

SAFEGUARDING SUNDAY CAMPAIGN

15th November, 2026

Love in the Heart of the Church

1. Resources at a glance

On Sunday 15 November 2026, the 33rd Sunday in Ordinary Time, each of our three communities will keep Safeguarding Sunday at every Mass under one title: **Love in the Heart of the Church**. Our Carmelite word for this day is St Thérèse's discovery that her whole vocation was to be love in the heart of the Church, her Mother. Safeguarding is that love made practical.

Each community is directed to:

1. Keep Safeguarding Sunday at all Masses of 14–15 November, including the Saturday vigil, using the elements in section 5.
2. Announce the Sunday on 1 and 8 November, including a clear, gentle word for survivors of abuse.
3. Display named safeguarding contacts on posters, the website and the newsletter before 15 November
4. Send a one-page return to the Safeguarding Team by Friday 4 December (section 11).

What does not change. The readings and prayers of the 33rd Sunday are used as given. Nothing here replaces the safeguarding policy that governs each community (diocesan, RLSS or provincial). Where this directive and that policy differ, the policy governs.

2. The Carmelite Insight: Thérèse and the Little Ones

St Thérèse of Lisieux gives this Sunday both its heart and its method: love that protects, practised in small, faithful acts. **"In the heart of the Church, my Mother, I shall be Love"** (Manuscript B, 3). Thérèse reached this by reading 1 Corinthians 12 and 13, the same chapter that gives Safeguarding Sunday its theme. She saw that the Church has a heart, and that love alone moves every member.

For our communities this means safeguarding is not one department among many. It is the heart's work, and it belongs to everyone who belongs to the Body.

4. Breaking open the Word: homily Suggestions

The readings already preach Safeguarding Sunday; the homilist's task is to let them. Four movements are offered below. Use one, some or all, in your own words. Quote the readings from the Lectionary in use in England and Wales.

1. Entrusted (Matthew 25:14–30). The master goes away and entrusts his servants with what is his, each according to ability. The most precious thing entrusted to any parish is not its buildings but its people, and first the little ones. The two faithful servants are praised for being faithful in small things; that is Thérèse's little way, and it is how safeguarding actually works. The third servant buries his talent because he is afraid. Fear buries things: concerns, questions, and sometimes people's stories. Love brings them into the open and acts.

2. Awake (1 Thessalonians 5:1–6). Paul warns against those who say "peace and security" and stop watching. No community can say "that was the past; we have a policy now." We are children of the light, so nothing that harms a child may be kept in the dark; we stay awake and sober. Thérèse, as a young novice mistress, described herself as a watchman on a tower. That watchfulness was not suspicion; it was love that paid attention and safeguards.

3. Open hands (Proverbs 31; Psalm 128). The woman of worth works with willing hands and opens them to the poor and needy. A few verses earlier in the same chapter comes the verse that gives Thirtyone:eight its name: speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves (Prov 31:8). The psalm pictures children like olive shoots around the table. On this World Day of the Poor, Pope Leo asks whether we are a refuge. For a child, a refuge is a place where they are safe, heard and believed.

4. Love in the heart. Thérèse searched the members of the Body and found her place in its heart: love. Safeguarding is not a policy bolted onto the Church; it is the heartbeat. Close with 1 Corinthians 13:7, the theme of the day: love protects, always.

A word to the children present (30 seconds): *"Jesus says you are his treasure. God has asked all the grown-ups here to look after his treasure. If you ever feel worried or unsafe, you can tell a grown-up you trust, and they will listen."*

Tone: do and avoid

Do	Avoid (triggers)
Speak of hope, protection and belonging.	Graphic or detailed descriptions of abuse.
Acknowledge honestly that the Church has failed people.	Calling survivors to "forgive and move on", or implying healing has a timetable.
Name who people can go to, and say they will be taken seriously.	Suggesting that abuse is "in the past" or "dealt with".
Keep survivors' dignity at the centre.	Making the Church's reputation or pain the main subject.

7. For the children: Little Flowers, Brave Voices

Every child at Mass on 15 November should go home knowing three things: *I am God's treasure. I know my trusted grown-ups. It is always OK to tell.*

Thérèse is the right guide. She was a child who lost her mother, a shy girl who learned to speak, and a young woman who saw that children are like soft wax in the hands of the adults around them. There is also a happy link for children: at fourteen Thérèse found her voice before Pope Leo XIII. *Leo* means *lion*, and Thirtyone:eight's children's character, Roarry, is a lion who teaches children to "raise their roar."

10. Contacts and signposting

Contact details go on posters, newsletters, websites and the take-home card. It is the policy of the Catholic Church in England and Wales to report all allegations of abuse to the statutory authorities.

Numbers were checked in September 2026; confirm them again before printing.

11. After Safeguarding Sunday: the return and next steps

Safeguarding Sunday is a starting point, not the finish line; each community sends a one-page return to the Safeguarding Team by Friday 4 December, and carries one improvement into 2027.

12. Ready-to-use texts

All texts below are original to this directive and may be adapted freely by each community.

A. Introduction, after the Greeting

Today the Church keeps the World Day of the Poor, and churches across the United Kingdom keep Safeguarding Sunday, with the theme Love Protects. St Thérèse discovered that in the heart of the Church she would be love. Protecting the little ones and the vulnerable is that heart at work. We bring before God all who have been harmed, and we renew our promise that this will be a safe place for everyone.**

B. Penitential Act (Form C)

- Lord Jesus, you placed a little child in the midst of your disciples: Lord, have mercy.
- Christ Jesus, you hear the cry of the poor and of those who have no voice: Christ, have mercy.
- Lord Jesus, you are the light no darkness can overcome: Lord, have mercy.

C. Universal Prayer

Priest: Brothers and sisters, the Lord is the refuge of the poor. With confidence we bring him our prayer.

1. For the Church, our Mother: that in her heart love may always come first, and every child and vulnerable adult may find her a place of safety. **V/** Lord, in your mercy - **R/** Hear our prayer
2. For all who have been harmed, especially by anyone in the Church: that they may be heard and believed, receive the support they need, and find healing and peace at their own pace. **V/** Lord, in your mercy
3. For the children of our community: that they may know they are God's treasure, have grown-ups they can trust, and find the courage to speak. **V/** Lord, in your mercy
4. For all who keep others safe: our safeguarding representatives, catechists and children's leaders, teachers, social workers, police and health workers; that their watchfulness may be the watchfulness of love. **V/** Lord, in your mercy.
5. On this World Day of the Poor: for all who are robbed of bread, of voice or of face; that our community may be a refuge for them. **V/** Lord, in your mercy.
6. For all who grieve, especially children who have lost a parent, and for all our dead in this month of the Holy Souls. **V/** Lord, in your mercy.

Priest: God of mercy, in St Thérèse you showed us the little way of trust and love. Hear our prayers, make us faithful in small things, and help us protect those you entrust to us. Through Christ our Lord.

D. Invitation to silence after Communion

Let us keep a minute of silence for all who have been harmed, and for all who carry what they have never been able to voice.

E. The PSR's notice before the Blessing (under two minutes)

My name is [name], and I am the safeguarding representative here. Safeguarding means making sure that everyone who comes here, children, young people and adults, is safe and treated with dignity. If you are ever worried about someone, or about something that happened to you, here or anywhere, recently or long ago, you can speak to me or to [second person]. You will be listened to and taken seriously. Our details are on the card at the door. If you would rather speak to someone outside the Church, Safe Spaces offers free, confidential support, and its number is on the card too. Today [name] is in [room] after Mass for anyone who would like a quiet word. Thank you to everyone who serves our children and keeps the checks and training that help us keep our promise.

F. Prayer of the Heart of the Church (said by all)

God of tender love,
you have entrusted to us the treasure of your little ones:
the children around our table,
and all who are poor, frail, or afraid.
Make us faithful in small things,
watchful as children of the light,
and quick to open our hands to those in need.
With Saint Thérèse,
may we be love in the heart of the Church, our Mother:
love that listens without hurry,
receives without questioning,
and protects, always.
Where we have failed, give us truth and humility.
To all who have been harmed, give healing, justice and peace.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

G. The children's prayer

Jesus, you call me your treasure.
Help me to be love in the heart of my family and my church.
When I feel worried, help me tell a grown-up I trust.
When a friend is sad or scared, help me to be kind and to speak up.
St Thérèse, little flower, pray for me. Amen.

H. Newsletter/Buletin and Pulpit Notice (1 and 8 November)

*Safeguarding Sunday, 14–15 November. At all Masses on 14 and 15 November we will keep Safeguarding Sunday with churches across the country, under the title **Love in the Heart of the Church***. We will pray for all who have been harmed, give thanks for those who keep our community safe, and remind everyone how to raise a concern. There will be a session for children at the [time] Mass. We know this subject may be painful for some. If you would prefer to attend another Mass, or to talk to someone beforehand, please contact [PSR name and contact] in confidence.*

Independent support is available from Safe Spaces on 0300 303 1056.

Sources

- [Mass readings, Sunday 15 November 2026](#)

- [About Safeguarding Sunday](#), Thirtyone:eight
- [Message of Pope Leo XIV for the 10th World Day of the Poor](#)
- [Raise your Roar with Roarry](#), Thirtyone:eight children's resources
- [Carmelite Friars in the UK](#) and the [Safeguarding Policy Statement](#)
- [Safe Spaces England and Wales](#)
- [Childline](#)
- *Your Guide to Safeguarding Sunday 2026*, Thirtyone:eight
- *Story of a Soul*, trans. John Clarke OCD, 3rd ed., ICS Publications, 1996