

Summary of the references to Bishop Donal Murray in the Murphy Report

Paragraphs in which Bishop Murray is mentioned in the Report can be found on this web site under *Paragraphs referring to Bishop Murray*.

The contents of the Murphy Report can be found in full by navigating through this link:

<http://www.justice.ie/en/JELR/Pages/PB09000504>

1. The following are the key outcomes, including criticisms which relate to Bishop Murray in the report;
 - a. Bishop Murray is referenced in relation to nine cases **(See references below)**
 - b. In any case where Bishop Murray was the first person to receive a complaint/allegation he has not been criticised. There were five such cases.
 - c. In another case, in which he was not the first to receive a complaint, there is no criticism.
 - d. Bishop Murray is criticised in three cases but in none of those three cases was he acting on an allegation of sexual abuse. In one of these he was acting on complaints/concerns raised and did his best to investigate those complaints but did not have an allegation to work with.
 - e. In the final two instances, Bishop Murray was not the recipient of a complaint but was asked to carry out a specific task in relation to a priest against whom a complaint had been made prior to Bishop Murray's involvement.
 - f. In the case (Naughton) in which the report is most critical of Bishop Murray, the report finds: "*Bishop Murray was another long serving auxiliary bishop (from 1982 to 1996). He handled a number of complaints and suspicions badly. For example, he did not deal properly with the suspicions and concerns that were expressed to him in relation to Fr Naughton (see Chapter 29). When, a short time later, factual evidence of Fr Naughton's abusing emerged in another parish Bishop Murray's failure to reinvestigate the earlier suspicions was inexcusable. Bishop Murray did, however, accept in 2002 that he had not dealt well with the situation.*" – Section 1.53, page 14 of Murphy Report
 - g. Nevertheless, the following points are also relevant to this case:
 - i. "*In 1983, two parishioners from Valkeymount expressed concerns to Bishop Donal Murray about Fr Naughton's behaviour. They claimed he was "too close to the altar boys". Bishop Murray told the Commission that the two men wanted Fr Naughton removed from the parish. He said that the men refused to be specific with him and that they were not suggesting that there was anything wrong going on. The bishop told the Commission that he was uneasy and was afraid that it could involve inappropriate or even abusive activity with children. The parish priest at the time investigated the complaints and concluded that they were unfounded.*" – Section 29.4, page 455 of Murphy Report
 - ii. Bishop Murray was about eighteen months a bishop at the time. The area for which he was responsible had a population of approximately 250,000 and therefore was not familiar with the people of the parish. Consequently he sought the help of the Parish Priest to make further inquiries.
 - iii. Bishop Murray asked the parishioners who came to him a) whether they were concerned about any individual altar boys and b) whether they were concerned about any particular kind of behaviour. In each

case they responded that they were not suggesting that there was anything wrong going on.

- iv. The Parish Priest was sceptical about any suggestion of abuse. The bishop asked the Parish Priest to speak to people who might be aware of any concerns – the bishop suggested teachers, sacristans etc. Some days later the Parish Priest assured Bishop Murray that he could set his mind at rest on this matter.
 - v. Bishop Murray then summoned Fr Naughton to his own house and spoke to him. Fr Naughton denied any wrongdoing. Bishop Murray warned him that there must be no further reason for concern.
 - vi. Bishop Murray then reported the matter to the Archbishop to ensure that he would be aware of the matter
- h. In another of the cases in which Bishop Murray is criticised, the focus is on his failure to implement proper monitoring processes: *“There was a major problem about the monitoring of this priest (Fr. Marius). Despite the fact that he was the area bishop and was in touch with the priest on a regular basis between March 1993 and the time of his appointment as bishop of Limerick in February 1996, Bishop Murray failed to put a proper system in place.”* – Section 34.33, Page 510. However the report goes on to say that in the Commission’s view there was nobody responsible for monitoring: *“Bishop Murray also said that there was ‘no developed thinking’ within the Archdiocese at this time regarding how a known or suspected offender should be supervised.”* – Section 34.33, Page 510. The priest concerned had signed a detailed Behavioural Contract with the Archbishop.
- i. In the third of these cases (Fr. McNamee), no allegation was received by Bishop Murray but he is criticised for not properly informing the nuns in the convent about a priest’s past: *“Bishop Murray called to see him shortly before Christmas 1994. He inquired with the superior as to Fr McNamee’s health and general well-being. He failed to mention to the superior the real purpose of his visit and the concerns which the Archdiocese had in regard to Fr McNamee and his behaviour with young people.”* – Section 12.23, Page 182. As the bishop pointed out to the Archbishop’s House immediately on his return from seeing the priest, he had no detailed knowledge of the priest’s past. Not alone did he not have any detailed knowledge of the priest’s past, he also had no idea then, or until he learned that Cardinal Connell had issued an apology to the sisters after Bishop Murray had gone to Limerick, that the nuns were, apparently, never told of previous complaints against this priest.
2. In these two cases when the Report uses the word ‘complaint’ it seems to mean ‘case’. Bishop Murray received no complaint.

3. In summary:

Fr Marius: The Report finds that no-one was responsible for a monitoring system.

Fr Mc Namee: Bishop Murray had never been informed of complaints in his previous parishes nor of investigations conducted. He had no information re: recently received complaint. (Commission accepts this). Clear from briefing that Bishop Murray was not meant to be telling them of previous offending. He only discovered the Sisters had not been told when Cardinal Connell apologised to them some years ago. This account is borne out by the information in briefing document sent to Bishop Murray’s and in his report back written and sent on the day of his visit to Fr McNamee.

Index of the Murphy Report

Murray, Donal (auxiliary bishop 1985-1996), 1.22, 1.47, 1.53, 1.58, 1.65, 1.89, 3.22, 11.13, 21.6, 26.34 awareness of clerical child sex abuse, 1.22 handling of complaints, 1.53, 12.22-12.25, 12.49, 21.6, 21.23-21.24, 26.19, 29.4-29.12, 29.15, 29.53, 29.54, 29.56, 31.5, 31.12, 33.6-33.13, 33.18, 33.44, 34.16-18, 34.20, 34.33

[References in red above are omitted or incorrectly given in the Report]

References to Bishop Murray in Murphy Report:

The following are the chapters in which Donal Murray is referenced in the Murphy report:

Chapter 1, page 1 – 28

Chapter 3.23, page 47 (In accurately given in the report as 3.22)

Chapter 12, page 177-187 Fr McNamee

Chapter 21, page 344 – 352 Fr Horatio

Chapter 26, page 390 – 399 Fr Moore

Chapter 29, page 455 – 469 Fr Naughton

Chapter 31, page 478 - 481 Fr Clemens

Chapter 33, page 494 – 505 Fr Quinton

Chapter 34, page 506 – 513 Fr Marius (Omitted from the index printed in the Report)

There was another case in which Bishop Murray was involved, but mentioning his involvement would risk revealing the true identity of the priest. In that case, the Report expresses satisfaction at how it was handled.

There was another case in which Bishop Murray was notified that he was involved and was told that he might be approached by the Commission. That did not happen and he cannot identify the case in the Report. He believes that it did not involve a minor.