

## McLellan Commission Principal Recommendations:

1. Support for the survivors of abuse must be an absolute priority for the Catholic Church in Scotland in the field of Safeguarding. The Bishops' Conference of Scotland should make a public apology to all survivors of abuse within the Church.
2. The "Awareness and Safety" manual should be completely revised or rewritten.
3. There must be some external scrutiny and independence in the Safeguarding policies and practices of the Catholic Church in Scotland.
4. Effectiveness and improvement must be measured at every level of Safeguarding in the Church.
5. A consistent approach to Safeguarding is essential: consistent across different parts of Scotland and consistent across different parts of the Church.
6. Justice must be done, and justice must be seen to be done, for those who have been abused and for those against whom allegations of abuse are made.
7. The priority of undertaking regular high-quality training and continuous professional development in Safeguarding must be understood and accepted by all those involved in Safeguarding at every level.
8. The Catholic Church in Scotland must set out a theology of Safeguarding which is coherent and compelling.

## Called to Renew our Commitment

The Catholic Church in Scotland renews its commitment towards the lives, safety, wholeness and well-being of each individual person within God's purpose for everyone.

We will now take forward Dr. McLellan's recommendations, planning their implementation, and then implementing them.

We accept that Safeguarding is the responsibility of the whole Church, all of the baptised as well as the ordained, professed, those who are employed and those who volunteer, working together to create and maintain safe environments.

Lord Jesus we praise you for calling us to the service of others.

We pray for a generosity of spirit to ensure the vulnerable are protected.

We pray for a compassionate heart so that we will reach out to those who are wounded by abuse.

We pray for courage and determination as we seek the safety of everyone in our parish communities.

We dedicate ourselves to this work of service and pray that you will help us to do you will at all times and in all places.

Amen

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# Safeguarding in the Catholic Church



A response to the  
McLellan Commission

August 2015

**On 25<sup>th</sup> November 2013, the Bishops' Conference of Scotland announced that Dr. Andrew McLellan would chair a Commission whose remit was to review the suitability and robustness of the Safeguarding procedures and protocols of the Catholic Church in Scotland.**

On 18<sup>th</sup> August 2015, Dr. McLellan published his Commission's Report. It contains many recommendations and will present challenges for the Church in future.

The Bishops of Scotland have agreed unanimously to accept its recommendations in full to ensure that Safeguarding standards are as high as possible.



*"The invitation to chair this Commission came from the Bishops' Conference of the Catholic Church in Scotland. When I accepted it I made it clear that I did not feel that my first responsibility was to them. My first responsibility was, and has been through all our work, to those who have been harmed."*

*"The fact that the Bishops commissioned a Minister of the Church of Scotland to carry out this review demonstrated an ecumenical trust, which could not have been guessed at in Scotland thirty years ago. I appreciate that generosity of spirit."*

**Dr. Andrew McLellan**

## An Apology to Survivors of Abuse

As the President of the Bishops' Conference, and on behalf of all the Bishops of Scotland, I want to offer a profound apology to all those who have been harmed and who have suffered in any way as a result of actions by anyone within the Catholic Church.

Child abuse is a horrific crime. That this abuse should have been carried out within the Church, and by priests and religious, takes that abuse to another level. Such actions are inexcusable and intolerable. The harm the perpetrators of abuse have caused is first and foremost to their victims, but it extends far beyond them, to their families and friends, as well as to the Church and wider society.

I would like to assure the survivors of abuse that the Catholic Bishops of Scotland are shamed and pained by what you have suffered. We say sorry. We ask forgiveness.

We apologise to those who have found the Church's response slow, unsympathetic or uncaring and reach out to them as we take up the recommendations of the McLellan Commission.

Since 2007 we have had a comprehensive programme of Safeguarding in place. In a spirit of openness and transparency, with our dedicated staff and volunteers across the country, whom we thank for the time and effort they give, we commit ourselves to renewing and improving our Safeguarding structures, processes and protocols.

In faith, hope and repentance, we renew our commitment to the welfare of children, young people and the vulnerable in all our communities and to the service of all God's people.

Finally, I wish to repeat what I said when the McLellan Commission was announced:

*"We recognise the trauma and pain that victims and survivors of abuse have suffered and we are committed to providing for them both justice and healing."*

Archbishop Philip Tartaglia  
President,  
Bishops' Conference of Scotland