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CAFOD A better world needs all of us

Safe in Faith

NBCW NATIONAL BOARD OF CATHOLIC WOMEN

16 Days of Activism to End Violence against Women

25th November marks the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women. It launches **16 Days of Activism** – an international campaign calling for action to end violence against women and girls.

This guide highlights some of the actions you can take within the Church and beyond to stand alongside survivors of abuse, address the causes of violence, and tackle government policies that make women vulnerable to abuse or inflict further harm.

25 November

International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women

One woman is killed every 5 days by a partner or former partner in the UK. **The Red Chair Project** encourages churches to mark an empty chair in remembrance of women who are killed due to men's violence, and call for change. Download a free resource pack.

26 November

SIGNPOST TO SUPPORT

By directing women experiencing abuse to the right support, churches can play an important role in standing alongside women who are trying to leave or recover from abusive relationships. Share **Safe in Faith's** signposting toolkit to help upskill your church leaders.

27 November

STAND AGAINST VIOLENCE WITH WOMEN GLOBALLY

CAFOD supports women and girls experiencing violence through the provision of women's safe spaces offering vital services, life skills and vocational training in contexts such as Lebanon and Sudan. You can help fund this vital work by giving directly to justice for women and girls here.

28 November

FAITH ON THE 4TH

On the 4th day of the 16 Days of Activism we look at the unique role that faith communities and institutions can play in addressing violence against women. Take a look at the latest research from the **Faith and VAWG Coalition** who amplify the crucial work of faith communities.

29 November

SAFE IN FAITH IS 5!

Safe In Faith has now been working for 5 years to foster better support for survivors of domestic abuse in faith communities. Mark the occasion by printing posters to put up in your church, signposting women to key support. Safe in Faith also offer training for church leaders, including brand new training on domestic abuse across cultures.

30 November

REVERSE ADVENT CALENDAR

Women leaving abusive relationships often find themselves facing huge financial challenges, leaving them more reliant on crisis support such as food banks for support. Instead of a traditional advent calendar, try a reverse calendar where you donate a different item each day of advent to your local food bank. Locate yours here!

01 December

TAKE ACTION AGAINST 'EARNED SETTLEMENT'

The government's new 'Earned Settlement' policy will extend routes to settlement in the UK for millions of people. It risks trapping women in unsafe situations where immigration control is used by perpetrators as a tool of coercion. Read CSAN's response from a Catholic perspective, and find out about how these policies will impact women.

02 December

TOOLKIT FOR BLACK MAJORITY CHURCHES

The **Black Churches Domestic Abuse Forum** has designed a toolkit for churches keen to strengthen how they respond to violence against women. Find out more about their work, and if you attend a Black Majority Church you can download and share their toolkit with your church leaders.

03 December

SUPPORT SAFE REPORTING

Insecure immigration status is regularly used as a tool of control by abusive partners or employers, with migrant women fearing they will be deported if they report abuse. Read about **Latin American Women's Rights Service** campaign for safe reporting mechanisms. You can also support their work for women with No Recourse to Public Funds

04 December

STAND WITH MUSLIM WOMEN

There has been a significant rise in racist and gender-based violence directed towards muslim women due to islamophobic rhetoric. Reach out to your local muslim women's organisation to ask how your church can stand in solidarity with them, and read this blog series on Islamophobia by the **Faith and VAWG coalition**.

05 December

UNDERSTAND WHAT DOMESTIC ABUSE LOOKS LIKE

Grow your understanding of what abusive behaviour in relationships looks like and how to respond. Read **CSAN/Safe in Faith's** Do Justice guide on Domestic Abuse and **The National Board of Catholic Women's** resource pack. Sharpen your knowledge with **Bright Sky's** questionnaire.

06 December

DAY OF PRAYER

We encourage you to take time today to pray for women facing gender-based violence, and for the Church's response.

See Michelle's prayer below, from Nikki Dillon Keane's book *Domestic Abuse in Church Communities: A Safe Pastoral Response*.

07 December

ASK FOR MARY

Parish Offices can be an ideal place for women facing violence and abuse to safely reach out for support, when they are not safe to do so at home.
Ask your church to join **Safe in Faith's 'Ask for Mary' programme** and receive training so they can better support women access the services they need. Find out more.

08 December

LEARN ABOUT GENDER BASED VIOLENCE AROUND THE WORLD

Read more about **CAFOD's** work to mitigate and respond to violence against women and girls in contexts affected by climate crisis, conflict and poverty.

09 December

REUNITE WOMEN WITH THEIR FAMILIES

The government's suspension of Refugee Family Reunion is having a devastating impact on refugee women whose families are being torn apart. Join Women for Refugee Women's **Families Belong Together campaign**, calling on the government to restore the right for refugee families to reunite.

10 December

CREATE A SAFER FUTURE FOR GIRLS

16-19 year olds face the highest levels of domestic abuse of any age group, but relationship education in schools could tackle gender-based violence and support young people to live free from abuse. Check out **End Violence Against Women's** campaign to tackle domestic abuse through education.

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Michelle's prayer

Lord protect me,
guide me,
keep me safe.
Grant me the strength, wisdom and good judgement to know what to do in any situation.
Help me know when and whom to ask for help.
Help me value myself as you value me and expect the love and respect you intend for me.
Help me to break old patterns that have harmed me and put me at risk.
Help me to remember that I can say no to anything that is not in my best interests.
Help me to remember that you made me to be in your image as a precious child of God,
with my unique gifts and contributions to this wonderful world.
Help me to remove or avoid anything that stands between me and my path,
my journey and all that makes me the best I can be.
Let me feel worthy of love,
and let your love in
to mend this broken heart, mind and life,
so I can be whole and wonderful.
In you I place my love and trust.
Protect me, Lord.
Amen.