



Ethics and Safeguarding Report to Synod 2025

Canon Sergio Sapunar

1. Safeguarding

- a. Visited most Deanery Retreats to meet people face-to-face, share our Diocesan efforts, and gather feedback to better support local churches.
- b. Collaborated with several local churches, including safeguarding staff and volunteers across the Diocese, to clarify and implement the safeguarding policy in various aspects of church life.
- c. The policy has been updated to cover the protection of both children and adults.
- d. Assisted GPMD in training and implementing our safeguarding system.

e. A New Safeguarding Training System for the Diocese

While in-person training is the best way to learn, it is essential to have a reliable, standardized on-demand system that can efficiently train everyone, regardless of their safeguarding officer's time, skills, schedule, or location in our Diocese. To address this, we will use a single platform provided by Ministry Defender Solutions. The platform includes:

- Online Child Abuse Awareness Training (like Ministry Safe)
- LMS Policy Training. (We will create our own policy training by uploading videos, documents, and creating quizzes.)
- Background checks and "real-time" arrest notifications.

- Data management for the Diocese and local church with certification reminders.
- Competitive Pricing.

2. Peacemaking

- a. The Peacemaking Guidelines replaced the Conflict Resolution Policy.
- b. Met with, listened to, and engaged with numerous rectors through the Rector Development Program.
- c. I have worked with at least six rectors in our Diocese, providing support and guidance to help them resolve conflicts within their local churches.
- d. Rectors and churches will be supported by providing resources, visiting, and teaching about biblical peacemaking within local congregations.

3. Title IV

- a. I assisted the Bishop Ordinary with two disciplinary cases involving clergy and conducted two investigations: one canonical and one pastoral inquiry.
- b. We have worked on enhancing and clarifying our Policy, Processes, and Procedures. This will help ensure that the complainant, respondent, and local church have a clearer understanding of expectations, different steps, and potential outcomes in a more thorough and detailed manner. Work has also been done on creating documents, including definitions and positions, related to Title IV.
- c. An investigative team has been established. The team consists of experienced members, including both clergy and laypeople—men

and women—from within and outside the diocese. Their expertise covers church ministry, law, and professional investigations.

d. Title IV ACNA Revision

- A working relationship was established with the new ACNA director of Safeguarding, Dr. Tiffany Butler.
- The progress of this review, which aims to enhance clarity, minimize litigation, and encourage inquiry processes, has been monitored closely.

In Christ,
Canon Sergio Sapunar