



## Open Letter to all Church Staff and Volunteers



*The Archdiocese of Dublin is committed to ensuring that all people who are employed or are volunteers within the Archdiocese act according to the highest standards in all aspects of their roles and responsibilities. Children form an integral part of the Christian Community. So also do staff members, agency volunteers and parish voluntary lay faithful (e.g. Ministers of the Eucharist, Parish Council Members, Church Readers, Sacristans and Parish Child Protection Representatives).*

*The Archdiocese of Dublin supports the principle that Church personnel who have contact with children and vulnerable adults should undergo Garda Vetting. Every role potentially involves contact with children and/or vulnerable adults, and irrespective of the degree of such contact, the Diocese requires all who are employed or who engage in volunteer ministry or works of service for the Christian community to undergo Garda Vetting as an expression of our common commitment to safeguarding children and vulnerable adults.<sup>1</sup>*

The issue of Child Safeguarding is one we all take seriously. Compliance with Diocesan Guidelines is compulsory for everyone involved in the parish church in Halston Street. Likewise, compliance with the Guidelines of the Capuchin Franciscan Order is compulsory for everyone involved in the Friary church in Church Street.

All our staff and volunteers in both churches are important to us. Without every one of you, we would not be able to offer our congregations the welcome and cordial atmosphere that is so often commented on. One of the most frequent comments we hear from visitors to both Church Street and Halston Street is that we have beautiful churches which were obviously loved by all those who cared for them, and many of the comments also go on to speak of the warm welcome afforded all who enter the church.

None of this is possible without you – all our flower arrangers, cleaners, collectors, choir members, musicians, Parish Pastoral Councils members, Secular Franciscan Order members, committee members for all the parish groups, Ministers of Word, Welcome and Eucharistic, plus our household and office staff. The loss of any volunteer or staff member through non compliance would be very sad for the church and a great loss to the people who come to our churches, therefore we ask you to complete the attached Garda Vetting Form and present for Child Safeguarding training.

The National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church is currently conducting audits in dioceses throughout the country. As a result, both Halston Street and Church Street will be audited in the coming months. Our hope is that we will not be found wanting in any aspect of protecting our children and all those who come in worship in either church.

We will be offering a new Child Safeguarding Course in the coming months for those who could not attend the course in May 2013, but before that, we require that all staff and volunteers re-apply for Garda Vetting.

All the information on the completed forms is held in the strictest confidence by the Parish Priest and/or Guardian.

Yours in Christ and St. Francis

Fr. Bryan Shortall ofm cap., Guardian and Parish Priest

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from <http://csp.dublindiocese.ie/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/Policy-and-Procedures-for-Garda-Vetting1.pdf>