

“Lord Jesus, Hear our voices as we pray for your care and protection. Strengthen and guide us as we strive to make our Catholic communities a safe place for all. Give us the wisdom and courage to listen with open hearts, see with open eyes, and speak out to ensure children and adults are safe, loved, respected, and cared for. We also pray for those who have been harmed. Give them the courage to seek the truth and to heal. Amen “

This Issue :

From the Director

Meet Blessy

Cath New—
NCSS
National Audit
Outcomes

ACSL Live
Learning

Safeguarding
Round Table
Event



Welcome to the first newsletter for 2025!

The Safeguarding Program Office welcomes new staff and a fresh start to the year with lots of exciting initiatives ahead.

We wish to welcome Blessy Varughese into the Safeguarding Administration role. We are very happy to have her onboard. She has eased into the role quickly and it has been a pleasure to see Blessy take on this new role with great professionalism and enthusiasm—welcome Blessy!

The Safeguarding Program Office Team is fully back on board with Thomas Law—Safeguarding Coordinator, Anthony Coyte—Projects Officer and Blessy Varughese—Administration Officer. The Archdiocese Safeguarding Program Office is in great hands.

FYI—The **Safeguarding Handbook is redundant** and has been replaced by the **Safeguarding Policy and Guidelines**. Please refer to the [Safeguarding Program Website](#) to view the most up to date Safeguarding information.

Please check out the remainder of the newsletter for what is coming up— great opportunities to continue to grow and flourish in the safeguarding space. Thank you and God Bless. *Barb Blayney*

“I can do all things through him who strengthens me.”

Welcome Blessy!

Hi, I'm Blessy, the Administration Officer for the Safeguarding Program. I joined the team in January after relocating from Qatar, and it's been an exciting journey so far.

Moving to Australia was a big decision, but I'm happy to say that the people I've met and the beauty of this place have made it all worthwhile. I absolutely love the natural beauty here, from the stunning beaches and lush greenery to the vast, open landscapes—there's always something new to discover.

I'm thrilled and thankful for this opportunity and look forward to contributing my skills and experience in this new environment.



PERTH CATHOLIC ARCHDIOCESE PASSES SAFEGUARDING AUDIT WITH FLYING COLOURS

Cath News

SAFEGUARDING ([HTTPS://CATHNEWS.COM/CATEGORY/SAFEGUARDING/](https://cathnews.com/category/safeguarding/))

A comprehensive safeguarding audit led by Australian Catholic Safeguarding Ltd has found the Perth Archdiocese has implemented 90 per cent of National Catholic Safeguarding Standards indicators relevant to their operations.

The audit assessed whether appropriate and proactive strategies are in place to protect children and adults at risk from harm in the archdiocese.

The audit was conducted by ACSL in partnership with Perth-based audit firm Australian Audit in late 2024.

Audit processes included a desktop review of policies, site visits to 25 per cent of parishes and a variety of ministries spread across the Archdiocese, plus interviews with 130 personnel.

Commenting on the release of the audit report, ACSL chief executive Ursula Stephens noted that the archdiocese is committed to providing persistent and strong leadership and solid role modelling of appropriate safeguarding practices.

“The central safeguarding office is efficient and doing great work investing in safeguarding resources,” Dr Stephens said.

“This is a commendable achievement for a geographically dispersed archdiocese encompassing metropolitan and remote communities, from Perth to Kalgoorlie.

“A particular strength of the archdiocese is that there are excellent age-appropriate strategies used to engage children, seek their views about what makes them feel safe, and enable them to participate in decisions that affect them.

“Hearing the voice of children and young people is essential to good safeguarding practice, and the archdiocese will now also be focusing on ensuring adults at risk in church communities are similarly heard and consulted in safeguarding processes.”

Dr Stephens said the audit found that 10 per cent of NCSS indicators are still in the initial stages of implementation.

“There was one high-priority audit outcome regarding professional supervision for clergy. While mentoring programs, professional/pastoral supervision, professional development and regular appraisals are available, not all clergy and religious in ministry are availing themselves of these opportunities on a more regular basis,” she said.

“The archdiocese foresaw this issue after completing their initial self-assessment via the NCSS Portal and has already commenced a mediation plan to offer further resources and support in this area.”

The [full audit report](#) for the Archdiocese of Perth is available on both [ACSL's website](#) and the [Archdiocese of Perth's website](#).



Perth Archbishop Timothy Costelloe SDB, with senior leaders and safeguarding personnel, accepts the audit certificate from ACSL audit team member Kendra Bosworth (Perth Archdiocese)

ACSL SAFEGUARDING LIVE LEARNING

- **An Introduction to Safeguarding**

This is a FREE short course providing awareness and foundational skills for safeguarding children and adults at risk.

Click [HERE](#) to find out more.

- **Cultural Diversity and Child Sexual Abuse—Webinar**
11 April 1.30pm—2.45pm AEST

Dr Poja Sawrikar is an independent research consultant specialising in gender and race equity. She has over 20 years of experience as an academic working at the Department of Psychology at The University of Sydney (2000-2005), Social Policy Research Centre at the University of New South Wales (2005-2014), and School of Human Services and Social Work at Griffith University (2010-2020).

This session will provide learners with tools and strategies for engaging with culturally diverse victims/survivors in an ethical and sensitive way.

Click [HERE](#) to find out more.

- **Vulnerability—A Dynamic Concept**
1 May 11am– 12pm AEST

Fr Justin Glyn SJ is a Catholic priest, Jesuit and academic in the area of law and theology. He obtained his Ph.D in law at University of Auckland in 2008 (administrative and international law) and a Licentiate in Canon Law/ Master of Canon Law at University of St Paul/University of Ottawa in 2018.

Click [HERE](#) to find out more.

INVITATION TO ALL SGOS

The Safeguarding Program Office kindly invite you to the inaugural **Safeguarding Round Table** event.

We invite you to join us in a collaborative reflective practice on Safeguarding. Together we'll explore new ideas, address emerging issues, examine our practices and assumptions, fostering shared learning.

We would love the opportunity to ~ share ideas ~ connect ~ network ~ inspire ~ meet new friends ~ empower!

Please click here to [REGISTER YOUR INTEREST](#).

The Safeguarding Round Table
ALL SGOS WELCOME

**Thursday
3 April 2025
10 am - 11.30 am**

**40A Mary Street, Highgate
(Access free parking via Harold St)**

REGISTER YOUR INTEREST

Morning Tea Provided

SHARE IDEAS
CONNECT
NETWORK

INSPIRE
MEET NEW FRIENDS
EMPOWER

Join us in a collaborative reflective practice on Safeguarding. Together we'll explore new ideas, address emerging issues, examine our practices and assumptions, fostering shared learning.

Catholic Archdiocese of Perth | Safeguarding Office | 29 Victoria Square, Perth, WA 6000
Phone: 08 9221 7762 | Email: safeguarding@perthcatholic.org.au