



Review of Child Safeguarding Practice
in the
Society of the Divine Saviour
(Salvatorians)

undertaken by

**The National Board for Safeguarding Children in the
Catholic Church in Ireland (NBSCCCI)**

Date: March 2016

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Background

The National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland (NBSCCCI) was asked by the Sponsoring Bodies, namely the Episcopal Conference, the Conference of Religious of Ireland and the Irish Missionary Union, to undertake a comprehensive review of safeguarding practice within and across all the Church authorities on the island of Ireland. The purpose of the review is to confirm that current child safeguarding practice complies with the Standards set down within the guidance issued by the Sponsoring Bodies in February 2009, *Safeguarding Children: Standards and Guidance Document for the Catholic Church in Ireland* and that all known allegations and concerns had been appropriately dealt with. To achieve this task, safeguarding practice in each Church authority is to be reviewed through an examination of case records and through interviews with key personnel involved both within and external to a diocese or religious order.

This report contains the findings of the *Review of Child Safeguarding Practice within the Society of the Divine Saviour* (hereinafter referred to as the Salvatorians) undertaken by the NBSCCCI in line with the request made to it by the Sponsoring Bodies. This religious order had ceased any formal ministry on the island of Ireland prior to the review. The NBSCCCI however was aware that there was a member of the order (deceased) who had sexually abused children in Ireland, so on this basis it was decided to conduct a limited form of review. Because the Order no longer ministers in Ireland, a large number of the criteria against which compliance with the seven Standards is measured do not apply. The review therefore is mainly concerned with a review of the historical case of a priest abuser who was a member of the Order. Case material was made available to the reviewers by the Provincial; and he was also interviewed at the Order's Provincial Office in London. The NBSCCCI believes that all relevant documentation for this case that is in the possession of the Provincial was shared with the reviewer, and the Provincial has confirmed this.

The abusing priest ministered in a parish in the Archdiocese of Dublin, and the Child Safeguarding and Protection Service (CSPS) of the Archdiocese had also developed a case file. The NBSCCCI is grateful to the Archbishop of Dublin for permission to read the CSPS case file.

The reviewer also examined the Child Safeguarding Policy and structures of the Order.

In response to a notice announcing the review, a victim of the abusing priest member of the Order asked to meet with the reviewer to give her account of her dealings with the Salvatorians following her disclosure of abuse.

The findings of the review have been shared with a reference group in redacted form before being submitted to Fr. McAllister, Provincial, along with any recommendations arising from the findings.

Introduction

In the centenary year of this religious order it published a major written history entitled, *The Salvatorians in History and Today 1881—1981*, which is available to read on <http://www.salvatorians.in/sites/all/images/publication/file/>. This 230-page history provides a very detailed account of the founder of the order and of its growth and development.

The Salvatorians were founded by Fr. Francis Jordan, a German priest, on December 8th, 1881. He had been ordained in July, 1878. At this time the move to separate State from Church had developed into a harsh restriction of the ministry and pastoral care activities of the Church in Germany. The *Kulturkampf* Laws were introduced to try and limit the power and influence of the Church in Germany, but Fr. Jordan wanted to establish a religious society that would work to mitigate the effects of these oppressive legal provisions. He developed an ambitious plan to grow a society that would have three degrees of membership, the first being that of the members who would be professed and who would maintain the three evangelical counsels, usually referred to as the vows of poverty, chastity and obedience.

The Salvatorian website describes the foundation of the order in the following manner:

*On the 8th December 1881, in the Chapel of St Brigida in Rome, Father Jordan and three other priests took private vows as members of the Apostolic Teaching Society. It is this date which is kept as the foundation day of the Salvatorians.*¹

Having been founded in Rome, the Salvatorians have their Motherhouse there, which is where the Superior General and the order's General Council are based.

The order went through two name changes, from being the Apostolic Teaching Society to the Catholic Teaching Society, and finally to the Society of the Divine Saviour, its current name. It quickly became known as *the Salvatorians*.

Fr. Jordan was enthusiastic that his congregation would become active as a missionary society, and by 1890 they had their first mission, to Assam in India. The society's website describes the rapid expansion of this missionary outreach:

A big uplift was given to the Salvatorians when the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith asked Father Jordan if he would take charge of a vast new mission area in Assam, North East India. As early as 1890 he sent his first missionaries to Assam, even though he could hardly spare the men. In 1892 he started foundations in the United States and Austria. There followed: Ecuador-Colombia (1893), Switzerland (1894), Czechoslovakia (1895), Brazil (1896), Romania (1898), Belgium, Poland and Yugoslavia (1900), England (1901) and Germany (1915). So during his lifetime Father Jordan established the Society in 14 different countries.²

The Salvatorians are now active in six regions of the world. These are:

¹ www.sds.org/about-us/history

² Ibid.

Africa: Cameroon, Comoros Islands, Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya, Mozambique and Tanzania

Asia: India, Philippines, Sri Lanka and Taiwan.

Australia

Europe: Albania, Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Czech Republic, England, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Montenegro, Poland, Romania, Russia, Scotland, Slovakia, Spain, Switzerland and Ukraine.

North America: Canada Guatemala, Mexico and the United States.

South America: Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Suriname and Venezuela.

While there are members of the Order in Ireland, the British Pro-vince (which includes Ireland) is no longer directly responsible for the ministry that any of these priests are engaged in. These few ministries are described later in this report.

In 1888, Fr. Jordan welcomed Therese von Wüllenweber to Rome to found the Sisters of the Divine Saviour, which remains within the Salvatorian ‘family’. Between the Sisters, the priests and brothers of the Salvatorians and some lay Salvatorians, there are approximately 3,100 members active in 45 countries. These men and women minister “that all may know the Saviour”.

The *Charter of the Salvatorian Family* can be read at www.sds.org/about-us/salvatorian-family/charter; and *The Constitution of the Society of the Divine Saviour*, published by the Generalate of the Society of the Divine Saviour in Rome on March 15, 2013 can be downloaded from www.sds.org/resources/publications/constitution.

The Review

The following notice was placed on the Salvatorian website:

SAFEGUARDING IRELAND

Published September 29, 2015

The Salvatorians have invited the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland (NBSCCCI) to conduct a review of safeguarding practice.

If you have any concerns about Safeguarding in the Salvatorians in Ireland, we invite you to come forward to us at Salvatorian Safeguarding Officer, 129 Spencer Road, Harrow HA3 7BJ; to the NBSCCCI (01-5053124); or to An Garda Siochana / PSNI or TUSLA / HSC and give contact details.

As mentioned in the introduction, one victim did contact the NBSCCCI to request that she would be interviewed as part of the fieldwork for the review, and this was done. The reviewer also corresponded with this adult woman subsequent to that interview.

The information contained in this review report was obtained during site visits to the British Pro-vince Provincial Office in Harrow in London and to the CSPS offices in the Dublin Archdiocese, where case files were read; as well as from meetings with the Provincial of the Order and the Order's Child Safeguarding Officer, with staff of CSPS, and with the victim who had contacted the NBSCCCI. The Provincial provided the reviewer with a copy of the SDS *Safeguarding Children in Ireland* policy and procedures document of February 2012.

Due to the fact that the Order has no formal ministry on the island of Ireland, many of the seven Child Safeguarding Standards in the *Standards and Guidance Document for the Catholic Church in Ireland* of 2009 do not apply: But the Salvatorians nonetheless have invited the NBSCCCI to conduct a Review in order to assess compliance with the standards promulgated by the National Board as approved by the sponsoring body.

Role Profile – past and present role with children

The Salvatorians in Ireland had one formal ministry, when they staffed and ran a parish on behalf of the Archdiocese of Dublin. Their ministry involving children was the parish ministry they provided within the Archdiocese of Dublin. In carrying this out the congregation was bound by the child safeguarding policy and procedures of the Archdiocese of Dublin specifically, and would have been expected to adhere to the policy and procedures contained in the 1996 Irish Church Document, *Child Sexual Abuse - Framework for a Church Response* generally.

Profile of Members

There are 27 SDS priests in the British Pro-Province, and seven of these priests reside in the Republic of Ireland. Two priests live in retirement in a house in Dublin. One retired priest lives in a nursing home where he also acts as Chaplain, as well as undertaking some supply work in the local diocese. One priest on loan to western diocese acts as a curate in a parish there. Another SDS priest lives in the mid-west and does occasional supply work in local parishes. One priest lives in the north-west and does occasional supply work in his local diocese. Finally, another SDS priest lives in the north-west, does not have faculties to minister in his local diocese, but does supply work in another European country.

Of the four SDS priests who live in Ireland and who have ministries here, all four follow the child safeguarding guidance of the relevant diocese in which they live and work.

The Salvatorians do not have and do not envisage having any ministry with children and young people in Ireland, so the criteria that underpin Standard 3 are not applicable to them.

Policy and Procedures Document

The Salvatorians have the *Safeguarding Children in Ireland* policy and procedures document of February 2012. This was adopted by the order once their Safeguarding Commission approved it on 7th February 2012. On page 5 of the 44-page document, the statement is made that

It is the responsibility of every member of the Society of the Divine Saviour to uphold the law and adhere to Gospel values by respecting the dignity and rights of all children and young people, and to work together so as to ensure their safety and wellbeing.

On the same page it is further undertaken that:

The Society of the Divine Saviour is committed to working in partnership with statutory authorities to ensure that all aspects of child welfare are managed promptly, professionally and justly. We will adhere to statutory policy, notably 'Children First': National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2009). All child protection concerns will be reported to the civil authorities without delay.

There is some confusion in this statement, in that the two official publicized iterations of *Children First* were in 1999 and in 2011.

Prior to their 2012 Irish policy and procedures, the Society operated the 2007 Society of the Divine Saviour – British Province Child Protection Procedures.

The *Safeguarding Children in Ireland* SDS policy and procedures is not available on the Salvatorians website.

Structures

The Salvatorians have adopted the English Catholic Church's child safeguarding structures in that it has a Safeguarding Commission and a Safeguarding Officer; the equivalent structures in the Catholic Church in Ireland are the Safeguarding Committee and the Advisory Panel (which are completely separate and discharge very different functions), and the Designated Liaison Person. However, the *Safeguarding Children in Ireland* SDS document refers to the Designated Person and the Advisory Panel, which in reality do not exist. This is confusing, and is perhaps the result of having a document written for Ireland by someone who was more familiar with the Irish Catholic Church than the English Catholic Church. The result however is that the document does not achieve the level of clarity that is necessary.

Management of Allegations and liaison with the statutory authorities

Information received from the Salvatorians, indicate that there was one priest who ministered in Ireland against whom there were allegations of child sexual abuse. According to the Salvatorian case file, there is knowledge of 9 named children who were abused by Fr. A. However, behind the small numbers recorded is this one case of a prolific, long term abuser of children, there is information on file which suggests, by his own admission Fr. A had abused in excess of 100 children, mostly girls in the age range 6 years to 9 years of age, in various parts of Ireland; but Fr. A did not provide the names of these children when making this admission.

Fr. A served as a Salvatorian priest from the time of his ordination in the 1950s to the time of his death, in 2009. He worked as a teacher and a seminary lecturer in the UK, a member of the General Council of the Order in Rome, a parish priest in an Australian and in a Dublin parish, and as a congregational archivist and hospital Chaplain in Rome. His abuse began early in his priesthood and lasted at least until 2004.

Fr. A was accused in 2002 by a female relative of abusing her when she was a child; and from reviewing the case files this appears to be the first allegation that was made known to the congregation. While it is difficult from the written records to be completely sure of when his Provincial was first made aware of this allegation, Fr. A was withdrawn by the then Provincial from his parish in Dublin in December 2002. By that time Fr. A had been assessed, though it is noted that Fr. A had arranged this assessment himself. The advice of the assessing professional was that, while the abuse alleged did happen, it was

probably a once-off event. He did however state that it would probably be wise not to allow Fr. A to have ministry that allowed him access to children.

The Provincial wrote to the Archbishop of Dublin informing him that he was withdrawing Fr. A from the parish, and he implied that this was due to the stress of his responsibilities there. The Provincial however did not inform the Archbishop of the real reason for withdrawing the priest; and he subsequently arranged for him to take up a position in the congregation's archives at the congregation's Motherhouse in Rome.

In 1996 the first guidelines for the management of clerical child abuse was published in Ireland, the *Child Sexual Abuse - Framework for a Church Response* document published by the Irish Bishops' Conference and the Conference of Religious in Ireland. That 64-page document provided the Provincial of the Salvatorians with very clear guidance on how he should have managed the allegation against Fr. A. There is no evidence on file that the Provincial took any of the actions recommended in the guidance document of the Irish Catholic Church of that time.

The Provincial should have informed but did not inform the following individuals and agencies of the allegation against Fr. A, and of the real reason for moving him from his Dublin parish:

- An Garda Síochána
- The Eastern Health Board
- The Cardinal Archbishop of Dublin, or anyone else in the archdiocese
- The parishioners of the parish he was leaving
- The priest Superior of the SDS Community in the parish he was leaving
- The incoming Parish Priest of the parish he was leaving
- The Salvatorian Provincial Council in London
- The Superior General of the Salvatorians in Rome
- Any of the other members of the Congregation's Generalate in Rome
- Any manager or staff member of the hospital or clinic in Rome to which he was appointed in November 2003, when the previous chaplain died suddenly. [Fr. A had gone to Rome to become an archivist in the Motherhouse].

There is no information on file about the whereabouts or activities of Fr. A between the time that the Provincial wrote to the Cardinal Archbishop on 11/11/2002 and when he arrived in Rome sometime early in 2003.

There is no record on file of any restrictions having been placed on Fr. A, nor of any precept forbidding him to have public ministry, and more importantly, ministry with children.

It is important to note that the Provincial referred to in this description of events has completed his term of office and is not the same person as the current Provincial

As nobody in Rome had been made aware that there were child protection concerns about Fr. A, he was not supervised in any way while he worked in Rome. To date the congregation has not received any allegations relating to Fr. A's time spent in Rome as an archivist and hospital chaplain.

It is recorded that Fr. A returned in May 2004 on holidays to the Dublin parish from which he had previously been withdrawn, and that he said Mass and mixed with parishioners there. It is not recorded on file whether this was Fr. A's only visit to Ireland following his posting to Rome in early 2003.

The Salvatorians are currently investigating an allegation from a woman who was abused as a child by a priest in that Dublin parish in 2004; during which time Fr. A was back on holidays ministering in the parish; it has not been confirmed that the respondent priest was Fr A.

Fr. A's *modus operandi* was generally to befriend families that had daughters in the age range 6 years to 9 years of age. He would then visit these families and sexually abuse these small girls. He apparently did so while their parents were out of the room, and he did so with impunity. The reviewer has been informed that Fr. A would stop visiting families when their daughters turned 10-years of age, as they were then outside his preferred target age group.

When he was in the Dublin parish in May 2004, Fr. A became aware that a young woman in another part of Ireland had alleged to her mother that he had sexually abused her during her childhood. Fr. A, on hearing about this complaint, drove to the home of the family concerned to discuss the matter with the mother who had received the disclosure from her daughter. This action by the priest is inexplicable unless he believed himself to be in some way immune from the consequences of his abusive behaviour. However, when he arrived at the family home An Garda Síochána was contacted and Gardai arrived and arrested the priest. An Garda Síochána subsequently took a statement from the young woman.

It is recorded that even after his interview with An Garda Síochána, Fr. A visited and stayed with a family in another part of Ireland; the current leadership state that they have no knowledge of this. There is no record on file of any restrictions being placed by the Order on him, his ministry, or his contact with families.

Fr. A was referred to a residential assessment unit in the UK in August 2004, and it was during his time there that he admitted to having sexually abused over 100 children, mostly but not exclusively small girls; he admitted to sexually abusing two or three boys early on in his priesthood. He returned to Ireland for a time following his assessment and stayed under the supervision of his brother (also a priest) who was chaplain to a centre for recovering alcoholics in Galway. The file records do not provide exact dates for this visit to Ireland by Fr. A, or any account of his movements while he was here.

Fr. A returned on some date to the UK and began the treatment programme which lasted for a year. After a couple of months the treatment centre closed and he resided in a rented house with another priest in treatment under the supervision of the therapy team. After the treatment programme concluded he moved to a small SDS community house that had been established to provide supervision and support to him. The file records do not provide exact dates of Fr. A's return to the UK.

The management of Fr. A was overseen by the congregation's Child Protection Committee, which discussed the case on ten occasions between 26/01/2006 and 24/02/2009.

Fr. A was convicted of child sexual abuse in December 2007. The case related to his abuse of 'several girls over a 25-year period. He was given a custodial sentence of four years with all but 18 months suspended. Fr. A was released from prison in early 2009. He took part in a post-prison risk assessment conducted by a Psychiatrist, the report of which informed his subsequent management and supervision. He was accompanied back to the UK where he again lived in the small community house developed for him. Fr. A was put on the UK Central Public Protection Unit Sex Offender Register and he signed a strict Contract of Conduct drawn up by his Provincial. He died later that year.

It was after his conviction that the parishioners in the Dublin parish in which Fr. A had been parish priest were informed in a statement read out at weekend Masses that he had sexually abused children.

In January 2008, the then Provincial commissioned an independent case review of the congregation's handling of the Fr. A case. The reviewer who was engaged completed a comprehensive report in October 2008 that was critical of how the case was originally managed – there were no appropriate safeguarding structures; existing church guidance was not followed and not known by members; recording and reporting was poor; communications were poor; there was a confusion of roles; and the seniority of Fr. A seemed to impede clear thinking by the congregational leadership.

The review report also contained seven recommendations for how the congregation should improve its child safeguarding – to develop and disseminate a written safeguarding policy; to have clear written guidance on what to do in the event of a child safeguarding concern arising; to develop a *culture of safety* within the congregation; to improve awareness of child safeguarding in the congregation through development and training; to develop victim support; to put in place perpetrator support; and to plan to monitor the steps outlined.

The reviewer saw no evidence of a plan to monitor the recommendations of the independent review report or of a record of its implementation.

To date the Salvatorians are aware of nine women who have made allegations concerning Fr. A abusing them as children, and some of these women have initiated civil claims against the congregation.

The victim interviewed by the reviewer provided evidence that helped convict Fr. A. The congregation referred her to and paid for counselling for her over a number of years. The complainant met the reviewer on one occasion and had several phone calls with the NBSCCCI staff. In all her communication she expressed her deep anger about the management of the case and her continued belief that the Order covered up the abuse by Fr. A.

It is clear to the reviewer that because Fr. A was considered to be a good priest who had served at very senior levels in the congregation, the allegations against him were not initially believed. Fr. A is still esteemed by some members of his congregation for his work and personal piety, and they seem to be able to separate this out from his admitted behaviour as an abuser of small children. This ability to dissociate - or split off - is a source of genuine concern to the NBSCCCI.

In the March 2013 Constitution of the Society, at paragraph 206, it is stated that:

We are obliged to evaluate our apostolic activities periodically, especially according to Gospel values, and to update the methods and means we employ in them, in order to ensure an ever more adequate response to the needs of the People of God.³

In the spirit of this statement, the following recommendation is made:

Recommendation 1

It is recommended that that the Provincial of the British Pro-province of the Society of the Divine Saviour's works with his Provincial Council and his Safeguarding Commission in a planned and concerted way to identify any cultural and attitudinal changes that need to be made within the congregation to ensure that children are safeguarded against clerical sexual abuse, and to make these changes.

It is noted that the Provincial reports extensive awareness-raising initiatives taken within the congregation in the period subsequent to Fr. A's conviction through the provision of a number of in-service training modules; and he is of the view that these initiatives taken by the leadership of the congregation have been instrumental in having Safeguarding treated more seriously by the whole order. The leadership of the British Pro-province has also widened the congregation's Safeguarding Commission, and they commissioned an external review into lessons that needed to be learned from this case, which review report was read by the NBSCCCI reviewer.

While it is clear from the file records that Fr. A eventually received the assessment, treatment and supervision that he required, there is little recorded that convinces the reviewer that his abuse was ever properly notified to the statutory authorities.

³ Constitution of the Society of the Divine Saviour - Incorporating changes made by the XIV, XV, XVI, XVII and XVIII General Chapters and approved by the Holy See - Published by the Generalate of the Society of the Divine Saviour, Rome, March 15, 2013

The file records do not contain any dedicated section that suggests victim needs-led response to complainants by the congregation. There is no written record on file of the expression of outrage by the leadership of the congregation to victims of Fr. A about what he had done to children over the course of his priestly ministry as a member of the Society of the Divine Saviour.

Recommendation 2

It is recommended that the Provincial seeks to identify the victims of Fr. A, within and beyond Ireland, and to respond to them with sensitivity and with genuine and generous pastoral care.

The congregational website contains no information of any sort relating to child safeguarding, which could be read as signifying that this aspect of the Society's mission is not considered to be a priority to it.

Recommendation 3

It is recommended under Standard 5, Criterion 5.1 that the Salvatorians create a dedicated page on their website for Child Safeguarding in which the safeguarding structures and policies and procedures, including contact details, are clearly displayed and are easily accessible.

Conclusion

The Society of the Divine Saviour allowed an abusive priest to continue to live without interventions or restrictions, despite there being adequate knowledge and advice available to it as to how he should have been managed once it was known that he had abused a child. It is very possible, based on our knowledge of the behavior of serial paedophiles, that he abused during the period from when the congregation was first made aware in 2002 to when it arranged for him to undertake residential treatment in the UK in August 2004. The file records do not contain sufficient information on his movements between the time that he completed treatment until he was imprisoned to be able to say with confidence that he had no access to children during that period either.

This priest served as a teacher in the UK, as a parish priest in Australia and Dublin and as a hospital chaplain in Rome. To date the Provincial has not been made aware of any complaints against him related to any of these three postings.

The National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland wishes to impress on the Society of the Divine Saviour the considerable responsibility it still carries to ensure that the devastation perpetrated on his victims by Fr. A is conscientiously, compassionately and effectively addressed.

Recommendations

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Review of Safeguarding in the Catholic Church in Ireland

Terms of Reference

(which should be read in conjunction with the accompanying Notes)

1. To ascertain the full extent of all complaints or allegations, knowledge, suspicions or concerns of child sexual abuse, made to the Diocese by individuals or by the Civil Authorities in the period 1st January 1975 to 1st June 2010, against Catholic clergy and/or religious still living and who are ministering/or who once ministered under the aegis of the Diocese and examine/review and report on the nature of the response on the part of the Diocese.

2. If deemed relevant, select a random sample of complaints or allegations, knowledge, suspicions or concerns of child sexual abuse, made to the Diocese by individuals or by the Civil Authorities in the period 1st January 1975 to 1st June 2010, against Catholic clergy and/or religious now deceased and who ministered under the aegis of the Diocese and examine/review and report on the nature of the response on the part of the Diocese.

3. To ascertain all of the cases during the relevant period in which the Diocese:
 - knew of child sexual abuse involving Catholic clergy and/or religious still living and including those clergy and/or religious visiting, studying and/or retired;
 - had strong and clear suspicion of child sexual abuse; or
 - had reasonable concern;and examine/review and report on the nature of the response on the part of the Diocese.

4. To consider and report on the following matters:
 - Child safeguarding policies and guidance materials currently in use in the Diocese and an evaluation of their application;
 - Communication by the Diocese with the Civil Authorities;
 - Current risks and their management.

Accompanying Notes

Note 1

Definition of Child Sexual Abuse:

The definition of child sexual abuse is in accordance with the definition adopted by the Ferns Report (and the Commission of Investigation Report into the Catholic ArchDiocese of Dublin). The following is the relevant extract from the Ferns Report:

“While definitions of child sexual abuse vary according to context, probably the most useful definition and broadest for the purposes of this Report was that which was adopted by the Law Reform Commission in 1990⁴ and later developed in Children First, National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children (Department of Health and Children, 1999) which state that ‘child sexual abuse occurs when a child is used by another person for his or her gratification or sexual arousal or that of others’. Examples of child sexual abuse include the following:

- exposure of the sexual organs or any sexual act intentionally performed in the presence of a child;
- intentional touching or molesting of the body of a child whether by person or object for the purpose of sexual arousal or gratification;
- masturbation in the presence of the child or the involvement of the child in an act of masturbation;
- sexual intercourse with the child whether oral, vaginal or anal;
- sexual exploitation of a child which includes inciting, encouraging, propositioning, requiring or permitting a child to solicit for, or to engage in prostitution or other sexual acts. Sexual exploitation also occurs when a child is involved in exhibition, modelling or posing for the purpose of sexual arousal, gratification or sexual act, including its recording (on film, video tape, or other media) or the manipulation for those purposes of the image by computer or other means. It may also include showing sexually explicit material to children which is often a feature of the ‘grooming’ process by perpetrators of abuse.

⁴ This definition was originally proposed by the Western Australia Task Force on Child Sexual Abuse, 1987 and is adopted by the Law Reform Commission (1990) *Report on Child Sexual Abuse*, p. 8.

Note 2 Definition of Allegation:

The term allegation is defined as an accusation or complaint where there are reasonable grounds for concern that a child may have been, or is being sexually abused, or is at risk of sexual abuse, including retrospective disclosure by adults. It includes allegations that did not necessarily result in a criminal or canonical investigation, or a civil action, and allegations that are unsubstantiated but which are plausible. (NB: Erroneous information does not necessarily make an allegation implausible, for example, a priest arrived in a parish in the Diocese a year after the alleged abuse, but other information supplied appears credible and the alleged victim may have mistaken the date).

Note 3 False Allegations:

The National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland wishes to examine any cases of false allegation so as to review the management of the complaint by the Diocese.

Note 4 Random sample:

The random sample (if applicable) must be taken from complaints or allegations, knowledge, suspicions or concerns of child sexual abuse made against all deceased Catholic clergy/religious covering the entire of the relevant period being 1st January 1975 to 1st June 2010 and must be selected randomly in the presence of an independent observer.

Note 5 Civil Authorities:

Civil Authorities are defined in the Republic of Ireland as the Health Service Executive and An Garda Síochána and in Northern Ireland as the Health and Social Care Trust and the Police Service of Northern Ireland.