

Safeguarding Commitment to Survivors

If you have been wounded by the Church – by a priest, a religious, a minister or by the institution itself – we receive you with reverence. We believe you. We are sorry.

What was done to you was wrong, and it will be met here with truth.

A Spirituality of Care

Carmelite spirituality holds that every person is a dwelling place of God – a dignity no harm can reach. Teresa of Ávila, John of the Cross and Blessed Francisco Palau each knew suffering at the Church's hands, and each found God present within it, not beyond it. They give us permission to name what has gone wrong without abandoning what remains true.

We do not ask survivors to resolve these tensions quickly, or at all. We do not ask for forgiveness on a timeline. We do not ask anyone to return to the institution that harmed them. We ask only that they know they are welcome here, exactly as they are.

Commitments

CACS and all who minister in its name undertake:

- To believe you – without requiring proof before you are heard, and without minimising what you have experienced.
- To receive you with reverence – recognising in you a soul already held in the friendship of God, on a journey that belongs ultimately to the Holy Spirit.
- To accompany without fixing – sitting with the reality of your experience rather than rushing towards resolution, explanation or the rehabilitation of the Church's reputation.
- To guard your privacy – handling all disclosures with the utmost confidentiality, within the limits required by law and our safeguarding obligations, which we will always explain to you.
- To refer to statutory authorities where required – and to tell you in advance when that step must be taken, so that nothing happens without your knowledge.

- To offer independent support – including referral to external agencies and consideration of support on a case-by-case basis.
- To remain accountable – to our safeguarding committee, to the Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency, and to those we serve.

Saint John of the Cross wrote: *Where there is no love, put love – and you will find love.* This is the spirit in which these commitments are made: not as an obligation undertaken reluctantly, but as an act of care for those who have already borne too much.

Those who come to CACS have the right to expect this to be honoured. Where concerns arise, please bring them to our safeguarding lead.

