

November 2019



**Awareness
& Action**

Throughout the 16 DAYS campaign, Mothers' Union joins with many others, globally, to raise awareness of, and call for an end to, gender-based violence in *all* forms and in *all* societies.

The 16 Days of Activism against Gender Based Violence Campaign is an extension of the day-to-day grassroots work of Mothers' Union. We work alongside communities to help end gender-based violence and to support those affected by it, every day of the year.

Mothers' Union has produced a set of resources specifically for its members and friends, which we are welcome to use and to encourage others to use. They are a great asset in supporting our members and friends as we engage with this important campaign

www.mothersunion.org

<http://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/ending-violence-against-women/take-action/16-days-of-activism>

<https://16dayscwg1.rutgers.edu/>



FAITH MOVEMENT FOR GENDER JUSTICE

Side by Side is a growing global movement of people of faith who want to see gender justice become a reality across the world.

They draw together faith communities in many different countries.

Their goal is to see a world in which:

- gender inequality is no longer considered acceptable under any social, political, economic, religious and cultural circumstances
- women and men, boys and girls understand and promote gender justice and do not engage in behaviour or practices which condone, promote or model gender inequality
- social, political and economic development outcomes are gender equitable e.g. SDG outcomes
- power relations between men and women are gender equitable and all people, regardless of gender, exercise agency and autonomy over their own bodies and lives
- gender based violence is eliminated and no longer tolerated under any circumstance.

www.sidebysidegender.org



**Awareness
& Action**

God created human beings in his own image.
In the image of God he created them;
male and female he created them.
Then God looked over all he had made,
and he saw that it was very good!
Genesis 1:27, 31 (NLT)

Eve's Story

Today is my third time to attend the Annual Women's Aid victim impact report. A lot has happened in these three years. The most important of which is why I am speaking here today, I am here to give a real account of the challenges that face a victim of domestic abuse and to show that there is hope - three years ago I made the move and started the legal process of separating from my abusive husband with whom I shared a life for 17 years.

Today I am happy, the happiest I have felt in 20 years. I can finally live my daily life without fear, I no longer have to worry about whether something trivial that I say or do will upset him and send him into a tirade of verbal abuse or worse still a rage. Three years ago Women's Aid gave me the confidence to make the decisions I knew I had to make to protect myself emotionally, psychologically and physically from a man who I had once thought I loved.

During our 17 year relationship the physical abuse was so bad that I had to attend accident & emergency four times. Black eyes, fractured cheekbones, suspected fractured arm, split lips, head trauma. I never reported it to the guards, I feared of what he would do to me, to my family and to himself.

.....the last time he assaulted me, I feel very lucky to be alive. After a 12-hour drinking binge he came home upset that I had been out earlier in the evening with friends he disapproved of..... The tirade of abuse went on for two hours..... He woke our children from their beds and dragged me by the hair into their bedroom to tell them what a terrible mother I was..... I'll never forget the fear on their little faces..... He threw me on to the bed and then straddled me locking my arms under his legs. That's when the punching started, over and over again at my face on my head.... Then putting his knees on my chest he tried to choke me. I was struggling to breathe.....when I heard my 4-year-old daughter say "Stop daddy, mummy can't breathe. She can't breathe daddy. You're hurting her neck."

The breach of the protection order was heard in the District Court....He plead guilty, but because he had run for sanctuary in a mental hospital his behaviour was excused and no sentence or punishment of any description given. His lawyer even asked that he have this charge expunged from the record as he was making an effort to reform. The judge agreed.....I felt cheated as he winked at me leaving the courtroom. He had gotten away with it again. I was put under pressure by his family not to prosecute him under the charge of Section 3 Assault which is what the guards had deemed appropriate given the extent of my injuries. I was guilted into the idea that it wouldn't be good for the children, that he was going to get the help he needed.

I am ashamed to say that I didn't have the courage to prosecute. I wish I had felt more supported and protected by the law and the right counselling to make a better decision.

He is a ticking time bomb that last exploded when he assaulted my 80-year old mother 4-months ago because he her phone signal was down and he had to wait 30 minutes for an access collection of the kids.

This is an abridged version of Eve's Story that first appeared in the Irish Independent in July 2018

www.independent.ie/irish-news/news



WOMEN'S AID

Making Women and Children Safe

National Freephone Helpline 1800 341 900

24 HOUR

Domestic & Sexual Violence Helpline

0808 802 1414

Open to all women and men affected by domestic & sexual violence

text support to 07797 805 839 24hrsupport@dvhelpline.org

**CHILDREN'S
RIGHTS
ALLIANCE**
Uniting Voices For Children



5 out of the 6 goals of #NoChild2020 included in Budget 2020!

- **Free School Books:** €1 million for a pilot scheme for free books for primary school children in 50 schools
- **Hot School Meals:** €4 million to ensure that over 35,000 children in primary school will get hot school meals in 2020, as well as children in 45 non profit early learning settings.
- **Medical cards:** Expansion of free GP care to children under eight and free dental care for children under six.
- **Targeted Payments:** Working lone parents can earn an extra €15/week and keep their payment, while families on Working Family Payment can earn extra €10/week. Children on welfare payments will get an extra €2/week for under 12s, €3 for over 12s.
- **Childcare:** Additional €54 million for childcare. Extra 5 hours of childcare for lower income families and lone parents can keep existing subsidies until August 2021.



The Big Parenting Survey 2019 is now live!

Last year, the first ever “Big Parenting Survey” was completed by more than a 1000 parents across Northern Ireland and it provided an invaluable insight into the real lives of families.

The results showed:-

- Technology was the biggest challenge for parents and parenting;
- Social media was seen as the second biggest;
- Parents felt confused, left behind and worried about the impact of technology.

There were also stories of technology being a help and useful resource for parents.

This year Parenting NI has decided to take a closer look into parents’ views on technology as well as their parenting experiences generally.

Complete the survey at:

www.bps2019.questionpro.com

Mark 10: Verse 16

And he took the children in his arms, placed his hands on them and blessed them.



Useful Contact Details:

Faith & Policy Unit Co-ordinator: Beth Wortley Tel:02838841126 email:mufaithandpolicy@gmail.com
Southern Dioceses Social Policy contact: Vacant - Contact Beth Wortley
Northern Dioceses Social Policy contact: Jean Thompson Tel:02877765141
Mobile: 07731635627 email:jeanius65@aol.com



16 Days 2019 – Diocesan Events

Saturday, 23rd November,
unless otherwise stated

Armagh - Royal Hotel; Cookstown 16 Days
Breakfast; 9.30-12 noon

Cashel, Ferns & Ossory – St Laserian's, Old
Leighlin 4 pm

15th December, Christ Church, Waterford
(including Souls of Our Shoes Exhibition)
4 pm

Clogher – Friday, 15th November, St Patrick's
Hall, Monaghan, 11am – 12 pm

Tuesday, 26th November, Garvary Parish
Church, 8 pm

Connor – Various Branch events throughout
the Diocese

Cork, Cloyne & Ross – Sunday, 24th
November, Garryvoe Hotel, 10 30 am

Derry & Raphoe – 16 Days Breakfast, White
Horse Hotel, Londonderry 9.30 am – 11.30 am

Down & Dromore, Millbrook Lodge Hotel,
Ballynahinch, 9 30 am, 16 Days Breakfast

Dublin & Glendalough – Saturday, 30th
November, Drumchondra Parish Church,
11 am

Kilmore, Elphin & Ardagh – Saturday, 30th
November, The Martin Memorial Hall,
Killeshandra, 3 pm – 4 30 pm

Meath & Kildare – St Mary's Church, Navan,
Co Meath, 11am

Limerick & Killaloe – Sunday, 17th
November, St Mary's Church, Nenagh, Co
Tipperary, 3 pm

Tuam, Kilalla & Anchony – The Parish
Centre, Castlebar, Co Mayo, 10 am – 1 pm



shutterstock.com • 223249449



**Buy Fairtrade
Buy Ethical**

https://mueshop.org/product-category/mu-products/ethical_gifts/

<https://www.fairtrade.org.uk/>

Useful Dates for your Diary



11th – 15th November – Anti-Bullying Week

13th November – World Kindness Day

13th – 19th Nov – Alcohol Awareness Week

19th November – International Men's Day

25th November – International Day for the
Elimination of Violence Against Women

25th Nov – 10th Dec – 16 Days of Activism
Against Gender Based Violence

2nd December – International Day for the
Abolition of Slavery

10th Dec – International Human Rights Day