



SAFEGUARDING SUNDAY

12th October 2025

Safeguarding Sunday is an opportunity for parish communities to raise awareness of safeguarding, reflect on their own safeguarding journey, and to highlight and celebrate the good work that is being done by so many to safeguard vulnerable people. It is the day where we promote and remind everyone involved in the church that safeguarding is a standard practice for us all in which we focus on how best our parishes can encourage children and young people to have active ministries in our parish and to ensure they are both safe and welcome.

Churches who take part in Safeguarding Sunday see:

- GREATER positive awareness and understanding of safeguarding among church members.
- An INCREASE in the number of people feeling able to talk about what's happened to them for the first time.
- MORE people coming forward to volunteer and to help with running activities.
- An INCREASED number of people completing safeguarding training.

A POSITIVE environment for children to be involved in parish life.

• And the number of Safeguarding Representatives feeling supported in their role by the church is BIGGER!

SAMPLE NEWSLETTER NOTICES FOR SAFEGUARDING SUNDAY:

Option #1

Safeguarding Sunday is an opportunity for parish communities to raise awareness of safeguarding, highlight, and celebrate the good work that is being done by so many to safeguard vulnerable people. The theme of this year's Safeguarding Sunday is "working to make our society safer for children and young people."

We would like to acknowledge the children and young people who take part in our parish activities and hope they will continue to be part of our parish life. Thanks also to our parish volunteers and to the parents who support our young people. Your enthusiasm, care and welcome plays a huge part in ensuring that children and young people have a positive experience in our parish.

Our thanks to our Parish Safeguarding Reps, N. and N. We thank them for their oversight, support, and encouragement. Further information is available on www.meathsafeguarding.ie

Option #2

This weekend, the Catholic Church in Ireland marks Safeguarding Sunday, on which we acknowledge the commitment of so many faith communities in creating a culture of safeguarding. Thank you to all who are committed to the care, wellbeing and protection of children, young people and people at risk in our parish. The theme of this year's Safeguarding Sunday is "working to make our society safer for children and young people."

A particular word of thanks to our Parish Safeguarding Reps, N & N, who work closely with the priest(s) of our parish, staff and volunteers to ensure a positive experience for children and young people taking part in parish activities.

Further safeguarding information is available on www.meathsafeguarding.ie

SAMPLE PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL

Parishes are invited to select one of more prayers from the samples below.

Celebrant:

Conscious that each person is precious in the eyes of the Lord, let us place our prayers before God who is kind and merciful, and rich in compassion.

For our community: that we have the strength to stand in solidarity with victims and survivors of abuse, the humility to come to terms with the sinful crimes of the past, and the patience to stop and listen to children and the vulnerable. **Lord, hear us.**

For families: that they may grow stronger and more resilient in their love and care for one another so that children are raised in safe and nurturing environments. **Lord, hear us.**

For those in positions of responsibility: that they may always follow the example of Jesus Christ, the Good Shepherd, by treating children and young people with proper respect and care. **Lord, hear us.**

For those whose lives have been traumatised through abuse: that they may find the courage to share their story and to find lasting peace and healing. **Lord, hear us.**

For Church leaders and those entrusted with ministry and pastoral care in the Church: that they will continue to help build stronger faith communities that will promote the safety of children and adults at risk. **Lord, hear us.**

For a spirit of collaboration in our parish which ensures the happiness and confidence of every child, supports safe communities and fosters an environment of protection where children flourish. **Lord, hear us.**

For our Diocese as it seeks to follow the example of Christ and the teachings of his Church: that we will work to ensure that policies and procedures are implemented to safeguard children and young people. **Lord, hear us.**

Celebrant:

Gracious and loving God, source of all truth, justice and healing, we implore you to hear the prayers we offer and to look favourably on the prayers of your people. We ask this through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

(Intercessions adapted from www.catholicoutlook.org)

Safeguarding Sunday Prayer (#1)

Lord, our God,
look with favour on our children
whom we as a Church commend to your tender care.
Your Son, gladly welcomed little children.
He took them in his arms, blessed them,
and held them up as an example for us all.

We pray that you, Father,
will also send your blessing upon all gathered here this day,
so that we may play our part in helping our children grow in Christ.
By the power of the Holy Spirit,
may they become Christ's witnesses in a world
which craves their energy, light and generosity.

Allow us to create environments
where together we flourish and minister to each other
in a spirit of light, love and joy.

We also beg your pardon for the times we have failed in this ministry.
We remember those who have been hurt and those who are hurting,
may your healing be a source of strength and comfort to them and their
families.

We make this prayer through Christ our Lord. **Amen**

(Source: Diocese of Killaloe)

Safeguarding Sunday Prayer (#2)

Lord, we thank you for the gift of our children;
they are our light and our joy.

Give us wisdom to guide them,
patience to teach them,
and a desire to encourage them always.

As we strive to love them sincerely,
may we never betray their trust,
dampen their hope,
or discourage their spirit.

May we help them achieve their potential
and fulfil your dreams for them.

May your grace and love fall gently upon them
giving them the inner strength, peace and patience
they will need for the journey ahead.

And as we strive to create safe environments
where we can freely minister to them,
may we be open to you ministering to us in and through them. **Amen**

(Source: Diocese of Killaloe)

Prayer For Survivors

Lord God,
hear our prayer for survivors and those who are suffering:
dispel their darkness and loneliness with your everlasting light,
so that they can recover their self-confidence.
Through your grace and mercy may they
be healed and strengthened by your unconditional love.

God our strength and our redeemer:
you do not leave us in this life
nor abandon us in death.

Hear our prayer for those in despair.
Renew in them your sustaining strength
for we believe that there is nothing in all creation
that can separate us from your love
in Christ Jesus our Lord.

(Source: Towards a Safer Church Liturgical Resources 2018)

A Prayer for those Working or Volunteering in Safeguarding

Heavenly Father,

We pray for all those who serve in a Safeguarding role within our Church.

We especially pray for our Diocesan Safeguarding Team and Parish Safeguarding Representatives.

Thank you for their willingness and the time they give to fulfil this important task.

Give them your wisdom, discernment, and strength.

Help us support them in their roles, remember them in our prayers, and respond to their requests and advice so that we might be a safer place for everyone.

In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,

(Source: Diocese of Leeds, 2024)

A prayer for our Church leaders

Almighty God,

We pray for all those who serve in a position of leadership in our Church.

We especially pray for Bishop Tom and all our Parish Clergy.

Thank you for their commitment to serve us in this way.

As they make decisions, set the culture, and seek to lead us in our worship and witness, give them wisdom, humility, and courage to follow Jesus' example of servant leadership, we pray.

Help us support them in their role, remember them in our prayers, and ensure they have others around them who can help, challenge, and encourage them so that we might be a safer place for everyone.

In Jesus' name.

Amen

(Source: Diocese of Leeds, 2024)

Scripture Verses

Isaiah 41: 10,13

So do not fear, for I am with you;
do not be dismayed, for I am your God.
I will strengthen you and help you;
I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.
For I am the LORD your God
who takes hold of your right hand
and says to you, Do not fear;
I will help you.

Mark 12:28-31

One of the teachers of the law came and heard them debating. Noticing that Jesus had given them a good answer, he asked him, “Of all the commandments, which is the most important?” “The most important one,” answered Jesus, “is this: ‘Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ The second is this: ‘Love your neighbour as yourself.’ There is no commandment greater than these.”

Proverbs 31:8

Speak out on behalf of the voiceless,
and for the rights of all who are vulnerable.

John 13:34

“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”

James 1:27

Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans
and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.

Luke 22:25–26

Jesus said to them, “The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those who exercise authority over them call themselves Benefactors. But you are not to be like that. Instead, the greatest among you should be like the youngest, and the one who rules like the one who serves.

Micah 6:8

He has shown you, what is good.
And what does the LORD require of you?
To act justly and to love mercy
and to walk humbly with your God.

Psalms 91:1–4

You who live in the shelter of the Most High, who abide in the shadow of the Almighty, will say to the Lord, “My refuge and my fortress; my God, in whom I trust.”
For he will deliver you from the snare of the fowler and from the deadly pestilence; he will cover you with his pinions, and under his wings you will find refuge; his faithfulness is a shield and buckler.

Ephesians 5:8–13

For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light (for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth) and find out what pleases the Lord. Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them. It is shameful even to mention what the disobedient do in secret. But everything exposed by the light becomes visible — and everything that is illuminated becomes a light.