

**ANTI – BULLYING**

**CHARTER**

**FOR**

**THE SISTERS OF OUR LADY OF THE MISSIONS**

**February 2017**

We the Sisters of our Lady of the Missions commit ourselves to working together to maintain a bully-free environment in our communities, ministries, and in all other institutions where we live and work. Members of our religious communities and those engaged in our services are expected to respect the right to the God-given dignity of all people in communities, at work and in our ministries. All must be treated equally, and be respected for their individuality and diversity. Bullying in any form is not accepted by us and will not be tolerated. Our policies and procedures will underpin the principles and objectives of this.

All individuals, whether religious in our communities, those directly employed by us, our volunteers or those contracted by the Sisters of our lady of the Missions, have a duty and responsibility to uphold this Anti-Bullying POLICY.

### **What is bullying in religious life?**

1. A bully can destroy an atmosphere of love, peace and support.
2. Behaviour that causes deep psychological pain, stress and personal hurt
3. Bullying can occur by put-downs, rumour, silence/isolation, exclusions, workloads (overload or no work) or denial
4. A bully may coerce, control, persecute or oppress others, through force or threats or by imposing guilt trips on victims.

Elderly religious can feel bullied by being:

- Ignored or disregarded
- Talked about as if they were not present
- Threatened
- Intimidated
- Having worries dismissed
- Never receiving a genuine gesture of affection or concern
- Decisions made for them without consultation

## Effects of bullying on the elderly

- Loss of self esteem/personal worth
- Depression
- Feelings of helplessness and hopelessness

We the Sisters of Our Lady of the Missions endeavour to avoid this happening in our Communities by

- The Provincial Leadership Team agree to have three designated persons to deal with bullying – one Sister to represent Scotland, one to represent England and one for Ireland
- Insuring that alleged victims are able to discuss their claims with one of the designated persons.
- If the claims seem valid the designated person accompanies the alleged victim to an interview with the PLT
- The responsibility of those who make a complaint about bullying should produce – a detailed diary, dates, time, location, words used, body language and effects on the victim.

Ways we aim to address the problem of bullying (if one ever occurs) are:

- Informal method
- Formal method
- Professional mediation.

The PLT and the designated person will decide which method is to be used but both sides need to get help and designated person/s need training in how to deal with complaints

We must continually invoke the grace of God and when we all respect our God-given dignity hopefully our Religious Life will be the loving family that God has meant us to be

This Policy is endorsed by the undersigned members of the Provincial Leadership of the Sisters of Our of the Missions.

Margo Murphy RNDM

Brigid Quinn