

# Canon lawyer criticises archbishop

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Wed, Dec 02, 2009

IRISH AMERICAN canon lawyer Fr Tom Doyle has strongly criticised Archbishop of Dublin Diarmuid Martin's comments on the Dublin archdiocese report.

Fr Doyle took particular exception to the archbishop's stance on RTÉ Radio's *This Week* on whether Bishop Donal Murray of Limerick should resign after publication of the report, which described the bishop's handling of an allegation of clerical child abuse while an auxiliary bishop in Dublin as "inexcusable".

Archbishop Martin had said resignation was a matter for Bishop Murray and indicated in his RTÉ interview that it was a matter for public opinion. Fr Doyle felt this stance was "a contradiction in terms".

Fr Doyle added: "Anyone in any way involved with a cover-up should be forced to resign. It is far, far worse than any doctrinal slip." As far back as the mid-1980s, Fr Doyle warned the US Catholic Church of dire consequences if the scandal of clerical child sex abuse was not dealt with openly and effectively. He was ignored and removed from his position at the Vatican embassy in Washington.

Though he had not read the Dublin diocesan report in full when he spoke to *The Irish Times*, he said he was "not shocked, not surprised" by the content so far. Objectively, it was "horrendous", he said, with huge "betrayal on the part of the bishops who don't understand at all the depth or effects of abuse."

The bishops, he said, "do not get it. Ones such as Bishop Murray should be out of business". He described the "depth of the cover-up and the collusion of the civil authorities" with it in Dublin as "toxic". Proactive, pastoral concern for the victims "was simply not there," he said. "What you see with Ferns, Ryan, and the Dublin reports are accounts of [abuses by] sexually dysfunctional priests and, which is worse, added to by the betrayal of bishops who, rather than reach out to victims, turned their backs on them."

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