



Pastoral Response to Victims and Survivors

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

In the spirit of the Gospel and the healing ministry of Jesus, the Diocese of Sale is committed to the care, protection and safety of children and adults at risk.

Sadly, in our history and the history of the Catholic Church, this has not always been so.

On behalf of the previous Bishops and personally as the current Bishop of the Diocese of Sale, I wish to express my heartfelt regret for the hurt and distress caused to you, and your families, by members of clergy, religious, teachers or other adults who were in our Diocese who caused you harm and betrayed your trust.

I unreservedly apologise for the suffering caused and am committed to providing you with the care and support appropriate for you on your journey towards healing. I acknowledge that each person's story is unique and each path to healing is different. There is no one perfect 'one size fits all' healing response from the Church. In addition to the psychological trauma and physical manifestations of abuse, I recognise that there is a deep fracture of your spiritual bonds with the Church. For this also I am truly sorry.

The Catholic Diocese of Sale is committed to providing a holistic approach to healing the deep wounds of trauma inflicted by those in whom you trusted.

I am committed to addressing the failings of the past. I am reminded by the Holy Father, Pope Francis in the Letter to the People of God (2018) where he stated:

“The pain of the victims and their families is also our pain, and so it is urgent that we once more reaffirm our commitment to ensure the protection of minors and of vulnerable adults”

We renew our commitment to the policies and practices that have been established and enacted in all our Parishes and ministries.

Our pastoral priority must be to respond to those stories which must be heard, investigated and responded to by the example of Christ Jesus.




The Diocese has and continues to take significant steps in ensuring a safe environment for children and adults at risk (vulnerable adults) which include:

- Safe People – Safeguarding and awareness training for all those in ministry and volunteers. We have rolled out both face to face and online training. We are also developing material for children to learn ‘protective behaviours’.
- Safe Practices – Policies, Codes of Conduct, Statements of Commitment at both Diocese and Parish level to ensure sound practices in safeguarding. This includes practices in all church ministry settings including reporting to authorities of any behaviour of concern.
- Safe Places – Risk assessments in all aspects of ministry.
- Safe Data – Ensuring robust data management and management of records.

The Diocesan Professional Standards Office welcomes your [contact](#) if you wish to seek ways in which we can support and guide you in understanding what paths may be open in addressing your personal concerns of sexual abuse in the Catholic Diocese of Sale.

Be assured that you have my continued pastoral and prayerful support.

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With every peace,
Bishop Greg Bennet

29th October 2021