



People were bringing little children to him and Jesus said: 'Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. I tell you solemnly, anyone who does not welcome the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.' Then he put his arms around them, laid his hands on them and gave them his blessing.

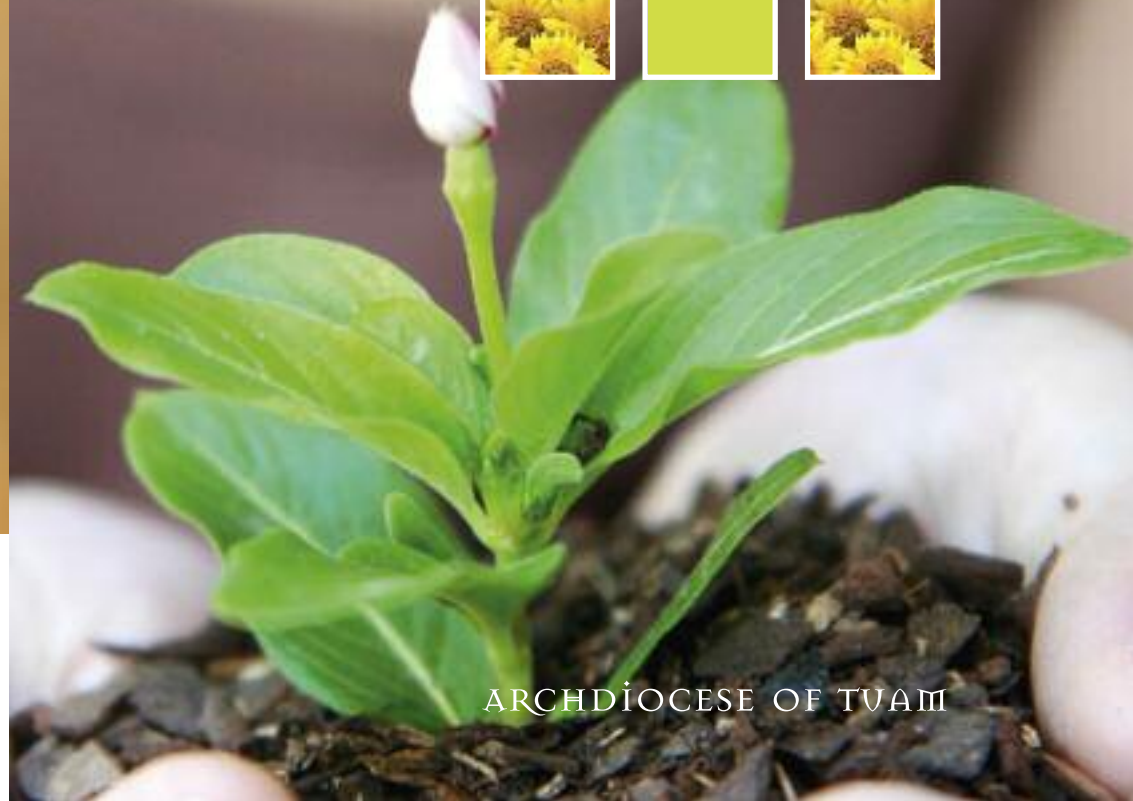
(Mk. 10: 13-16)



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# SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN



ARCHDIOCESE OF TUAM

# Introduction



The purpose of this publication is to highlight some of the progress made in our diocese in the area of the Safeguarding of Children in recent years.

I have apologized in the past on behalf of the Church for our failures in this area. I sincerely and humbly apologize once again now. But for any act of contrition to ring true it must be accompanied by a sincere determination that the wrong done or the hurt caused will not happen again.

It is through developing, strengthening and constantly improving the church's safeguarding measures that we will ensure that all children placed in our care will flourish in a safe and secure environment.

In 2004, a Diocesan Safeguarding Committee was established to ensure the

well being and safety of all children involved in church activities in our diocese. Since then much has been achieved:

Despite the procedures now in place we must be careful to avoid any complacency. Our goal is clear - to make the Catholic Church the safest environment possible for every child or young person.

We owe a great debt of gratitude to the Diocesan Safeguarding Committee for their work in this area.

Our young people deserve the best and the Church must be to the forefront in safeguarding their welfare.

Our children deserve nothing less.

+ Michael Neary  
Archbishop of Tuam  
February 2011

**The following is a summary of some of the developments made in the area of Safeguarding Children:**

## At Diocesan Level:

- The Tuam Diocesan Safeguarding Children Committee was established by Archbishop Neary in January 2004. It is chaired by Ms Maureen Walsh and its membership consists of Ms Mary Trench, Mr Joe Staunton, Ms Noreen Sadler, Mgrs John O Boyle and Fr Tod Nolan (Coordinator of Training).
- The role of the Safeguarding Children Committee is to ensure the well being and safety of all children involved in church activity through the establishment of a robust Safeguarding

strategy for the Archdiocese.

- In July 2004 the Diocesan Safeguarding Children Committee developed a Child Protection Policy for the 55 parishes of the Archdiocese.
- In spring 2010 the 'Archdiocese of Tuam – Safeguarding Children Policy' was launched. This Safeguarding Children Policy is fully compliant with civil legislation and church guidelines.
- The Safeguarding Children Policy is readily available in local parish offices and can be viewed on the diocesan website [www.tuamarchdiocese.org](http://www.tuamarchdiocese.org).
- The Policy applies to all church personnel, paid or voluntary, who work with children and young people

and also to the children/young people in their care.

## Training

- In 2005 a series of two hour Safeguarding Children training and awareness raising meetings for all church personnel who have regular contact with children were held across the diocese.
- In the spring of 2010, over 500 people attended the launch of the Safeguarding Children Policy at eight different venues.
- 'Keeping Safe' is the HSE accredited national child protection training programme. The Diocese has three qualified Keeping Safe trainers who provide fully accredited training to church personnel. All Parish Safeguarding Representatives and all priests ministering in the Archdiocese have participated in the accredited nine-hour Keeping Safe Training Programme.

## In Parishes

- Each parish nominates at least one person to act as local Parish Safeguarding Representative. The diocese has 66 fully trained Parish Safeguarding Representatives in place.
- This person ensures that all parish activities are carried out in such a manner as to ensure the safety and well being of the children involved.
- The Diocesan Safeguarding Children Policy requires that a Parish Safeguarding Audit takes place every two years. The most recent audit was carried out in November 2010.

## Vetting

- All priests ministering in the Archdiocese and all Parish Safeguarding Representatives have received Garda vetting.



## Publications

- A Safeguarding Children Information leaflet to accompany the Safeguarding Children Policy is widely available in churches throughout the diocese.
- A copy of the Diocesan Safeguarding Children Policy Statement together with relevant contact details has been posted in all churches and church property throughout the diocese.

## Safeguarding Designated Persons

- The Archdiocese has appointed two Designated Persons to whom all safeguarding concerns, suspicions, disclosures or allegations must be referred.
- The Designated Persons for the Archdiocese are:  
  
Ms Mary Trench (087 9315823)  
Mgrs John O Boyle (093 52284)
- The role of the Designated Person includes informing the HSE and the Gardaí of all allegations received.