



# TIKANGA HAUMARU

SAFEGUARDING PANUI  
AUTUMN 2026

## Dignity – At the Heart of a Safer Church



### WELCOME

Welcome to our Autumn Safeguarding Newsletter. This edition focuses on the dignity of every human person – a core truth of our Catholic faith and the foundation of all safeguarding work.

Thank you for your ongoing commitment to creating safe, welcoming, and respectful parish environments.

### DIGNITY – THE FOUNDATION OF A SAFE CATHOLIC CHURCH

The Catholic tradition teaches that each person is created in the image and likeness of God. This belief shapes all safeguarding practice. When dignity is upheld, people feel safe, valued, and able to participate fully in parish life.

Honouring dignity involves respectful communication, protecting privacy, maintaining boundaries, and welcoming diversity. A simple guiding question is: “Does this action recognise the inherent worth of the person before me?”

### DIGNITY IN ACTION

Here are some ways we can look after Someone's Dignity.

**A Welcoming Space**

A parent is anxious about leaving their child at a parish programme. Respond with warmth, explain safety processes clearly, and invite questions. This honours their protective role and builds trust.

**Responding to Distress**

If a parishioner is upset, offer a private, visible space, listen without judgement, and support them gently. This promotes emotional and spiritual safety.

**Supporting Young Children well**

Address behavioural issues privately and calmly, focusing on actions rather than character. This protects their self-worth while maintaining safety.

**Honoring Cultural Dignity**

Ask families how the parish can support their cultural practices, especially during sensitive times like funerals. This strengthens inclusion and respect.



# WHEN SOMETHING IS NOT RIGHT?

## WHAT TO DO IF SOMETHING IS NOT RIGHT IN A PARISH

*A clear step-by-step guide for concerns involving anyone in parish life*

### 1. Notice Something Isn't Right

*If you witness or experience behaviour that seems unsafe, harmful, inappropriate, a safeguarding concern, or contrary to parish expectations or policies, trust your instincts and act.*

### 2. Make a Brief Record

*Write down key information: what happened, when, where, who was involved or affected, and any witnesses. A full detailed statement is not needed at this stage.*

### 3. Report the Concern

*Report to any of the following: Parish Safeguarding Coordinator, Parish Priest, Diocesan Safeguarding Office, or NOPS (Phone: 0800 114 622 or 03 365 1993, Email: [prof.standards@nzcbc.org.nz](mailto:prof.standards@nzcbc.org.nz)). If someone is in immediate danger, contact Police. You may report to Police at any time.*

### 4. Initial Check (Assessment)

*The diocesan office or NOPS will review the concern, decide the appropriate process, and confirm whether local parish handling, diocesan investigation, or escalation is required.*

### 5. Investigation (if required)

*If needed, an independent or trained investigator is appointed. You may bring a support person. Relevant individuals may be interviewed, and records reviewed. If Police are involved, the Church process pauses until they finish.*

### 6. Findings and Assessment

*A report is produced and reviewed by the appropriate diocesan or national committee, which determines whether the concern is upheld on the balance of probabilities.*

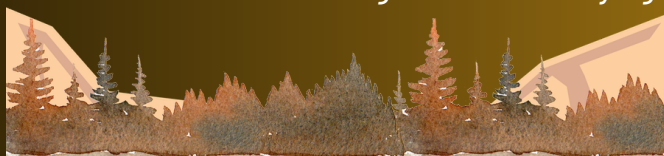
### 7. Actions and Resolution

*If upheld, the parish, diocese, or relevant Church authority will communicate the decision, discuss next steps, and put in place necessary actions such as behaviour agreements, supervision, pastoral care, safeguarding measures, or disciplinary actions.*

### 8. Review Option

*If you are not satisfied with the investigation or decision, you may request a review of the process.*

*This year I have had reason to be involved in Four Safeguarding Challenges in Parish communities. Whilst it is of some concern that parishes are having to deal these situations. On the other hand it is showing that people are now becoming more open to 'saying something if it something is not right'. The hard work of the Parish Contacts and leadership teams have demonstrated Standard One 'Communicating the Church's Safeguarding Message and Standard Three 'Complaints and concerns' of the Safeguarding Standards which in turn has contributed to this. Thank you to everyone now and in the future for coming forward and saying something.*



# Police vetting changes

By now everyone should have received the information around police vetting changes. Some also would have sadly received an email from me returning the documentation as the volunteer no longer fits the criteria set by the police vetting service, not us at the Diocese.

## Parish Police Vetting & Safety Check Update (2026 Guidance)

### What Parishes Need to Know

The Police Vetting Service (PVS) has tightened its eligibility criteria for 2026. Parishes are encouraged to assess each role individually to determine whether a Police Vet, Ministry of Justice (MoJ) Criminal Record Check, or standard safety check only is required.

#### 1. When a Police Vet Is Required

A Police Vet is appropriate when a role directly involves:

- Care or supervision of children/young people
- Education or formation of children/young people
- Physical care of vulnerable adults (e.g., feeding, hygiene, medication)

Examples:

Altar server trainers • Sacramental programme leaders • Children's Liturgy • Chaperones • Youth ministers • Crèche helpers • Prison ministry

#### 2. When a Police Vet Is Not Required

PVS has confirmed that the following do not meet vetting criteria:

- General spiritual or pastoral ministry
- Transporting adults
- Emotional/mental support unless performed in a professional, registered capacity

Examples:

Ministers of Communion to the Sick • Pastoral visitors • Parish secretaries/office staff • Ministers of Word/Eucharist

#### 3. When an MoJ Check May Be Appropriate

Use an MoJ Criminal Record Check (completed by the parish) when the role involves:

- Access to finances or sensitive information
- Significant trust or authority
- Solo work or home visits to vulnerable adults

Examples:

Parish secretaries • Money counters • Finance or Pastoral Council members • Board members • Pastoral visitors

#### 4. Safety Check Requirements for All Roles

Every volunteer or staff member must complete:

- Identity verification (sighting original photo ID in person)
  - Referee checks
  - Parishioners: meet + one non-family referee
  - New parishioners: meet + contact previous parish + referee
- Pairing with an experienced volunteer until checks are completed

#### 5. Police Vet Documentation (If Applicable)

- Use accurate job titles
- Provide a brief, criteria-linked description of duties

#### 6. Parish Compliance Checklist

- ✓ Role assessed correctly
- ✓ ID verified
- ✓ Referee checks completed
- ✓ Police Vet or MoJ check done (if required)
- ✓ Safety Check Certificate issued
- ✓ Documents stored according to privacy/retention rules

#### 7. Ministry of Justice (MOJ) Checking

You will find a summary of the MOJ information attached to the email. Please have a read of this to find out more information.



# WORKSHOPS 2026

2026 workshops have begun and there has been a good turnout of volunteers so far. Thank you Sacred Heart Parish, Dargavile and St Dominics Parish, Blockhouse Bay for hosting these. Your manaakitanga has not gone unnoticed. Please see the list below for upcoming workshops



## SAFEGUARDING WORKSHOPS



### MARCH

- Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> March, 7.00pm. Holy Cross Parish, 21 Carruth Road, Papatoetoe.
- Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> March, 7.00pm. Safeguarding ONLINE workshop.

### APRIL

- Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> April, 7.00pm. Safeguarding ONLINE workshop.

### MAY

- Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> May, 11.15pm. St Benedict Parish, (Filipino Community) 1 St Benedicts Street, Newton.
- Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> May, 7.00pm. Safeguarding ONLINE workshop.

### JUNE

- Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> June, 7.00pm. St Pauls Parish, 162 Waimumu Road, Massey.
- NO ONLINE WORKSHOP JUNE

### JULY

- Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> July 7.00pm. Safeguarding ONLINE workshop.

### AUGUST

- Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> August, 7.00pm. St Patrick and St Joseph Cathedral, 43 Wyndham Street, City.
- Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> August 7.00pm. Safeguarding ONLINE workshop.

### SEPTEMBER

- Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> September, 7.00pm: Safeguarding ONLINE workshop.

### OCTOBER

- Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> October, 7.00pm. Maria Assumpta Parish, 198 Beach Haven Road, Beach Haven..
- Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> October, 7.00pm. Safeguarding ONLINE workshop.

### NOVEMBER

- Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> November, 7.00pm: Safeguarding ONLINE workshop.

**ONLINE WORKSHOPS FILL UP FAST AND REGISTRATIONS MAY CLOSE BEFORE THE DATE OF WORKSHOP.**

**PLEASE REGISTER EARLY BY EMAILING LISA-MAY GRAY, SAFEGUARDING COORDINATOR  
LISAM@CDA.ORG.NZ**

**THANK YOU EVERYONE FOR CONTRIBUTING TO A SAFE CHURCH FOR EVERYONE EVERY DAY.**



# Tira Tūhāhā

## Prison Chaplaincy Aotearoa

*TTPCA Vision: Every prisoner has the opportunity to have their spiritual and religious life enriched*

*TTPCA Mission: Being the hope that transforms lives.*

***“God is the light that illuminates the darkness (even if it does not dissolve it), and a spark of divine light is within each of us.” (Pope Francis)***

Kia Ora/Greetings. Ko Maria tōku ingoa.

I am a Catholic Chaplain, mandated by the Catholic Diocese of Auckland to minister to and support Men/Tāne at Northland Region Corrections Facility (NRCF) located near Kaikohe. Together with other Tira Tūhāhā Prison Chaplaincy Aotearoa (TTPCA) chaplains, we strive to respect, support and offer God's aroha and compassion to every Tāne:

He aha te mea nui o te ao? He tāngata! He tāngata! He tāngata!

What is the most important thing in the world? It is people! It is people! It is people!

Aroha mai, aroha atu. Love received; love returned.

Ngā Manaakitanga,  
Chaplain Maria

How can you get involved/support our mahi?

Prayer: anyone and everyone can support and be present with those imprisoned through prayers.

For those Northland Parishes

Becoming a Volunteer: There are opportunities for those who can offer time and Christian aroha to become a Volunteer at NRCF: whether it is a once a month presence at Sunday's Worship or leading a weekly Bible Studies programmes – we would love to welcome Catholic Volunteers to support and offer their gifts within the wire.

Please contact me for further details.

Maria Autet, Prison Chaplain at NRCF  
Catholic Diocese of Auckland  
Ph 09 401 5818 or 021 230 4059  
Email: [maria.autet@prisonchaplaincy.org.nz](mailto:maria.autet@prisonchaplaincy.org.nz)  
<https://www.prisonchaplaincy.org.nz>







# *A Prayer for Dignity*

Loving God,  
Hold close all whose dignity has been wounded—  
prisoners seeking hope,  
communities in war-torn places longing for peace,  
and survivors of abuse rebuilding their lives with courage.

Let your light remind them of their immeasurable worth.  
Wrap them in protection, restore their strength,  
and surround them with people who bring safety, justice, and compassion.

Teach us to honour the dignity in every person  
and to be instruments of healing in a hurting world.

Amen.

