



Prov. Circ. 24/30

Friday, 6<sup>th</sup> December 2024

**A communication from the Spiritans to People who suffered Sexual Abuse by Members and Employees of the Spiritan Congregation**

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself. My name is Fr. Brendan Carr and this summer when the Spiritan Province of Ireland held a Chapter, I was elected as Provincial Leader. Together with my fellow Spiritans on the new Provincial Leadership Team, we began our mandate on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2024.

One of my first priorities on assuming office was to meet with the Restore Together group. At that meeting, my predecessor Martin Kelly C.S.Sp., outlined some of the vital initiatives that are already underway. These include:

- 1) The appointment of **independent restorative justice facilitators**, including Mr Tim Chapman, to contact individuals who have reported abuse by members/employees of the Spiritans and engage in a listening, support and healing process with them and assist in engagement by those individuals with the Spiritans in the context of the restorative justice process.
- 2) The involvement of the **Spiritan Safeguarding Office**, which responds to the needs and provides support for all who come forward directly to the Spiritans. The Safeguarding Office works in close co-operation with the independent restorative justice facilitators to ensure a co-ordinated response to everyone who comes forward.
- 3) The ongoing funding of **easily accessible counselling services** for all who come forward. This includes those from Spiritan schools and people outside of the schools who also suffered abuse.
- 4) The arrangement, in the restorative process, of **'face-to-face' meetings** with former students who experienced abuse in our schools with members of the Spiritan leadership team.

Since September, a fellow Spiritan and I have met regularly with the Restore Together group. These meetings have taken place on a bi-monthly basis and we have heard first-hand of the concerns and anxieties of so many.

We have given particular emphasis to the ongoing development of the restorative justice process. It comprises a five-pillar programme:

- 1) Apology/Recognition/Acknowledgement
- 2) Therapy/ Counselling
- 3) Testimony and truth seeking
- 4) Redress
- 5) Outreach/Memorialisation

CONGREGATION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT  
PROVINCE OF IRELAND  
KIMMAGE MANOR



I want to personally reassure you that we are committed to continuing open and ongoing dialogue with the Restore Together group and other affected individuals so that just, restorative, and non-adversarial outcomes can be initiated, finalised and implemented as soon as possible.


The horrific legacy of historical abuse within the Irish Province has profoundly shaken our Spiritan community, both for those who worked in our schools in Ireland and for those who spent their lives overseas.

After much self-reflection, listening to the voice of those who have been abused, and observing a day of lament, our Provincial Chapter, which took place this past July, unanimously voted to make restorative justice an integral part of our future mission in Ireland.

We not only recalled and reaffirmed the statements and apologies issued by past Chapters with expressions of heartfelt remorse, but also endorsed a firm commitment to seek to make amends for those who have been abused so that they might find "*healing, wholeness and be able to reclaim the joy of living*" which was taken away.

I want to reassure you that our members and staff remain fully committed to act in a professional and compassionate manner on this journey that we take together.

Thank you all for your patience while we work with Restore Together to provide you with a further update in early 2025.

  
Brendan Carr C.S.Sp.  
Provincial Leader

If you would like to speak to the Spiritan Safeguarding Office or an independent restorative justice facilitator, please contact:

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