

Child Protection Policy concerning those in formation

Introduction

A proper selection and formation process for those presenting themselves for a monastic life has a vital part to play in ensuring the care and protection of children and young people in the Church.

Selection of Candidates

It is important that those who are accepted into formal training for the monastic life have achieved a sufficient level of maturity to allow them to engage in and benefit from a programme of formation. In making this determination, the Abbot and Novice Master shall seek the assistance of those competent in this area, as well as those who know the prospective candidate.

The selection of candidates for the monastic life needs to be seen as an integral process involving the Novice Master and the Abbot.

References from responsible people who have known the candidate over a long period of time are also important aids to the selection process.

Vetting

The Garda vetting procedures of the state should be utilised. All applicants to the noviciate will be required to have completed the Garda Vetting Application Form.

Formation

Personal formation

The programme of formation at Glenstal Abbey includes a sound human formation and draws on the insights of the human sciences. It is particularly important that the process of formation fosters the growth and integration of the affective life of the individual, including his sexuality in the context of a celibate lifestyle.

It is essential that formation personnel are satisfied that the future monk can relate appropriately both to children and adults before presenting him for simple and solemn profession of vows.

Health policy

Each candidate accepted into the noviciate needs to be in good physical and mental health so that he can participate actively in the monastic life of the community at Glenstal Abbey.

The applicant will be informed of this policy early in the process of inquiry into the noviciate.

Psychological tests and behavioural tests may be a required part of the admissions process. Psychological testing is paid for by the community. The results of these assessments will be shared with the applicants but shall be the property of the Abbot.

Training in best practice

Those in formation for the monastic life shall be given comprehensive training in safe and best practice in working with children and young people. This training will include, at the earliest possible stage, the provision of clear information about how to respond if concerns about child protection arise in the context of formation or outside it. All those in formation shall be provided with the name and contact details of the relevant Abbot's Delegate(s) for Child Protection and shall be made aware of the procedures for reporting suspicions or allegations of child abuse outlined in *Safeguarding Children: Standards and Guidance Document for the Catholic Church in Ireland*. They shall be made aware of the commitment in the Church's procedures to act in accordance with the principle that the welfare of children is always the paramount consideration.

Transfer from other Dioceses and Jurisdictions

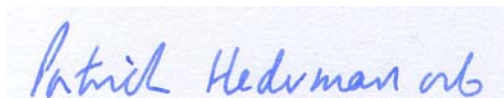
Diocesan priests or religious from other congregations may seek to enter the noviciate with a view to joining the monastic community at Glenstal. The monastery's responsibility for the safety and well-being of children and young people includes ensuring that proper procedures are in place in relation to reviewing such applications.

The monastery shall apply the following procedures:

- Prior to permitting any priest or religious to enter the noviciate, the Abbot and Novice Master shall seek detailed information about the suitability of the candidate for the monastic life from his Bishop or Religious Superior.
- All such applicant priests and religious shall be made aware of the code of good practice for working with children and young people as set out in *Safeguarding Children: Standards and Guidance Document for the Catholic Church in Ireland*. And they shall be asked to give an undertaking that they will abide by it.
- The Abbot and Novice Master shall undertake to ensure that no priest or religious who has been deemed to have committed any form of child abuse is received into the noviciate.

Confidentiality

As with all personnel records at Glenstal Abbey, information obtained through the application form, reference information, interviews, criminal background check, etc., is kept confidential. Should the candidate leave the noviciate or the monastery at a later stage, records are retained even after the date of departure. Should the candidate proceed to make simple profession, these records may be passed to the Junior Master. Should the candidate then profess solemn vows this file will then be joined to the monk's other records held by the Abbot.



8th November 2010

Patrick Hederman OSB
Abbot of Glenstal

Date