

14 December 2020

### **Johannesburg Archdiocese Child Safeguarding Policy**

Dear Episcopal Vicars, Deans, Parish Priests and PPC Chairs

In 6c of the Acts of the Synod, 2019, the Department of Evangelisation was tasked with disseminating the Archdiocesan “Child Safeguarding Policy”, and with supporting parishes in its implementation. Subsequent to the Synod the Archbishop mandated the department with forming a safeguarding committee, and appointing a chairperson for that committee.

I am happy to inform you that Fr. PJ Cassidy M.Afr accepted the responsibility of chairing this committee and has in turn formed a committee to share in the responsibility of formulating policy, assisting in training, and in ongoing monitoring and evaluation. Fr Cassidy has many years’ experience in drawing up and implementing best practices for his religious congregation and in dioceses across two continents.

With this letter you will also have received the Child Safeguarding Policy and the letter of promulgation of that policy from the Archbishop.

The Archbishop is aware that there may be challenges in the immediate full implementation of every aspect of the policy, and will therefore accept the progressive realisation of the standards over the following year, 2021. In the year 2022 the Archdiocese Safeguarding Committee will guide parishes through a self-audit, to identify which parishes are compliant, which are not, and what challenges have arisen which may have delayed compliance.

Below is an implementation timeline for the policy:

- January 2021: The work of the Safeguarding Committee begins as they familiarise themselves with the policy and come up with training materials and a plan of action for the year.
- February 2021: Two deaneries to have training workshops
- March 2021: Two deaneries to have training workshops
- April 2021: One deanery to have training workshops
- May 2021: Two deaneries to have training workshops

- June 2021: Workshops with the remaining deaneries.
- July- December 2021: Committee is available to assist parish having challenges with implementation.
- January – March 2022: Parishes take part in implementation self-audit.
- April 2022: Archdiocese Safeguarding Report is presented to the Archbishop.

The proposed content of the training workshop is as follows:

- Presenting our Archdiocesan Safeguarding Policy (Seven Standards)
- Highlighting Standard Three (Pastoral Related)
- **Practical Implications**
  1. Establishing a Parish Safeguarding Committee and their role (2-3 people)
  2. Advertising relevant contact details in our respective pastoral areas, Priest House, Church & Parish Hall etc.
  3. Safe Recruitment of Pastoral Agents
    - Self-Declaration
  4. Safe Activities with our young people
  5. Self-Parish Audits
  6. Highlighting the Churches Response to Abuse and relevant Documents

Fr Cassidy and his committee will be contacting Deans and DPC Chairs to arrange the training workshops outlined above. If we can be of any help whatsoever in getting your parishes Safeguarding compliant, please let us know. This important work that you do is not simply a requirement of the Archdiocese, but is also mandated by the universal Church, as well as our local civil law.

Yours in Christ



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Fr Bruce Botha SJ, Episcopal Vicar for Evangelisation