



*“Encouraging
Families
through Faith
In Action”*

Domestic Violence Ramifications of the AusAlert National Test.

MU Members,

Kerryn Lewis, Prevention of Violence Against Women Coordinator Melbourne Diocese (PVAW) has issued the below notice directed to Church Clergy and Leaders. As MU, I ask you to bring this notice to the attention of your Vicar (in case they have not seen it). You may be able to include it in Church notices, and in general talk amongst parishioners, family, friends.

I also heard Paul Murray broadcasting this message on his program last night. The more we spread the information, the more vulnerable people we may be able to reach. Don't stay silent thinking someone else will say something.

On **Monday 27 July at 2:00pm (AEST)**, Australia will conduct the **AusAlert National Test**. While emergency alerts are designed to support public safety, they may unintentionally increase risk for people experiencing **family violence, coercive control, stalking or technology-facilitated abuse**.

Compatible mobile phones, tablets, smart watches, children's safety watches and other connected devices may receive the alert. For some victim-survivors, an unexpected alert could expose hidden devices, draw unwanted attention or compromise carefully developed safety plans.

As clergy and church leaders, you may be among the trusted people to whom victim-survivors disclose concerns. Your awareness and timely conversations may help someone protect their safety and maintain vital support networks.

ADVICE FOR PEOPLE WHO MAY BE AT RISK:

If receiving the alert could place someone or their children at greater risk, they should consider:

Turning affected devices off or placing them into Aeroplane mode at least one hour before the test.

Keeping those devices off or in Aeroplane mode for up to 24 hours after the test, where it is safe and appropriate to do so.

Everyone's circumstances are different. Any decisions about safety should be based on individual circumstances and personal safety planning.

How Can Church Leaders Help?

Church leaders play an important role in supporting the safety and wellbeing of their communities. Ahead of the AusAlert National Test, you can help by:

- Sharing information about the upcoming national test with your congregation and ministry groups.
- Encouraging anyone who may be at risk to review their personal safety plans before the test.
 - Raising awareness that compatible devices may receive the emergency alert.
 - Connecting people who need support with specialist family violence services.

A timely conversation may help someone protect their safety and maintain access to vital support networks.

Karen