

YOUTH & CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES AROUND THE DIOCESE

Along with a range of activities for young adults, under 18 & children's ministry initiatives are on the increase across the diocese: this coming June, thirty-one teenagers from the three deaneries, Waterford, Dungarvan and Clonmel, will travel to Lourdes along with seven Youth Leaders spending time with the sick and the elderly, bringing them to Mass and the ceremonies. In April, fifteen young people and nine youth leaders from across the Diocese will travel on the third annual Diocesan Pope John Paul II Pilgrimage to Medjugorje.

Thirty-five Parish Faith Reps are currently commissioned and receiving ongoing training to volunteer with youth in their parishes and the fruits are already evident: Youth Groups are currently up and running in Dungarvan, Clonmel and Ballyporeen. Youth Adoration is happening in a number of parishes and schools both monthly and weekly. Pope John Paul II Award participants are volunteering as readers, greeters, in choirs, at parish coffee mornings and more. The annual REvive Conference for Senior Cycle students at SETU Arena drew almost ninety students from across the diocese. The annual "Called to Greatness" workshop for JP2 Award participants drew forty students from five schools to reflect on vocations. Holy Family Mission are facilitating Confirmation and post-primary retreats for schools around the diocese. Alpha Youth has been running in two post-primary schools.



Some of the youth who travelled on pilgrimages with the Diocese last year receiving their Pope John Paul II Award in March 2026.

Altar servers are an integral part of many parish liturgies; children's liturgies, children's adoration, children's rosaries and Family Days are being offered around the diocese and plans are underway for Campa Mhuire Mháthair Catholic Faith Camps in Dungarvan, Tramore and Ardmore again this summer. Sincere thank you to all the clergy and religious, parish volunteers, Parish Faith Reps and LSRs who make all this possible!

SAFEGUARDING NEWSLETTER 2026

DIOCESE OF WATERFORD & LISMORE



MESSAGE FROM BISHOP PHONSIE



I wish to sincerely thank all our LSRs across the Diocese, our Priests, Stephen Plunkett and the Diocesan Safeguarding Committee who exercise such diligent respect for the dignity of our young people and their place in the Church. So much has been done in safeguarding and it is wonderful to see.

Last year an Italian teenager was made a saint in our Church. Carlo Acutis was just 15 when he died in 2006. He lived a life of love, holiness and service and is truly an example to us all. His life shows us how essential it is to keep building a Church which is safe and welcoming to all our people, especially the young, so that, together we can all grow closer to Jesus Christ who is the only Lord and Saviour.

+ Phonsie Callinan



What is Safeguarding Sunday?

Safeguarding Sunday is an annual initiative aimed at raising awareness about the safeguarding of children in the Diocese of Waterford and Lismore. It reminds all of us that protecting children and vulnerable people is at the heart of the Christian message. It is also an opportunity to highlight all the positive ongoing work and activity that those who volunteer their valuable time to safeguarding practices in their parish and ministries are delivering for children and young people.

A lot of thought, resources, training and energy is invested in safeguarding, which means that we have a vibrant youth ministry alive and growing in the Diocese of Waterford and Lismore. *Safeguarding Sunday* gives us an opportunity to reflect and raise awareness of how effective our Diocese safeguarding is and celebrate the safe environments that allow faith experiences and opportunities continue to grow.

It is an opportunity for all the parishes to pray as one and to acknowledge the dedication of all church personnel and volunteers who serve in the ministry of Safeguarding across the Diocese.

www.waterfordlismore.ie/safeguarding-children



FEEDBACK

The Diocese of Waterford and Lismore values any **feedback** on matters of Safeguarding Policy and Procedure.

Please contact: Stephen Plunkett Director of Safeguarding, St John's Pastoral Centre, John's Hill, Waterford or email safeguarding@waterfordlismore.ie

DIOCESAN SAFEGUARDING CONTACT DETAILS:

If you have a child safeguarding concern or wish to report an allegation, please contact one of the following:

- **Tusla, Child & Family Agency:** 051 301450
- **The Gardaí:** 051 - 305300
- **Garda National Protective Services Bureau:** 01-6663430 / 01-6663435
- **The Designated Liaison Person (DLP) for the Diocese of Waterford & Lismore** is Mr. Stephen Plunkett: 085 165 1518
- **The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (DDLDP)** is Ms. Anne Walsh 089 4858845

www.towardshealing.ie | www.towardspeace.ie



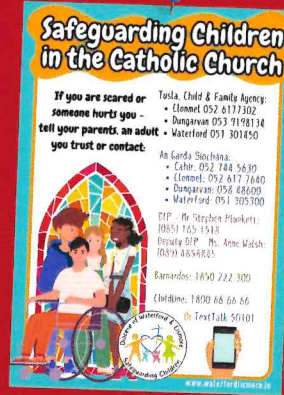
LOCAL SAFEGUARDING REPRESENTATIVES

There are 117 Local Safeguarding Representatives (LSRs) in our parishes across the Diocese of Waterford and Lismore. Through all our LSRs in the Diocese, whose ongoing commitment to safeguarding is greatly appreciated, we ensure that youth-based activities in the parish are safe for children and being run in accordance with the guidance from our safeguarding policy.

SO, WHAT DO LSRs DO?

- Raise awareness of what safeguarding is.
- Make information on safeguarding available and visible in parish churches and parish buildings.
- Circulate information to the public.
- Ensure Church activities are provided in adherence with safeguarding best practice, providing environments that are safe and prioritise the well-being of the children or vulnerable adults involved.
- Ensure contact details of the Diocesan Designated Liaison Person (DLP), Deputy DLP, Gardaí and Tusla are widely publicised in parishes.

THANK YOU!



"It was always my intention to volunteer in our local parish, and once I retired I had the time to do so. My Parish Priest asked me if I would take on the role, I had no experience safeguarding so I agreed to undertake training. It's a rewarding role & whilst the role initially looked daunting, I discovered LSR's have an array of guidance support from the Director of Safeguarding."

To find out more about safeguarding in your parish please contact Stephen Plunkett on 085 165 1518 or email stephen.plunkett@waterfordlismore.ie

CONTACT US

DID YOU KNOW?

- 117 Local Safeguarding Representatives (LSRs) currently volunteer in the Diocese of Waterford and Lismore
- 109 new people were trained and certified in safeguarding in 2025
- 259 Parish Garda Vetting applications were processed in 2025.
- 45 Parish Audits completed in 2025: *All Parishes complete a comprehensive safeguarding audit annually and submit it to the National Board Head Office.*

FACTS

National Conference Sheraton Hotel September 2025



For 3 days in September 2025, church leaders, survivors, safeguarding professionals and academics gathered in Athlone



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

for the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland ('the National Board') biannual conference. The event was a further step in the Church's ongoing journey toward healing, justice, and reform: *"Towards a Restorative and Transitional Justice model of engaging with victims and survivors in the Catholic Church in Ireland"*.

One of the most striking aspects of the conference was the centring of survivors' voices. People who had experienced harm within the Church shared their stories - not only of pain, but of resilience and hope. For many attendees, hearing directly from survivors was the most impactful experience of the three days.

KEY TAKE-AWAY MESSAGES



1. **Survivor-led Engagement.** The voices of those harmed must remain central. Their experiences should shape policy, practice, and pastoral care.
2. **Restorative & Transitional Justice:** Models from post-conflict societies offer valuable tools for healing, accountability, and institutional reform.
3. **Embedding Safeguarding in Church Life:** Safeguarding should be embedded in the culture and practices of the Church and its ministries.
4. **Long-Term Commitment.** True reform will require resources, courage, and sustained engagement.



All Diocesan Safeguarding Policies, Procedures, Forms and other documents required are available at www.waterfordlismore.ie/safeguarding-children.

