



## Safeguarding at the Scottish Catholic Interdiocesan Tribunal

### Notes for Spouses and Witnesses (February 2021)

#### Our Commitment to Safeguarding

All components of the Catholic Church in Scotland, especially those in positions of leadership and responsibility, value the lives, wholeness, safety and well-being of each individual person within God's purpose for everyone.

We seek to uphold the highest safeguarding standards in our relationships with people of all ages who are involved in whatever capacity with the Church and its organisations.

And therefore, as a Church community, we accept that it is the responsibility of all of us - ordained, professed, employed and voluntary members - to work together to protect children and vulnerable adults from abuse or harm.

1. The Tribunal is part of the Catholic Church in Scotland and so conforms to the Policy *In God's Image: Safeguarding in the Catholic Church in Scotland*<sup>1</sup>, as amended from time to time.
2. We take seriously all allegations relating to safeguarding matters raised by spouses or by witnesses.
3. If you are being interviewed as a spouse or as a witness you should be aware that safeguarding concerns **cannot remain confidential**. If you choose to mention them then we will apply the following rules:
  - a. If anything arises in the interview that suggests that someone is currently at risk then it must be reported to the relevant diocesan safeguarding adviser, even if it is not directly related to the Church. This concern must be passed on even if you object. If the person is actively at risk then the necessary steps should be taken to ensure that the relevant statutory authorities are informed to ensure the safety of that individual. This might include contacting the police, social or health services.
  - b. If anything arises in the interview that suggests historical abuse when no-one is currently at risk and the concern relates to the Church (e.g. a priest is accused or the abuse is alleged to have occurred at a Church event) then it must be reported to the relevant diocesan safeguarding adviser. This concern must be passed on even if you object.
  - c. If anything arises in the interview that suggests historical abuse when no-one is currently at risk and the concern does not relate to the Church then our interviewer will offer you the assistance of the diocesan safeguarding adviser. In this case alone, we will only pass on the concerns if you agree.
4. You are free not to mention any incidents you wish to keep confidential, but if another witness raises them we will still need to act as above.
5. You can ask the Tribunal or your Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser if you need more information about the Church's safeguarding policies.

<sup>1</sup> Available online at <https://ingodsimage.bcos.org.uk/>