**INFORMATION REGARDING PAST CASES REVIEW IN COVENTRY DIOCESE**

On Tues 5 Nov 2019, Bishop Christopher sent an email to all Incumbents and Priests-in-Charge in our Diocese. He also requested that our congregations and others be informed of the content of this email through our noticeboards, parish newsletters and websites. This is a shortened version of the email which contains the essential information about the Past Cases Review. A fuller version is displayed on the Church noticeboard in the Safeguarding section and on the website.

I am aware that statements like these can raise sensitive pastoral issues for people in a variety of ways and for a number of reasons. *If you have concerns, or are affected in any way and wish to speak to someone, please do contact me or members of our Ministry Leadership Team, or Muriel Ganley our Parish Safeguarding Officer. If you would prefer to speak to someone outside of St. Giles, please contact our Diocesan Safeguarding Team on 024 7652 1345.* Please note that the Past Cases Review only concerns Church Officers (ordained or lay people who hold an elected or appointed role in the church). It does not relate to those who simply attend as worshippers. We are grateful for the strong and careful commitment to Safeguarding in our parish - a responsibility we all share. Thank you for giving time to read this information as part of that commitment to keep everyone in our community safe. *With every blessing, Gail.*

Dear Sisters and Brothers

Bishop Mark Sowerby, Deputy Bishop for Safeguarding, has written *(abridged)*:

*Allowing light to shine on what has been hidden is a first step towards healing, not only for those who have been abused, but for those whose consciences are, or ought to be, troubled by those sins they have buried away beyond the sight of others. Sometimes it will take an external prompting for those things to be opened to the light of day and to the light of Christ but with such prompting may begin the path to penitence and forgiveness, the path to healing of long-hidden wounds.*

*Through the Past Cases Review, we are asking you to help shine a revealing light on any instances of abuse that have occurred in your benefice and to help ensure that everything that ought to be brought into the light has been. Shining a light on what has hurt or frightened someone is a matter of justice for those who have been victims; sometimes it may also prevent further harm and sometimes it may be the first step towards healing. With that in mind, we thank you for your cooperation in working towards a safer Church.*

*+Mark*

*(Bishop Christopher writing directly continues. . . )*

**Over the next few months our Diocese will be conducting a Past Cases Review where an independent reviewer will be looking at our safeguarding files and files relating to church officers, including those for clergy and Readers, to reassure us that all safeguarding matters have been reported and dealt with appropriately.**

As part of this review I am writing to ask you to check all of your parish records to ensure that all known instances of concern about church officers either non-recent or current have been reported to the Diocesan Safeguarding Team . . .

**It is important that we are made aware of any concerns related to church officers and to this end I would ask that you inform your congregations about the content of this email and that you display a copy of this e-mail and the attached leaflet on your noticeboards, in your parish newsletter and on your website.**

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