

People working in the diocese of Limerick, together with its priests, met in Limerick on Sunday 29th November 2009 and wish to make the following points:

The Dublin report is full of pain, real shame and intense sorrow. We know that we must acknowledge the work and perseverance of those who brought these crimes to light, and of course our pain, shame and sorrow is nothing compared to what the abused have suffered and how their lives were violated.

We are convinced from our experience of his thirteen years as our bishop that Donal Murray is a good person. We have deep respect for and total confidence in his personal integrity, as well as his utter commitment to truth and justice. We believe him when he says; 'I never deliberately or knowingly sought to cover up or withhold information brought to my attention'.

We are grateful for the wholehearted way he has embraced and rigorously implemented in our diocese the National Standards and Guidelines for the Safeguarding of Children. He has worked tirelessly and involved so many at all levels to put in place diocesan procedures to ensure that safeguarding and protection of children is paramount. He has always cooperated with and made himself accountable to the Gardaí and the Health Service Executive.

We believe it would be a retrograde step for the continuing development of Safeguarding Children, in our diocese and society, for our bishop to resign.

He has given us wonderful leadership in this regard and we believe he is worthy of the wholehearted support expressed at our large gathering on Sunday.

Yours sincerely,

Joe O Connell, Former Director of St. Senan's Education Office

Aoife Walsh, Child Protection Training Coordinator

Mary Ryan-Synnott, Chairperson, Pastoral Area

Christy Murray, Diocesan Pastoral Council

Michael Lane, Vicar General

Daniel Neenan, Vicar General

Eamonn Fitzgibbon, Vicar General

Noirín Lynch, Diocesan Pastoral Coordinator