

CONGREGATION OF JESUS MARY JOSEPH



Congregational Policy for Safeguarding Minors and Vulnerable Adults



Care & Dignity

2024



The letter C: Stands for care.

The Caring hand: Reminds us of our commitment toward the children and persons in vulnerable situations.

The Letter D: Stands for dignity.

Human character with raised hands: Represents a liberated human person created in the image and likeness of God. We recognise this inherent dignity of the person irrespective of their circumstances.

The letters JMJ: Represent all the members of the Congregation of Jesus Mary Joseph and our associates.

The colours: Represent care, dignity and positivity.

Pink represents care.

Greyish blue represents dignity.

Orange represents positivity.

Care & Dignity

Congregation of Jesus Mary Joseph

Congregational Policy for Safeguarding Minors and Vulnerable Adults

2024

Congregational Policy for Safeguarding Minors and Vulnerable
Adults

Copyright © 2024 by Congregation of Jesus Mary Joseph

Prepared by Cong. of JMJ Safeguarding Commission

Published by:

Congregation of Jesus Mary Joseph

Via Tevere 5D, Roma, Italy

00198.

cjmjroma@gmail.com ; www.Congregationjmj.org

No part of this book should be reproduced or transmitted in any form or means like electronic, print or recording without the prior written permission from the publishers.

Contents

Foreword.....	v
Message.....	vii
Preface.....	xi
1. Introduction.....	1
2. The Commitment of the Congregation	2
3. Safeguarding Commission.....	4
3.1 The Members of the Commission	4
3.2 Criteria for the Selection of the Members for Safeguarding Commission.....	5
3.3 Commitment of Congregational Safeguarding Commission	5
4. Guiding Principles	7
4.1 Gospel and the Documents of the Church.....	7
4.2 The Catholic Social Teachings of the Church	8
4.3 The International Law	9
5. Objectives	10
6. Scope of the Policy	11
7. Clarification of terms	12
8. Guidelines for Safeguarding	21
8.1 Creating and Maintaining a Safe Environment.....	21
8.2 Safe Recruitment.....	24
8.3 Ongoing Formation.....	26

8.4 Training in Safeguarding	28
8.5 Working with Communities in Communicating Safeguarding Message	29
8.6 Care and Support to the Alleged Victims, their Families, and the Complainant	31
8.7 Care and Management of the Accused	32
8.8 Dealing with Suspicions, Concerns, Knowledge, and Allegations	33
8.9 Accountability and Governance.....	35
8.10 Assuring Compliance with the Standards	36
9. Code of Conduct	37
10. Procedural Rules for Reporting the Abuse and Dealing with Allegations	41
10.1 Receiving an Allegation.....	41
10.2 Reporting.....	42
10.3 Dealing with the Allegation	44
11. Consequences for Non-Compliance to the Code of Conduct.....	48
12. Review.....	49
13. Conclusion.....	50
Abbreviations	51
Annexure - I	52
Annexure - II.....	55
Annexure - III	57

Annexure - IV	61
Annexure - V.....	64
References.....	69

Foreword

Dear Sisters and Friends,

In exploring our chapter theme of “Synodal Solidarity Towards Universal Fraternity”, we recognize the essential role of our Congregational Safeguarding Policy which not only upholds the dignity and safety of every individual within our communities but also reflects our commitment to fostering an inclusive environment for all. By promoting mutual respect and accountability, we embody the principles of solidarity and fraternity, ensuring that all voices are heard and valued. Together, these elements reinforce our mission to build a compassionate and united society of love. As we strive to embody the values of our faith and mission, it is essential that we also uphold the highest standards of safety and care for everyone, particularly the most vulnerable among us. This safeguarding policy booklet is a vital resource that reflects our commitment to creating a safe environment where every person can flourish.

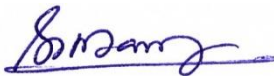
I greatly appreciate the collective efforts of Sr. Joseph Mary Mrudu Ravali Vadlamudi and Sr. Denin David Chiriyankandath and the team in preparing the booklet with the essential guidelines, procedures and relevant safeguarding measures

outlined in it. Your awareness and adherence to these policies are vital in ensuring that we uphold the values of trust, dignity and care.

I gratefully acknowledge the approval of this document by Rev. Sr. Innamma Yeruva and the Council on 12 April 2024, reflecting their confidence in its content and purpose. This recognition underscores our commitment to engage deeply with the contents of this booklet, familiarize ourselves with the guidelines, reflect on their significance, and actively participate in our ongoing efforts to ensure a safe environment for all. Together, let us reaffirm our dedication to safeguarding the dignity of every person we serve.

Thank you for your commitment to this important mission.

In unity and hope,



Sr. Mary Karickakunnel JMJ

Superior General

Message

Dear sisters,

I am happy to present to you the document on Congregational Policy for Safeguarding Minors and Vulnerable Adults, the first of its kind and a pioneering venture of our Congregation.

A Safeguarding Policy is of utmost importance in any organisation, institution, or community as it plays a crucial role in ensuring the well-being and protection of children, elderly, persons with disabilities and adults in vulnerable situations. The Congregational Safeguarding Policy serves as a comprehensive framework that outlines the responsibilities, procedures, and measures to prevent and respond to any form of abuse, neglect or harm.

The Declaration of the Church “*Dignitas Infinita*” (DI) declares, “Every human person possesses an infinite dignity, inalienably grounded in his or her very being” (Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith [DDF], 2024, art.1). By the implementation of this policy, we demonstrate “our commitment to the weak and those less endowed with power, insisting on the primacy of human person and the defence of his or her dignity” (DDF, 2024, art.1), fostering an environment of safety and trust.

The Safeguarding Policy is a beautiful expression of a centuries-long commitment of our Congregation, commissioned by our Founder Rev. Fr. Mathias Wolff SJ to give education to the young, administer mercy and to educate the poor in all the places where we are sent (Aarnink & van Laarhoven, 1997, p. 14). This policy is placed in the context of our mission and tradition and within the framework of Catholic Social Teachings ensuring compliance with relevant ecclesiastical and national laws. This policy is to be a living, relevant document to be upheld by the sisters, communities, ministries, and all persons associated with the Congregation, to live by the deeper aspiration of this policy committing ourselves to make our environments free from hurt, harm and trauma; instead to create spaces of welcome, safety and healing for all. This, therefore, is not a theoretical document but a commitment to practice of the highest standards. It specifically recognizes the power imbalances that can exist due to the nature of our living together and our ministry service, and how these can create opportunities for abuse to arise.

This policy provides a well- structured approach to handling concerns and complaints, offering a consistent and fair process for investigations and disciplinary actions if necessary. We encourage the Province/Regional leadership teams to take a dedicated and proactive approach in developing and

implementing the clearly laid out policies and protocols for identifying, reporting, and addressing instances of abuse or harm. We also recommend prompt and appropriate transparency and accountability, fostering a culture of trust and respect. It is mandatory to have a careful selection and screening providing adequate initial and ongoing formation, training and education in creating safe environment, effective communication, allocation of adequate resources. It is recommended to initiate mechanisms for responding to victims and the offenders, monitoring and periodic evaluation, collaboration and partnerships etc. to enhance the overall quality of the programs and services. By prioritising Safeguarding, we can ultimately ensure the protection of the rights and dignity of individuals, endorsing a secure and nurturing environment for all members of the community.

I avail this opportunity together with the General Council to heartily thank Sr. Joseph Mary Mrudu Ravali Vadlamudi and Sr. Denin David Chiriyankandath for their painstaking process to initiate and develop a Congregational Safeguarding Policy drawing insights from their expertise, experience of the experts and the Congregational leadership team. We acknowledge their committed work and extend our deepest gratitude for the time and energy spent on this important work.

The Second Congregational Chapter looks forward to setting a paradigm shift of love and care for all with a clear vision of creating a just world where no child, woman or person is exploited or left behind, unquestionably impels us to take up Safeguarding seriously and to work together in making it a concrete reality. May our Holy Patrons lead us and accompany us to honour, respect and protect every child of God.

Sr. Innamma Yeruva

Superior General: 2018 - 2024

Rome, 12 April 2024

Preface

The Congregation of Jesus Mary Joseph is a Catholic Religious Women's Congregation founded by Rev. Fr. Mathias Wolff SJ with the Charism, "An Ever-Adaptable Apostolic Availability" (Congregation of Jesus Mary Joseph [JMJ], 2018) in the service of God's Kingdom with a preferential option for the poor and the underprivileged. The JMJ sisters are at the service of humanity through the ministries of Education, Health Care, Social Work, Pastoral Care, and Evangelization, fostering the integral development and liberation of human persons. The Safeguarding of minors and vulnerable adults is an integral part of the Congregation's vision and mission.

The Kingdom of God is at the heart of Jesus' teaching. Jesus places the child at the centre and sets the criteria on to whom the Kingdom belongs (Matthew 18: 1-5, New Revised Standard Version, 1988). Jesus declares, "Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the Kingdom of God belongs" (Mark 10:13-16). These vulnerable ones need to be protected and safeguarded.

For a very long time, the issue of sexual abuse and other forms of abuse were considered too complex to deal with especially in the case of minors. It is a fact that there are many vulnerable

adults due to physical challenges and cognitive disabilities. There is yet another group of people whose vulnerability cannot be judged concerning any of the above factors but are still vulnerable in particular situations. The *Motu Proprio of Pope Francis, Vos Estis Lux Mundi* (VELM) defines a vulnerable person as, “Any person in a state of infirmity, physical or mental deficiency, or deprived of personal liberty which, in fact, even occasionally, limits their ability to understand or to want or otherwise resist the offence” (Pope Francis, 2023, art. 1, para. 2b). The victims of abuse especially sexual abuse experience adverse effects not only psychologically, physically, and socially but also spiritually. Abuse of every form inflicts deep wounds on the spiritual realm of the person creating a void in life. It is worse when the perpetrator is the one who is a trusted member of the Church.

The Congregation of Jesus Mary Joseph, dedicated to the work of liberation caters to various needs of the minors and the vulnerable adults. We have a two-fold responsibility to ensure safety and to promote the culture of care and dignity of every person we minister.

The Congregation is guided by its Constitutions, the Catholic Social Teachings (CST), and recognizes the dignity and rights of the children as stated by articles 3 and 19 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Children (UNCRC).

The Congregational Safeguarding Commission (CSC) envisions to recognise the inherent dignity of the human person and care for those in vulnerable situations. The mission of the safeguarding commission is to promote the culture of care and dignity within the Congregation and those of our associates. This commitment shapes the Safeguarding Policy of the Congregation of JMJ.

Sr. Joseph Mary Mrudu Ravali JMJ
Safeguarding Coordinator
Congregational Safeguarding Commission

1. Introduction

At the introductory part of *Vos Estis Lux Mundi* (2023), Pope Francis states that the crimes of sexual abuse cause physical, psychological, and spiritual damage to the victims. He urges us to take concrete and effective actions, to prevent abuses from happening again. Thus, we be able to give full credibility to the Gospel by living a life of virtue, integrity, and holiness.

Every person has the right to life and dignity. The Congregation of Jesus Mary Joseph ensures the safety of all minors and vulnerable persons by establishing Safeguarding Policy that would be implemented in all its apostolic activities and within the communities. The guidelines and the standards provide the framework for safeguarding practices.

The Policy expresses the commitment of the Congregation and practical implementation by raising awareness on the seriousness of the abuse of minors and vulnerable persons, responding to the victims and their families, working with communities, safe recruitment, establishing procedures to manage allegations, formation

and training, accountability and continuous assessment. These standards enable us to reach the expected level of performance and remain vigilant in safeguarding children and vulnerable persons. The members of the Congregation, its associates, employees, and volunteers abide by these principles and protect the integrity of the Congregation, the Church, and its mission.

Every member of the Congregation is required to understand, commit to, and sign the document adhering to the Policy throughout their ministry with minors and vulnerable persons in the community.

2. The Commitment of the Congregation

The Congregation of Jesus Mary Joseph is committed to the promotion and safeguarding of human dignity which is an integral part of the Gospel message.

- 2.1. We recognize the dignity of every human person and treating everyone with respect.
- 2.2. We work toward ensuring a safe environment for all minors and vulnerable adults.

- 2.3. We recognize the effect of abuse upon the victims and their families and respond with compassion and justice.
- 2.4. We care for the privacy of those who raise concern or bring allegations, and respond actively.
- 2.5. We abide by the norm of mandatory reporting of child abuse and abuse of vulnerable adults to the appropriate civil and ecclesiastical authorities, and deal with the allegations promptly.
- 2.6. We commit ourselves to the principles of responsibility, compliance, accountability, and transparency.
- 2.7. We collaborate with the Church, the government, the networking agencies, and communities to prevent any kind of abuse of children and vulnerable adults.
- 2.8. We strive to adhere to the safeguarding principles of justice, equity, solidarity, and responsibility.
- 2.9. We ensure regular evaluation of our safeguarding practices.

3. Safeguarding Commission

The CSC is the advisory board to the Congregational leadership team in the matters of Safeguarding. The Superior General of the Congregation is the immediate respondent to the Dicastery of Doctrine of Faith (DDF) and the Dicastery for Institutions of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life (*DIVCSVA*).

3.1 The Members of the Commission

- i) Safeguarding coordinator
- ii) An expert in civil and canon law
- iii) Educational officer
- iv) Social worker
- v) Psychologist
- vi) Medical officer
- vii) Media expert for communication.
- viii) Moral Theologian

Note: It is mandatory to include at least one Catholic layperson.

3.2 Criteria for the Selection of the Members for Safeguarding Commission

Persons who:

- 3.2.1 Are passionate about safeguarding minors and vulnerable persons.
- 3.2.2 Are willing to be trained.
- 3.2.3 Take the oath of confidentiality.
- 3.2.4 Are accountable, transparent, responsible, and cooperative in teamwork.
- 3.2.5 Are free of any records of the violation of human/child rights.
- 3.2.6 Are free of being convicted of an offence.

3.3 Commitment of Congregational Safeguarding Commission

- 3.3.1 Serves as advisory board to the Superior General in the matters of Safeguarding.
- 3.3.2 Ensures that the practices and procedures of the Congregational Safeguarding Policy are implemented in the provinces.
- 3.3.3 Receives and approves each Unit's Safeguarding Policy and its review.

- 3.3.4 Monitors annually, the actions and plans of each Unit, Mission communities, Regions and Provinces of the Congregation about its compliance with these standards.
- 3.3.5 Provides training at the international level.

Details of the person to contact if you are concerned about the welfare and safety of a child in any of the locations of the Congregation of Jesus Mary Joseph

Contact the safeguarding coordinator in the individual Unit of the Congregation. If the contact details are not available, please contact the Congregational Safeguarding Office

Safeguarding Coordinator

Email: jmjsafeguarding@holyfamilyfoundation.org

4. Guiding Principles

In developing the Safeguarding Policy, the Congregation is guided by the principles of the Gospel and the documents of the Church, the Catholic Social Teachings (CST), the Charism and the Constitutions of the Congregation, and International Law.

4.1 Gospel and the Documents of the Church

Jesus teaches his followers the importance of caring for children, saying, “Take care that you do not despise one of these little ones; for, I tell you, in heaven their angels continually see the face of my Father in heaven” (Mt 18:10). The safeguarding of the children is an integral part of the Gospel message of dignity, love, justice and peace from which the Canon law and the documents of the Church and the Congregation’s Constitutions draw its inspiration. In formulating the guidelines for safeguarding the following documents are referred.

4.1.1 The Code of Canon Law (1983) and later amendments in Book VI.

- 4.1.2 The *Motu Proprio Sacramentorum Sanctitatis Tutela* (2001).
- 4.1.3 The *Normae de Gravioribus Delictis* (2021)
- 4.1.4 *Vademecum* (2022)
- 4.1.5 The *Motu Proprio Vos Estis Lux Mundi* (2023)
- 4.1.6 The Constitutions of the Congregation of Jesus Mary Joseph (2018).

4.2 The Catholic Social Teachings of the Church

The foundation of CST is rooted in the inherent dignity of the human person, as created in the image and likeness of God. The policies, actions, and implementations must be directed by these principles.

- 4.2.1 ***Dignity of the human person:*** We believe that human persons have equal dignity irrespective of their ethnicity, religion, gender, and abilities.
- 4.2.2 ***The common good:*** Every person and group should share the good life in the society that promotes social inclusion and the good of all.

- 4.2.3 ***Preferential option for the poor and vulnerable:***
Special care and priority should be for the most powerless and the disadvantaged.
- 4.2.4 ***Solidarity:*** We have the responsibility to care for those in need and fight against the structural causes.
- 4.2.5 ***Participation:*** Every person is gifted by God with freedom and has the right to make decisions that affect them.
- 4.2.6 ***Subsidiarity:*** Every person and group have a role in governance at the local level and the leaders coordinate only when it is necessary.
- 4.2.7 ***Care of Creation:*** We have the responsibility to love and care for other creatures and use all the resources wisely and sustainably.

4.3 The International Law

The safeguarding principles are also guided by the international law of human dignity following:

- 4.3.1 The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), 1948.

4.3.2 The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), 1989.

4.3.3 The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), 2006.

Each unit abides by the state law that promotes human dignity and respects the rights of the children.

5. Objectives

5.1 To serve as the Congregation's guide to develop policies in individual units to safeguard minors and vulnerable adults.

5.2 To inform that the Abuse of Power, Abuse of Conscience, Sexual Abuse and other forms of abuse cause serious damage to the victims which should be condemned at all levels.

5.3 To recognize that children are most vulnerable and are at higher risk of abuse.

5.4 To recognize that any individual could be vulnerable in specific circumstances.

5.5 To recognise that both children and adults with disabilities are at an increased risk of abuse.

- 5.6 To provide templates for the procedures of reporting and investigation.
- 5.7 To implement Canonical procedures as required.
- 5.8 To sanction when the crime is established upon investigation.
- 5.9 To establish the Code of Conduct for community living and in the ministerial settings.

6. Scope of the Policy

The policy applies to:

- 6.1 all the professed members of the Congregation; and those involved in the mission of the Congregation.
- 6.2 those in religious formation.
- 6.3 the associates of the Congregation.

The complete comprehension and adherence to the Policy create in the members the attitude of respect for the rights of the children and vulnerable persons, and take active participation in the promotion of a safe environment within the communities and ministerial settings.

7. Clarification of terms

- 7.1 **Abuse:** Any violation of physical or psychological integrity or trust of another person. Abuse may consist of just one incident or it may happen repeatedly. All forms of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, spiritual abuse, neglect, commercial or other exploitation, and all forms of abuse and harm, resulting in actual or potential harm to the health, survival, development, or dignity of a child or person/s in vulnerable situation/s in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power.
- 7.2 **Accountability:** An obligation or willingness to be responsible for one's actions.
- 7.3 **Accused:** The person on whom the suspicion, concern, knowledge, or allegation of any safeguarding concern is made and/or against whom a report of sexual abuse, sexual harassment or other forms of abuse has been lodged.
- 7.4 **Adult:** A person aged 18 and above.
- 7.5 **Allegation:** Any disclosure/report of an act of

inappropriate behaviour of an abusive nature towards a minor or vulnerable adult.

- 7.6 ***Child/Minor:*** A person under the age of 18 years old regardless of cultural norms; equivalent to a minor who habitually has imperfect use of reason. (Pope Francis, 2023, art. 1, para. 2a)
- 7.7 ***Child Pornography:*** Any representation of a minor, regardless of the means used, involved in explicit sexual activities, whether real or simulated, and any representation of sexual organs of minors for primarily sexual purposes or for profit. (Pope Francis, 2023, art.1, para. 2c)
- 7.8 ***Child Sexual Abuse:*** Sexual activities like fondling, inviting a child to touch or be touched sexually, intercourse, exhibitionism, involving a child in prostitution or pornography, or online child luring by cyber-predators.
- 7.9 ***Civil Authorities:*** Local law enforcement agencies (e.g. a police department, state or central police or a designated child protection agency).
- 7.10 ***Community:*** The members of the local unit of the Congregation. It includes the residents with sisters

who are not members of the Congregation.

- 7.11 ***Complainant***: The person who formally reports abusive behaviour to the designated person. The person may be the victim/survivor or an adult who reports on behalf of a minor/vulnerable person.
- 7.12 ***Compliance***: The act of conforming with the principles of safeguarding.
- 7.13 ***Congregational members***: All the professed sisters of the Congregation of Jesus Mary Joseph and those in formation.
- 7.14 ***Congregational Associates***: Everyone affiliated with the Congregation's mission and is responsible for ensuring safety, care, and nurturance for every person under their care.
- 7.15 ***Delict***: A crime in the Code of Canon Law, an external violation of a law or precept gravely imputable by reason of malice or negligence. The typology of the delict is quite broad: it can include, for example, sexual relations (consensual or non-consensual), physical contact for sexual gratification, exhibitionism, masturbation, the production of pornography, inducement to

prostitution, conversations and/or propositions of a sexual nature, which can also occur through various means of communication (also, the acquisition, possession (even temporary) or distribution of pornographic images of minors for purposes of sexual gratification by whatever means or using whatever technology).

7.16 **Grooming:** It includes a wide variety of behaviour, such as spending large amounts of time with a particular person, (the Target), affording special privileges, or providing gifts, trips and other expressions of special attention to the Target. These behaviours are often designed to establish a special bond of trust and affectionate understanding between the groomer and the Target. These behaviours can also lead the Target to feel indebted to the groomer for all these kindnesses. Once this bond of trust and indebtedness is established, the stage may be set for sexual advances upon the Target or other forms of abuse of the Target. Because the pattern of grooming is made up of observable behaviours, these behaviours need to be

challenged and reported. Grooming, whether intentional or not, is by its very nature seductive behaviour. As well as being a signal of possible future sexual or other abusive activity, grooming in itself is inappropriate.

- 7.17 ***Hierarchicalism:*** An exclusive power culture within the hierarchy that is not inclined to servant leadership and fosters impunity among those in authority. The hierarchicalism is manifested in its elitism, profound lack of accountability and networking capabilities to cover-up the hierarchs' abuse of power (Keenan, 2019, p.6).
- 7.18 ***Internal Review Commission:*** A panel of people that functions as a consultative body to the Provincial Superior. The board offers advice to the Provincial Superior to assess allegations of sexual abuse of minors, and to determine the member's suitability for ministry.
- 7.19 ***Ministry:*** Refers to all the activities and services of the members of the Congregation both through formal organisations or informal voluntary services.
- 7.20 ***Misconduct:*** Any behaviour that is contrary to the

Civil Law or Roman Catholic Church teaching which includes all forms of abuse.

7.21 ***Neglect:*** Failure to meet developmental needs/ensure a child's or vulnerable adult's wellbeing and to protect them from harm.

7.22 ***Non-Contact Based Sexual Offences with a Child:*** Whoever, intending to achieve sexual gratification and commits any of the following with a child or vulnerable adult:

7.22.1 exposes the genitalia to the child/vulnerable adult or makes them do so;

7.22.2 masturbates in the presence of the child/vulnerable adult or makes them do so;

7.22.3 shows pornography to the child/vulnerable adult, in any form;

7.22.4 exposes the child/vulnerable adult to viewing sexual contact between any two persons;

7.22.5 uses sexually explicit and inappropriate language, before a child/vulnerable adult;

7.22.6 undertakes any other acts intended to outrage the modesty of a child/vulnerable adult.

Explanation: The question involving intention to achieve sexual

gratification or acts intended to outrage the modesty of a child/vulnerable adult is a question of fact.

7.23 ***Preliminary Investigation:*** The initial inquiry by which a Provincial Superior determines whether an alleged delict such as sexual abuse of a minor has a semblance of truth. Once that low threshold is met, the case should be referred to the Superior General and CSC who prepare an appropriate report which in turn is referred to DDF by the Superior General of the Congregation where the next stage in the process is determined.

7.24 ***Types of Abuse***

7.24.1 ***Abuse of Conscience:*** The malice of manipulation of the conscience that disables the victim to distinguish between moral good and evil.

7.24.2 ***Abuse of Power:*** Misuse of authority to control, influence, manipulate and harm others.

7.24.3 ***Emotional Abuse:*** Non-physical forms of punishments that are cruel and degrading to the person such as behaviours and actions that belittle, humiliate, denigrate, scapegoat, threaten,

scare, or ridicule the children and vulnerable adults.

7.24.4 ***Physical Abuse/ Corporal Punishment:*** Any degrading punishment in which physical force is used and intended to cause some degree of pain or discomfort, however light it may be.

7.25 ***Sexual Abuse:*** Involvement of a child or vulnerable adult in sexual activity that they do not understand or consent to and any act that involves sexual contact, sexual molestation, or sexual exploitation of a child or vulnerable adult by an adult, whether physical injuries are sustained or not. It includes forcing someone by violence or threat or abuse of power to perform or submit to sexual acts; performing sexual activities with a child or vulnerable adult; production, exhibition, possession or distribution of child abuse images either by print or electronic media or forcing or inducing a child or vulnerable adult to participate in pornographic exhibitions.

7.26 ***Spiritual Abuse:*** Exerting control over someone using religion, faith, and beliefs by manipulating

and presenting oneself as the voice of God that harms the person's relationship with God.

7.27 ***Sexual Harassment:*** Unwanted sexualized conduct or language directed towards another person or persons. It includes unwelcome, severe and persistent sexual conduct which creates an uncomfortable and hostile environment. It can be done by remarks, gestures or behaviour. Remarks would include allusions to sexual preferences, jokes, blackmail, threats, comments on appearances or body, intimate references, obscene language, sexual innuendos etc. Gestures and behaviour would include caresses, fondling, indiscrete glances, kissing, obscene gestures, pinching, unsolicited advances, etc.

7.28 ***Unit:*** Refers to a Province/Region, a Local community or the Institution of the Province or Region.

7.29 ***Victims/ Survivors:*** The person who has undergone abuse of any kind, and has worked or is working to overcome the negative effects of that abuse.

7.30 ***Volunteer:*** Any person who gives freely of his or

her time and expertise to participate in activities initiated by any Unit of the Congregation.

7.31 ***Votum:*** An authoritative opinion; in forwarding a case to DDF, the Superior General offers her authoritative opinion on the matter addressed in the particular case.

7.32 ***Vulnerable Adult:*** A person of any age who by their reason of condition, suffers from physical, mental, emotional, spiritual, handicaps or disabilities that make them vulnerable to misconduct and/ or abuse. VELM defines it as “Any person in a state of infirmity, physical or mental deficiency, or deprivation of personal liberty which, in fact, even occasionally, limits their ability to understand or to want or otherwise resist the offence” (Francis, 2023, art.1, para. 2b).

8. Guidelines for Safeguarding

8.1 Creating and Maintaining a Safe Environment

(Congregation’s Units provide an environment for children and vulnerable adults that is welcoming,

nurturing, and safe. They provide access to good role models whom the children and vulnerable adults can trust, who respect, protect, and enhance their spiritual, physical, emotional, intellectual, and social development.)

- 8.1.1 The Leaders appoint the Safeguarding Commission at the Province and Regional levels.
- 8.1.2 The Units follow guidelines of the Church, the Congregation, and the legislative requirements in the recruitment of all personnel and assess their suitability to work with children and vulnerable adults.
- 8.1.3 The Units implement effective practices in safety and care for all children and vulnerable adults, including those with specific needs.
- 8.1.4 The Units have in place written whistle-blowing procedures to support and assist personnel in raising concerns about possible dangerous or unethical conduct by others toward children or vulnerable adults involved in activities.

- 8.1.5 The Units have a written complaints procedure regarding safeguarding concerns.
- 8.1.6 The Units implement effective practices for personnel on assessment of hazards when working with children and vulnerable adults.
- 8.1.7 The Unit implements effective practices for the appropriate use of information technology, including social media.
- 8.1.8 Every Unit of the Province has a safeguarding office with two legally appointed persons, one being a lay associate.
- 8.1.9 Ensure human and financial resources at every Unit for the implementation of the plan.
- 8.1.10 Ensure that every Unit has a policy to protect the minors and vulnerable adults with special emphasis to the elderly members of the Congregation from abuse and neglect.
- 8.1.11 Ensure the culture of care and respect among its members recognising the dignity of every person.
- 8.1.12 The Congregation's authority has the responsibility for ensuring that members ministering to minors and

vulnerable adults agree to follow effective safeguarding practices.

8.2 Safe Recruitment

(Congregation's Units acknowledge that safe recruitment starts with the appointment of suitably qualified, skilled, and vetted personnel who have the desired competencies and skills to carry out their function in an effective, efficient, and safe manner. Whoever is recruited by the Congregation must be recruited safely and deemed suitable for the role that they are being asked to undertake).

- 8.2.1 All reasonable steps are taken while recruiting the aspirants to be the future members of the congregation and associates of the Congregation, and ensure that we eliminate applicants who might pose a risk to children or vulnerable adults.
- 8.2.2 Those engaged in the recruitment process are suitably trained and experienced to undertake this task.
- 8.2.3 The recruitment procedures are transparent, they adhere to best practices, and comply with the rules of

natural justice, appropriate record-keeping, and human resource management.

8.2.4 Congregational Units are committed to the policy of incorporating Safeguarding considerations within:

8.2.4.1 Job advertisements

8.2.4.2 Job descriptions

8.2.4.3 Interview

8.2.4.4 Self-declaration

8.2.4.5 Certificate of clearance

8.2.4.6 Contracts

8.2.4.7 An application form

8.2.4.8 A recruitment checklist

8.2.4.9 Qualification and identification checks

8.2.4.10 Psychological test when necessary

8.2.4.11 At least 2 reference checks

8.2.5 Once appointed, the following elements should be in place:

8.2.5.1 ensure that the members are inducted into the Safeguarding Policy and that they agree to follow the policy and procedures by signing an acceptance form and the Code of Conduct.

8.2.5.2 ensure that probationary period is served, where applicable.

8.2.5.3 ensure that safeguarding training is provided and attended.

8.3 Ongoing Formation

(Crucial to concentrate on the formation of the members and the associates of the Congregation to keep children and vulnerable adults safe by creating a culture of care and dignity)

8.3.1 Essential to organise human formation sessions for all the members focusing on physical, psychological/emotional and spiritual integrity in relation to oneself, the other and God.

8.3.2 Empower every member of the Congregation to think critically, speak assertively and act justly.

8.3.3 Foster synodality at all levels of formation, governance and decision making where active listening is prioritised.

8.3.4 Promote transparency and accountability, as a way of living obedience and poverty.

- 8.3.5 Provide formation in relationality where the members recognize the inherent dignity of the human person and care for oneself and the other.
- 8.3.6 Emphasize the attitudinal formation to cultivate the culture of care and respect.
- 8.3.7 Train members to recognise the vulnerability and dignity as inherent to human beings and deal with compassion irrespective of the circumstances and the state of the person.
- 8.3.8 Ensure the compliance of the members to the Code of Conduct by guaranteeing quality initial and ongoing formation.
- 8.3.9 Integrate formation in critical judgement, boundary settings, psycho-sexual and affective maturity in the training.
- 8.3.10 Essential to focus on leadership training for mature and responsible administration.

8.4 Training in Safeguarding

(Crucial to train the members and the associates of the Congregation to implement Safeguarding Policy)

- 8.4.1 The members of the Congregation, those in religious formation need to have knowledge and skills to enable them to safeguard children and vulnerable adults, manage allegations, and provide a compassionate response to victims.
- 8.4.2 Safeguarding education and awareness forms part of the curriculum during the initial and ongoing formation.
- 8.4.3 The personnel in the ministerial settings receive training and education in safeguarding.
- 8.4.4 Ensure specialised education for those involved in responding to allegations.
- 8.4.5 Ensure that all the members of Safeguarding Commissions of the Congregation, Provinces and Region are well trained in knowledge, attitude and skills in dealing with victims, secondary victims, perpetrators.

8.5 Working with Communities in Communicating Safeguarding Message

(Crucial to ensure the participatory and inclusive engagement of communities – children, parents/carers, lay faithful, clerics, religious, volunteers, and paid staff)

- 8.5.1 Ensure that the Safeguarding Policy of the Unit is communicated to all the stakeholders through awareness sessions and training programs.
- 8.5.2 Engage stakeholders in developing policies that are appropriate for the needs of the community and culture.
- 8.5.3 Engage the stakeholders in risk assessment and the preparation of the policies.
- 8.5.4 The stakeholders engage in formulating, communicating, and implementing the safeguarding strategic action plans.
- 8.5.5 Develop information and communication strategies to provide the stakeholders with adequate information, participation, implementation, and timely review of the policies.

- 8.5.6 Network with partners who have robust safeguarding measures in place.
- 8.5.7 Develop communication material that is suitable for the community to disseminate the safeguarding information.
- 8.5.8 Ensure that the policy is available to all the stakeholders in the language of the community.
- 8.5.9 Develop child-friendly safeguarding material to enable the participation of the children in risk assessment, drafting, implementation, and review of the safeguarding policy. The same should apply for any engagement with vulnerable adults, providing user-friendly information, cognisant with an awareness of disabilities.
- 8.5.10 Ensure the availability of the Safeguarding Policy, all the forms and tools on the official website.

8.6 Care and Support to the Alleged Victims, their Families, and the Complainant

(Crucial to ensure a victim-centred approach is adapted while drafting the policies, responding to the accusations, accompanying the victims and their families. Ensure adequate human resources for the implementation)

- 8.6.1 The first obligation of the Congregation is victims' healing.
- 8.6.2 The members shall proactively reach out to alleged victims and their families to demonstrate a sincere commitment, to listen and respond with compassion.
- 8.6.3 Make provisions to offer specific services to the alleged victims and their families.
- 8.6.4 Address the spiritual, physical, and emotional well-being.
- 8.6.5 Offer medical and therapeutic assistance as required in specific cases.
- 8.6.6 Take appropriate measures to protect the privacy of the alleged victims and their families.
- 8.6.7 Protect the privacy of the complainant.

8.6.8 The alleged victims/survivors and families are not required to maintain confidentiality.

8.7 Care and Management of the Accused

(Crucial to accompany the accused if they are members/associates of the Congregation)

8.7.1 Prepare a structural framework for the care and support of the accused.

8.7.2 Restrict the accused from engaging in the activities of the ministry.

8.7.3 Create a physical distance between the accused and the victim in the context of the religious community.

8.7.4 Treat the accused fairly and honestly, and provide legal advocacy.

8.7.5 Consider the accused to be innocent unless the crime is established.

8.7.6 The Congregation holds the responsibility of the accused if the accused is a member of the Congregation, and accommodate in a safe place.

8.7.7 Provide care and support for those associated with the accused who may be affected by the allegation.

- 8.7.8 Provide support for those who remain in the physical context where the allegation(s) of abuse took place.
- 8.7.9 Provide an agreed Safety Plan for the accused.
- 8.7.10 Restore the honour of the accused if the person is proven innocent.
- 8.7.11 Set in place the structures to care for the convicted.

8.8 Dealing with Suspicions, Concerns, Knowledge, and Allegations

(Crucial to respond immediately to any kind of allegations by reporting to the appropriate authority and keeping in place procedural rules appropriate to the particular context. The allegation may be of the present or the past)

- 8.8.1 Take seriously and act upon all allegations, suspicions, and concerns of abuse, according to Civil and Canon Law.
- 8.8.2 The Units appoint trained and supportive personnel skilled in listening to allegations of abuse, report these to the appropriate authority, and thereafter assess and manage risk factors.

- 8.8.3 Create in each Unit procedures and systems for recording, reporting, and responding to suspicions, concerns, knowledge, or allegations of abuse.
- 8.8.4 Adhere to the civil legislation/guidelines in each country where we minister; report allegations, concerns, and suspicions to the appropriate authorities.
- 8.8.5 Where the civil legislation, guidelines, and practices are inadequate, not in the best interest of the victim, we adhere to the best available practices.
- 8.8.6 Make the procedures for restorative justice available to deal with allegations that are beyond the scope of legal investigation.
- 8.8.7 Appoint personnel who are trained and experienced in restorative justice.
- 8.8.8 Deal with appropriate disciplinary actions if any false allegations are made.
- 8.8.9 Keep professional records throughout the process, mindful that such documents might be requested by law as part of a criminal trial.

8.9 Accountability and Governance

(Accountability is an essential principle of safeguarding that should be upheld in all aspects of life and activities of the community and the leaders foster this by practice and promotion)

- 8.9.1 All have a responsibility to safeguard children and vulnerable adults and to respond to allegations with compassion.
- 8.9.2 Those in a position of authority have additional responsibilities to endorse and communicate policies that demonstrate their commitment to promoting Safeguarding through their actions, setting a precedent for the entire Congregation.
- 8.9.3 Leadership fosters a culture where accountability is valued and practised.
- 8.9.4 Make documentation of the allegations and ensure the reporting procedures following the law of the place.
- 8.9.5 In case of abuse among the religious consider canonical procedures and deal with the case accordingly.

8.9.6 Enable a culture that is open, transparent, and committed to accepting responsibility for one's actions.

8.10 Assuring Compliance with the Standards

(Ensure annual internal self-audits of safeguarding practices and establish external independent audit processes).

8.10.1 Every Unit assures compliance with the Congregational Safeguarding Policy and reviews the plan annually.

8.10.2 Empower every member to take responsibility for their actions and to report violations.

8.10.3 Carry out a self-audit of safeguarding procedures annually and address the issues arising.

8.10.4 Regularly review the implementation of the policy by establishing effective feedback mechanisms.

8.10.5 Document and secure all reports with restricted access.

8.10.6 Make a review of safeguarding practices as part of the internal audit process.

9. Code of Conduct

The Code of Conduct presents the expectations of the members and the associates, in manner and conduct both in personal and professional life. It presents the behavioural protocol in relation to one another in the community, the minors, and the vulnerable adults. The members comply to the Safeguarding Policy and sign a document of commitment.

- 9.1 Adhere to the Safeguarding Policy, and comply with all relevant laws and policies of the State, and the laws of the countries in which the Congregation operates.
- 9.2 Treat everyone with respect regardless of national, regional, sexual orientation, gender, language, religion, political opinion, disability, ethnic or socio-economic origin.
- 9.3 Ensure that any physical contact with children is in response to the needs of the child, not the adult. The same applies regarding vulnerable adults.
- 9.4 Ensure, wherever possible, that another adult is present when working in the proximity of children.

- 9.5 Ensure that the buildings and/or facilities used for activities with children are suitable, safe, and secure.
- 9.6 Use all forms of technology, electronic devices, and social media responsibly to ensure that children and vulnerable adults are not exploited or harassed.
- 9.7 Portray children and vulnerable adults respectfully and appropriately when using visual images.
- 9.8 Comply with local traditions and restrictions when reproducing personal images.
- 9.9 When photographing or filming a child for public use, seek informed and prior consent from the parent or the guardian of the child at that particular time. In regard to vulnerable adults, the same permission should be obtained from the respective care-giver if the vulnerable adult is unable to give consent.
- 9.10 When sending images or personal data electronically, ensure that file labels do not reveal identifying information about a child or vulnerable adult.
- 9.11 Ensure that children and vulnerable adults who are filmed or photographed are presented in a dignified and respectful manner; that they are adequately

clothed; and that the images are honest representations of the context and the facts.

- 9.12 Refrain from language or behaviour that is inappropriate, harassing, abusive, sexually provocative, demeaning, or culturally incorrect.
- 9.13 Refrain from any form of physical and psychological abuse, including corporal punishment.
- 9.14 Refrain from any kind of gossip that is abusive and defames the person.
- 9.15 Refrain from any form of sexual abuse or illegal sexual activity, including paying for sexual services or acts.
- 9.16 Refrain from doing things for children or vulnerable adults that they are capable of doing for themselves such as washing, undressing and using the toilet.
- 9.17 Refrain from providing private transportation to children or vulnerable adults unless absolutely necessary.
- 9.18 Refrain from inviting unaccompanied children or vulnerable adults into personal dwellings, unless they are at immediate risk of injury or in physical danger.

- 9.19 Refrain from sleeping close to unsupervised children or vulnerable adults, unless absolutely necessary, in which case the individual must obtain external permission and ensure that another adult is present.
- 9.20 Refrain from demonstrating favouritism to children or vulnerable adults through the provision or receipt of gifts.
- 9.21 Refrain from giving alcohol, tobacco, or drugs to children or vulnerable adults.
- 9.22 Refrain from consumption of alcohol or drugs while being with children or vulnerable adults.
- 9.23 Refrain from hiring children or vulnerable adults for a domestic activity or other labour that is inappropriate to their age or developmental stage; interfering with the time available for children's education and recreational activities; or exposing them to significant risk or injury.
- 9.24 Refrain from any form of grooming, sexting, or possessing abusive or indecent images of children or vulnerable adults.
- 9.25 Refrain from advocating clericalism and hierarchicalism.

- 9.26 Report any suspicions of non-compliance with this Code of Conduct to the appropriate authorities immediately.

10.Procedural Rules for Reporting the Abuse and Dealing with Allegations

10.1 Receiving an Allegation

- 10.1.1 The safeguarding coordinator of the Unit listens fully, honestly and empathetically to the complainant.
- 10.1.2 The complaint is filled in a form assigned for the purpose.
- 10.1.3 The form includes as many details as possible, such as indications of time and place of the facts, persons involved or informed, and any other circumstances that would ensure an accurate assessment of the facts.
- 10.1.4 The safeguarding coordinator explains to the complainant the procedures for addressing the report. This is also provided in writing with a very simple guide for victims.

10.1.5 Receive the consent of the complainant to proceed with the investigation as laid down in the document. However, if the context is one of mandatory reporting, the allegation would still have to be reported even without consent.

10.2 Reporting

10.2.1 The Units make a public, stable and easily accessible system for the submission of the report by any person.

10.2.2 The oral disclosure of a child or vulnerable adult is considered as a report and proper documentation must be done.

10.2.3 The report of the vulnerable adult could be received at Province/Congregational office or website which will be directed to the corresponding safeguarding coordinator.

10.2.4 Any anonymous letters on the members of the Congregation need to be investigated.

10.2.5 The safeguarding coordinator of the Unit informs the civil authorities if it is mandatory to do so.

- 10.2.6 The safeguarding coordinator of the Unit informs the Province safeguarding coordinator of the reception of the complaint and does not investigate.
- 10.2.7 If the Provincial Superior receives an allegation, it must be reported to the Province safeguarding coordinator without delay to investigate if there is semblance of truth.
- 10.2.8 The Province safeguarding coordinator reports to civil authorities where it is mandatory to report suspicions of risk of harm to minors or vulnerable adults, if it was not done by the Unit safeguarding coordinator.
- 10.2.9 Any member of the Province is obliged to report to the Province safeguarding coordinator where the sexual abuse is said to have been committed by a member of the Congregation or associate.
- 10.2.10 Provincial Superior directs the report to the Local Ordinary of the diocese upon receiving an allegation, if the accused is cleric/member of the Church.
- 10.2.11 The Provincial Superior informs the Local Ordinary if the allegation has resulted in public scandal.

- 10.2.12 Provincial Superior is obliged to send the report of the preliminary investigation to the Superior General of the Congregation along with *votum*.
- 10.2.13 Any member of the Congregation is obliged to report to the Superior General the actions or negligence of the Provincial Superior that interfere with civil and canonical investigation to cover up the abuse.
- 10.2.14 Any report against the Bishop or the Superior General could be sent to the Holy See directly or through Pontifical representatives.
- 10.2.15 Any member of the Congregation who neglects to report an offence would be sanctioned according to the Code of Canon Law (Catholic Church, 1983, canon 1371, para. 6)

10.3 Dealing with the Allegation

- 10.3.1 The investigation should follow the procedures as prescribed in *Vos Estis Lux Mundi* (2023), *Vademecum* (2022), and the Code of Canon Law (1983).

- 10.3.2 In each Unit, it is highly recommended to follow the civil law of the Country in case of the abuse of minors and vulnerable adults.
- 10.3.3 The complaint of the child should be recorded in the presence of a parent/trusted adult who the child prefers and the same should be used during investigation. The child shall never be forced to repeat the narration of the abuse.
- 10.3.4 An allegation made by a vulnerable adult should follow the same procedure as mentioned above. The person should be allowed to have a competent adult accompany them.
- 10.3.5 In case of the members of the congregation, the canonical proceedings would be followed.
- 10.3.6 The Provincial Superior commissions the Province safeguarding coordinator for the semblance of truth.
- 10.3.7 The Provincial Superior commissions an external investigator to do the preliminary investigation if the semblance of truth is found, who submits report to the Provincial Superior upon investigation.

- 10.3.8 Further investigation is not the responsibility of the external investigator unless recommended by the Provincial Superior.
- 10.3.9 The Provincial Superior takes the advice of the Province safeguarding coordinator and prepares a *votum* which is to be sent to the Superior General.
- 10.3.10 The Province safeguarding coordinator maintains a case file and secures it in a secret archive which can be accessed only by the Provincial Superior, the Province safeguarding coordinator, and the external investigator.
- 10.3.11 The Provincial Superior sends the *votum* to the Superior General along with the report of investigation.
- 10.3.12 All the records must be maintained at the Congregational level by the Congregational safeguarding coordinator with limited access to others.
- 10.3.13 Any breach of privacy, prejudice, retaliation, or discrimination against the one who submitted the report will be sanctioned according to Canon Law.

- 10.3.14 All the parties involved with any allegation would maintain strict confidentiality.
- 10.3.15 The Congregational safeguarding coordinator studies the individual case with the safeguarding commission and advises the Superior General.
- 10.3.16 The Superior General submits the report to the ‘competent dicastery’ i.e., DDF regarding the delicts reserved to it by the norms in force, as well as in all other cases, the Dicastery for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life (Pope Francis, 2023, art. 7, para. 1).
- 10.3.17 The competent dicastery promptly provides appropriate instruction on how to proceed in the specific cases.
- 10.3.18 The procedures in dealing with the allegation would not interfere with civil law, particularly in the case of mandatory reporting. The authorities shall comply with the procedures of the civil law.

11. Consequences for Non-Compliance to the Code of Conduct

- 11.1 Any form of abuse i.e., physical, emotional, spiritual, financial abuse, abuse of conscience and abuse of power by the member of the Congregation toward a child or a vulnerable adult could be liable to investigation and disciplinary actions besides legal consequences.
- 11.2 Sexual abuse committed by a member of the Congregation toward a child or vulnerable person can be dismissed from the service of ministry and face legal consequences.
- 11.3 Sexual abuse committed by a member of the Congregation toward another member of the Congregation with asymmetrical power due to age and authority can be dismissed from the service of ministry and face legal consequences according to Canon and Civil Law.
- 11.4 Any kind of abuse among the members of equal power is prohibited and are liable to disciplinary actions.

11.5 Breach of confidentiality is a crime and could face consequences according to Canon Law.

12.Review

12.1 The Congregation regularly monitors reports and the complaints received regarding safeguarding through the CSC.

12.2 The Congregational Safeguarding Policy will be approved by the Superior General in consultation with her council.

12.3 The Safeguarding Policy will be reviewed by CSC every three years or sooner if necessary.

The present version of the policy is approved and signed by

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Sr. Mary Karickakunnel JMJ', with a horizontal line underneath.

Sr. Mary Karickakunnel JMJ

Superior General

13. Conclusion

These guidelines on safeguarding are the directives for the Provinces, Regions, communities, and institutions in the Congregation to develop safeguarding policies in each Unit according to the context. It is essential to understand that one policy would not work for all circumstances. There is a need to have unique policies for the communities, the old age homes, the care homes for children, the educational institutions, the hospitals, and the social work centres. The Code of Conduct and the consequences for non-compliance outlined here are for the members of the Congregation. Every institute develops the Policies and the Codes of Conduct appropriate for the members, the employees, and the visitors as the context demands. The members collaborating with other institutes adhere to the safeguarding policy of the particular diocese regarding their ministry. The purpose of safeguarding is to respect the dignity of the human person, created in the image of God. This has to be the essential criterion in all our plans, processes, and actions.

Abbreviations

CSC : Congregational Safeguarding Commission

DDF : Dicastery of Doctrine of Faith

DI : *Dignitas Infinita*

DIVCSVA: Dicastery for Institutions of Consecrated Life and
Societies of Apostolic Life

UDHR : The Universal Declaration of Human Rights

UNCRC : United Nations Convention of Rights of Children

VELM : *Vos Estis Lux Mundi*

Annexure - I

SELF- DECLARATION FOR RELIGIOUS

Name :

Date of Birth :

Current Residence :

Province/Region :

I commit myself,

- to respect the dignity and rights of all the people, especially those of children and vulnerable adults.
- never to take actions, that endanger the well-being of a person, especially a child or a vulnerable person, or that lead to sexual, or other forms of abuse or maltreatment.
- to respect the privacy and the individual boundaries of every person, especially those of children and vulnerable adults and to be careful with closeness and distance.

- to take the cultural realities into account in contact, especially with children and vulnerable adults.
- To have a respectful handling with trust and authority positions.
- to take immediate measures for the protection of people, especially of children and vulnerable adults when boundary violations are observed.
- to inform immediately the responsible authority, in case of justified suspicion of risk to the well-being of people, especially those of children and vulnerable adults.
- to sensitise other people in my environment to this issue.
- to take a position against racist, discriminatory, violent, and sexist behaviour, by word or action.
- to be trained and to implement the Congregational Safeguarding Policy.

I assure you that I have not been convicted of any criminal offense in connection with neglect of minors or physical, psychological, or sexual violence and that no preliminary proceedings have been initiated against me in this regard. If a preliminary proceeding is

initiated against me, I undertake to inform the Congregational leaders and withdraw my membership from the commission.

Place and Date

Signature

Annexure - II

Congregation of Jesus Mary Joseph

Safeguarding Commission Oath of Commitment

In the Presence of God and all those present here,
I the member of the
Congregational Safeguarding Commission solemnly swear
to safeguard the dignity and rights of all the people especially
of minors and vulnerable adults within our institution. I
promise unwavering commitment to the safety, well-being,
and protection of children and vulnerable adults, pledge to
create a safe environment and pronounce zero tolerance to
every form of abuse.

I guarantee to handle all
information regarding children and vulnerable adults with
the utmost confidentiality and respect, and act with diligence,
compassion and integrity. I affirm to respect the privacy and
dignity of those we serve and their families unless my office
or the law demands reporting to the appropriate authority. I
declare to abide by the values of responsibility,
accountability, transparency and compliance according to

the Safeguarding Policy of the Congregation of Jesus Mary Joseph in the spirit of the Universal Church.

Signature & Date

Signature of the President

Annexure - III

Preliminary Remark: The Major Superior (Superior General / Provincial Superior) of the proposed members declares that the member is eligible and suitable to be part of the Congregational Safeguarding Commission of the Congregation of Jesus Mary Joseph.

Certificate of Clearance

After careful examination of the personal data and assessments and based on my knowledge of _____
_____ (name), born on _____, I truthfully make the following statements. I declare that this sister/priest of _____ Province has a good reputation.

Previous activities

Since the time of the beginning of the novitiate, the named cleric or religious has carried out the following activities. (Please enter all assignments, if necessary, add

them on a separate sheet). If this is not possible, please give reasons.

1.__(Designation)_____in_____ (Institution & Place)_____, from _____ to _____

2._____in_____,
from_____to_____

3._____in_____,
from_____to_____

4._____in_____,
from_____to_____

5._____in_____,
from_____to_____

6._____in_____,
from_____to_____

Further information

Please mark as appropriate. If it is not possible to answer "yes" to one or more of the points below, but the person

named is still recommended for a ministry, please explain the reasons in detail.

1. I am not aware of any evidence of criminal offences or suspicion of criminal offences against him/her, either under secular or ecclesiastical law. Yes No

2. Neither his/her dealings with the minors/vulnerable persons entrusted to him/her, nor his/her management of the financial resources have given cause to doubt his/her suitability. Yes No

3. I am not aware of any incidents that have ever called into question his/her suitability and sense of responsibility for apostolate/pastoral ministry (e.g. mental illness, alcohol dependency, drug abuse). Yes No

4. He/she has not been in the past and is not to this day prevented in any way from exercising his/her ministry under disciplinary law and no canonical penalties have been imposed on him/her. Yes No

5. I am not aware of anything that prevents him/her from interacting and working with children, young people, and vulnerable adults in need of protection or assistance. Yes No

Only in the case of priests

6. The priest _____ was granted the faculty of hearing confessions by _____ for an indefinite/limited period until _____, which has neither been revoked or expired. Yes No
7. There is nothing to prevent the Local Ordinary from granting the faculty of hearing confessions (cf. c. 971 CIC). Yes No

Place, Date

Signature

Local Ordinary/Higher Religious Superior

Annexure - IV

Preliminary Remark: The Local Ordinary of the proposed members declares that the member is eligible and suitable to be part of the Congregational Safeguarding Commission of the Congregation of Jesus Mary Joseph.

Certificate of Clearance

After careful examination of the personal data and assessments and based on my knowledge of _____
_____ (name), born on _____, I truthfully make the following statements. I declare that this person has a good reputation.

Previous Activities

Since the time of the beginning of the professional work the named person has carried out the following activities. (Please enter all assignments, if necessary, add them on a separate sheet). If this is not possible, please give reasons.

1. ___(Designation)___ in ___(Institution & Place)___, from _____ to _____

2. _____ in _____,
from _____ to _____

3. _____ in _____,
from _____ to _____

Further information

Please tick as appropriate. If it is not possible to answer "yes" to one or more of the points below, but the person named is still recommended for a ministry, please explain the reasons in detail.

1. I am not aware of any evidence of criminal offences or suspicion of criminal offences against him/her, either under secular or ecclesiastical law. Yes No
2. Neither his/her dealings with the minors/vulnerable persons entrusted to him/her, nor his/her management

of the financial resources have given cause to doubt his/her suitability. Yes No

3. I am not aware of any incidents that have ever called into question his/her suitability and sense of responsibility for apostolate/pastoral ministry (e.g. mental illness, alcohol dependency, drug abuse). Yes No

4. He/she has not been in the past and is not to this day prevented in any way from exercising his/her ministry under disciplinary law and no canonical penalties have been imposed on him/her. Yes No

5. I am not aware of anything that prevents him/her from interacting and working with children, young people, and adults in need of protection or assistance. Yes No

Place, Date

Signature

Local Ordinary

Annexure - V

Reporting Form

Preliminary Remark: Any complaint should be formally received by filling in the complaint form (available on the website) by the complainant or the trusted adult preferred by the child or the safeguarding contact person, if the child cannot write. The filled-in form must be given to the Province safeguarding coordinator and the anonymous complaints must not be ignored.

Date of Report:

Time of Report:

Details of Complainant

Name of the Complainant:

Address:

Tel:

Mobile. No.

Email:

Relation to the Alleged Victim:

Details of Alleged Victim (Child or Vulnerable Adult)

Name:

Date of Birth:

Address:

Gender:

Social Status:

Mother Tongue:

Preferred Language of Communication:

School (if applicable):

Any Disability:

Details of the Parent/Guardian (where appropriate)

Name:

Address:

Tel:

Mobile no.:

Are Parents/Legal Guardian Aware of the Complaint:

Details of the Accused (Alleged abuser)

Name:

Address:

Relation to Child/Vulnerable adult:

Occupation:

Details of Incident

Date of Incident:

Time of Incident:

Place of Incident:

Names of Witnesses (if known):

Is the concerned child or adult aware of the concern being raised:

Description or Circumstances of the Abuse in Words of the Complainant:

Name of the Safeguarding Coordinator of the Local Unit:

Signature: _____

Mobile no.

Email Address:

Date:

Name of the Province Safeguarding Coordinator:

Signature: _____

Mobile no.

Email address:

Date:

References

- Aarnink, L. (Ed.), & van Laarhoven, L. (Ed.). (1997). *Sent by the Lord: The spirituality of the Sisters of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph*. Titus Brandsma Instituut.
- Catholic Church. (1983). *Code of Canon Law*. Canon Law Society of America. Retrieved from https://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG1104/_IND_EX.HTM
- Congregation of Jesus Mary Joseph. (2018). *Constitutions for the Members of the Congregation of Jesus Mary Joseph*.
- Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith (DDF). (2024). *Dignitas Infinita: Declaration on human dignity*. Vatican. Retrieved from https://www.vatican.va/content/ddf/en/apost_letters/documents/hf_ddf_apl_20240425_dignitas-infinita.html

Keenan, J. F. (2019). *Vulnerability and hierarchicalism*.
Unpublished manuscript, Institute of
Anthropology.

Pope Francis. (2023). *Vos Estis Lux Mundi*. Vatican.
Retrieved from
https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_letters/documents/papa-francesco_20190507_vos-estis-lux-mundi.html

The Bible. (1988). *New Revised Standard Version*.
National Council of Churches. Retrieved from
<https://www.biblegateway.com>

**“Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to
such as these that the Kingdom, of God belongs.”
Mark 10: 14**

**‘The sisters of the Society of JMJ as colleagues in the affairs of God,
should treat each other with great respect’.
Spirit & Charism Page.58**

**‘Because you have been religious for so long, do not consider yourself
superior to the sisters who have just recently been professed’ PM 1.65**

**Rev Fr. Mathias Wolff SJ,
Founder of congregation of JMJ.**



Every person has the right to life and dignity. The congregation of Jesus Mary Joseph ensures the safety of all minors and vulnerable persons by establishing Safeguarding guidelines that would be implemented in all its apostolic activities and within the communities. The guidelines and the standards provide the framework for safeguarding practices.

The guidelines express the commitment of the Congregation by raising awareness on the seriousness of the abuse of minors and vulnerable persons, responding to the victims and their families, working with communities, safe recruitment , establishing procedures to manage allegations, formation and training, accountability and continuous assessment. The standards enable us to reach the expected level of performance and remain vigilant in safeguarding children and vulnerable persons. The members of the Congregation, its associates, employees, and volunteers abide by these principles and protect the integrity of the congregation, the church, and its mission.

