie](http://www.redemptoristsdundalk.ie)

[www.redemptoristsesker.ie](http://www.redemptoristsesker.ie)

[www.eskerreds.ie](http://www.eskerreds.ie) [www.scala.ie](http://www.scala.ie)

This National Board Review was advertised on the Redemptorist Province website, and people with any safeguarding concerns, or who wished to contribute to the Review, were invited to do so. At the time of writing however, no responses have been received.

All Redemptorist churches, shops and halls have dedicated information points – directly observed by the reviewers in the three locations, Dundalk and Clonard and Limerick, visited during the course of this Review. The information includes the Redemptorist Child Protection Statement, with contact details of the DLP and relevant authorities

Child-friendly posters were on display in each location, as well as leaflets available to be taken away. Young people involved in various ministry groups were involved in the development of these, which also include generic codes of conduct.

A Redemptorist Safeguarding Sunday takes place on the fifth Sunday of Lent each year to promote the safeguarding message. Safeguarding representatives for the churches are encouraged to highlight safeguarding in general and their role in particular at Masses on the day. At other times of the year, they are encouraged to prepare safeguarding messages for inclusion in parish newsletters.

A dedicated Safeguarding Newsletter is produced annually; and copies of Redemptorists Ireland Safeguarding Newsletters for the years 2017-2019 inclusive were made available to the reviewers.

## **Review of Safeguarding Practice in the Redemptorist Congregation - March 2022**

---

Currently, there is no information available for people whose first language is not English, and this is an issue under review by local safeguarding committees. Gaps in information, as well as specific requirements for translated information, will be communicated to the Provincial Safeguarding Committee by the local areas, if necessary.

The Dublin Province *Safeguarding Focus Day* (discussed under Standard 5) is evidence of good practice in communicating the safeguarding message in the broadest way.

While the communication of the safeguarding message takes place in several forms across the Dublin Province, no comprehensive Communications Plan is currently in place. It would be useful to clarify responsibility for the overall coordination of safeguarding communication within the Province. The reviewers would encourage the Redemptorists to develop a plan and incorporate it into the strategic Safeguarding Plan, which at the time of Review is scheduled for updating by the Safeguarding Committee.

**This standard has been met.**

### Supporting documentation

- Redemptorist Child Protection Policy Statement poster/placed on website
- Promoting a Safer Church - poster
- Redemptorist Provincial Safeguarding Committee – Creating and Maintaining Safe Environment for All - poster
- While you are here you should feel safe, respected and fairly treated poster/leaflet
- What is Safeguarding? Is someone hurting you? Get help - poster
- Redemptorist Safeguarding Sunday leaflet – Safeguarding is everybody's business
- Safeguarding Sunday Prayer - handout
- Safeguarding Sunday Provincial's Message 2018 - handout
- Directory of the Dublin Province 2021
- Clonard Belfast Helpline Leaflet – Adult and Children's combined
- SBNI Guidelines for Faith Based Groups: Use of Social Media and other E – Based Communication
- Clonard Youth & Adult Ministry School Retreat Programmes - leaflet

### **Standard 7 - Quality Assuring Compliance with the Standards**

*The Church body develops a plan of action to quality assure compliance with the safeguarding standards. This action plan is reviewed annually. The Church body only has responsibility to monitor, evaluate and report on compliance with the indicators under each standard that apply to it, depending on its ministry.*

The Redemptorists have a Safeguarding Statement as required by Children First legislation. This is displayed on their various websites; and it was seen on display at the three locations visited by the reviewers.

The Provincial, together with the two safeguarding leads - the Safeguarding Co-ordinator and the DLP - comprise the safeguarding management team, and they meet as a team on average once monthly. The sharing of the safeguarding platform allows two separate and distinct roles to work independently of each other, but under the administrative and coordinating function of the Provincial. To strengthen good governance in safeguarding and case management arrangements, the benefits of a dedicated business / governance support lead will be explored by the Ordinary Provincial Council, to support the roles of the Safeguarding Lead (Safeguarding Coordinator) and the Case Management Lead (Designated Liaison Person). This would free up the Provincial from this direct management responsibility.

The Ordinary Provincial Council appoints the Chairperson of the Province Safeguarding Committee. Members of this committee include the Provincial (Superior), DLP, and the chairperson of each of the local safeguarding committees of the Redemptorist communities and parishes across Ireland – Dublin, Dundalk, Belfast, Limerick, Cork, and Esker. Committee members bring a range of relevant experience, including ministry, social work, youth work, law and education. Safeguarding Committees have a number of standing agenda items – Community reports; audit returns; review of the work plan; and training.

The Province Safeguarding Committee meets 4/5 times per year; however, this was disrupted due to Covid-19. Meetings via Zoom began again from May 2021. Minutes of Committee meetings were provided to the reviewers.

The Province Safeguarding Committee is appropriately constituted. It is a priority to put in place a written Constitution for the Committee, based on the National Board Safeguarding Guidance 2016, 7.1F template. This will include the role and function of the Committee; its membership; training requirements; record keeping; and the administration of meetings.

The Province Safeguarding Committee's three-year work plan was due for review at the end of 2019, but this task was not completed due to the impact of Covid-19. Work on this has recommenced, and this is now the priority for the Safeguarding Committee to complete. A Province Safeguarding Committee Special Review meeting took place in January 2022, involving local safeguarding representatives. The Province Safeguarding Committee produced an Annual Safeguarding Report, 2022, which was informed by self-audits completed by the local Safeguarding Committees in December 2021. Actions from these audits will inform the three- year Safeguarding Plan. Progress updates will be provided quarterly to the Province Safeguarding Committee until actions achieved.

The 2022 Annual Safeguarding report and Composite local self-audits report for 2019, along with other self-

## **Review of Safeguarding Practice in the Redemptorist Congregation - March 2022**

---

audit reports were provided to the reviewers.

A policy and procedure was developed and implemented in 2017 for internet use, and mobile and electronic communication. National Board training for working on-line has been accessed by safeguarding personnel.

Youth Ministry is well resourced in the Redemptorists, which enables the development and planning of new and ongoing safeguarding young person's activities and initiatives.

A comprehensive GDPR Guidance has been developed and implemented in 2020, which ensures good practice in relation to all areas of GDPR.

This standard will be fully met, once the Safeguarding Plan, (including reference to strategies for Communications and Training) is updated.

### **Supporting Documentation:**

- Redemptorist Provincial Safeguarding Committee Report to Assembly Chapter, 2019
- Redemptorist Provincial Safeguarding Committee Meeting Minutes, April 2019/May 2021/August 2021
- Provincial Safeguarding Plan, 2015 to 2019
- Redemptorist Provincial Safeguarding Committee Standing Agenda
- Redemptorist Provincial Composite Local Safeguarding Audit Report, 2019
- Redemptorist Provincial Safeguarding Committee Annual Report, 2022
- Redemptorist Community Scala, Cork, Local Safeguarding Audit, 2021
- Redemptorist GDPR Guidelines, 2020
- Redemptorist Policy & Procedure for Internet, Mobile and Electronic Communication, 2017
- Youth Ministry Strategic Plan, 2019 to 2023
- Youth Ministry Operational Plan, 2021

### **Conclusion**

The reviewers acknowledge the difficulties and challenges faced by the Redemptorists due to Covid-19 in the two years prior to the commencement of this Review to their ability to carry out their priority ministries of evangelisation and youth ministry in the way that they have done for many years. For reasons beyond its control, the execution of some functions of the Provincial Safeguarding Committee have been delayed.

The dedication and commitment to young people is seen in the prompt restarting of some programmes and in the continuation of some others that had continued under difficult circumstances, such as Meitheal. The Reviewers are assured that, having observed two different groups of young people, and having met with the Youth Ministry team and Redemptorist safeguarding personnel, attention to safeguarding of the highest level is a fundamental requirement of ministry within the Redemptorists.

## **Review of Safeguarding Practice in the Redemptorist Congregation - March 2022**

---

Appropriate safeguarding structures are well established. Case management is approached with a genuine regard for keeping children safe, while providing support and pastoral care for the complainant, and taking responsibility for the management and care of the respondent.

Under the leadership of the Provincial, there is a genuine and earnest will to ensure that all seven standards of National Board guidance are complied with. This will be the case as soon as the safeguarding plan is in place.