



This protocol is for Parish Priests and Parish workers in relation to the use of photography, both still and video, to capture Parish events.

# PROTOCOL: PHOTOGRAPHY/FILMING IN PARISHES

This document provides some guidance for safe, appropriate and respectful use of photography of children in a Parish.

## 1. Background

- Parishioners have long enjoyed photographing their children's progress and activities within parish life and at Church. Today this often includes sharing the images on social media. When other children in the background are identifiable, there can be concerns if their parents/carers have not given permission and the images become public. Some parents and carers may have general privacy concerns about images of their children being posted without their consent, or in some cases, there can be real legal or safety concerns for the child or family concerned.

## 2. Privacy Obligations

- Parishes operating under the Privacy Act must obtain consent from parents/carers before photographing or recording images of children for online use.
- Parishes with knowledge of personal information concerning children who cannot be identified publically for legal or other reasons generally may not disclose such information.
- The Privacy Act does not regulate personal photography or recordings by parishioners. In reality parishes are generally not in a position to control the personal photography activities of parishioners or to proactively monitor what they post on social media. Generally, there is no right of parishes to prevent photography in public outside Church grounds, unless a stalking, harassment or other legal issue arises.

## 3. What Parishes Can Do

- Parishes can highlight the need for respectful and safe photography practices as part of parish life and activities. To this end the notice template in the *document 6.7 Guidelines for Parishioners and Guests: Photography of children at Parish events* may be useful to display at strategic places within the Church buildings.
- Where a parish considers it appropriate, it may restrict photography on its premises by setting conditions of entry. Where such restrictions are used they should be clear, tailored, publicised and capable of enforcement. For example, a general parish policy in regard to sacraments which says 'No photography or recording is permitted during sacraments without the express permission of the Parish Priest' may be promulgated. A parishioner who wilfully disregards this policy could be warned and if persisting, could be required to leave the Church.
- If a parish receives a complaint from a parent concerning the photography or social media activity of another parent/carer, the parish should follow its complaints handling procedure. In more extreme cases the parish may assist the complainant to refer the matter to relevant authorities.