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VATICAN BANNED CASEY BECAUSE OF ABUSE CLAIMS

RTÉ to reveal Holy See got child sex complaint in 2001

EXCLUSIVE

By Anne Sheridan

THE VATICAN banned Bishop Eamonn Casey from public ministry for life after receiving multiple child sexual abuse allegations against him, the Irish Mail on Sunday can reveal.

A major RTÉ documentary in association with the MoS, which airs tomorrow, investigates how the Catholic Church handled at least five child sexual abuse allegations against the former Bishop of Galway.

It comes after this newspaper previously revealed how four women complained

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A Zendaya in the life of a Hollywood movie star

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Bertie: I've not ruled Áras bid in or out

By John Drennan

FORMER Taoiseach Bertie Ahern said he has 'never ruled it in or out' referring to a presidential bid next year.

The move could derail Micheál Martin's Áras ambitions after the Irish Mail on Sunday reported the Tánaiste plans to contest the presidency.

FULL STORY See Page 10 >>

Casey was banned for life by Vatican

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of alleged child sexual abuse against Bishop Casey, including his niece. Now it has emerged the Vatican reaffirmed the ban on the disgraced Irish cleric's ministry after his niece, Patricia Donovan, made a complaint of child sex abuse against him in 2005. In a rare statement, the Vatican confirmed it banned Bishop Casey from ministry before 2006, and reiterated that ban to him the following year. The RTE documentary will broadcast further revelations about the controversial former Bishop of Kerry and Galway, who was forced to resign following his dramatic fall from grace in 1992 after he fathered a child with his distant American cousin, Annie Murphy. The Vatican ordered him to leave the country and he became a missionary in South America before eventually returning to Ireland in 2006. Bishop Casey remained out of ministry for the last 12 years of his life, from at least 2005 to the day he died on March 13, 2017, aged 89. The Vatican statement also reveals the ban was never lifted – despite appeals by Casey and his supporters that he should be allowed to return to ministry. The statement said: 'We can confirm that

'Casey repeatedly breached the Vatican restrictions'

Bishop Casey had been requested not to publicly exercise the ministry before 2006, in terms that were reiterated formally in 2007, and he was never reinstated in the following years in spite of insistence from him and on his behalf. When further allegations were produced in 2015, Bishop Casey was already suffering from various physical and mental problems. These were of the type that would have rendered his defence difficult.' Aside from any criminal investigation or civil case for personal injury damages, the Vatican also conducts its own separate investigations into alleged clerical sexual abuse. Under Vatican rules, clergy members must remain out of ministry until cleared by both State and Church. However, strict restrictions set down for Bishop Casey's return to Galway in 2006 were never lifted. At the time, he was suspended from clerical duties as the Vatican examined statements from his niece and other alleged victims. Under the restrictions, Bishop Casey was not allowed to say Mass in public; he could only attend Mass as a member of the congregation or say Mass privately in his own home. He was also ordered not to give media interviews while the Vatican investigated the complaints against him. However, Bishop Casey went on to repeatedly breach the Vatican restrictions. He officiated at Mass in several dioceses several times; he continued to wear clerical clothing and represented himself as a priest in good standing.

HE WAS NEVER REINSTATED TO THE MINISTRY

'We can confirm that Bishop Casey had been requested not to publicly exercise the ministry before 2006, in terms that were reiterated formally in 2007, and he was never reinstated in the following years in spite of insistence from him and on his behalf. This was regardless of the outcome of the civil procedures. The praxis has emerged over the years that proceedings from the civil forum at whatever level can be brought into the canonical sphere. The allegations regarding Bishop Casey were received by the Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith in 2006. These led to no civil prosecution or subsequent legal action against the bishop. When further allegations were produced in 2015, Bishop Casey was already suffering from various physical and mental problems. These were of the type that would have rendered his defence difficult. The funeral rites and burial were requested by the bishop's family and some of the faithful of the diocese of Galway, and the Congregation for Bishops left decisions in this regard to the local level. The papal nuncio was not present for the funeral and burial.'

VATICAN STATEMENT ON BISHOP EAMONN CASEY



'It was the worst kind of abuse... It was horrific'

By Anne Sheridan

report her uncle to authorities, Ms Donovan tells the documentary: 'I had found out that he was visiting someone and staying overnight where there was a teenage girl... and that was what was in my mind when I

'He was quite organised and selective. He saw that I was vulnerable'

picked up the phone. All I thought of was that girl.' Ms Donovan previously told the MoS the alleged abuse happened in the three dioceses where her uncle served – Limerick, Kerry and Galway. 'He was quite organised and selective, and I think he saw that I

was vulnerable and quite sensitive. It was rape... everything you imagine. It was the worst kind of abuse. It was horrific. I stopped being able long ago to find any words in the English language to describe what happened to me. It was one horrific thing after another,' she said. Detectives in Limerick went to England to take a statement from Ms Donovan in January 2006 but, by August of the same year, the DPP directed that no charges be brought on 13 sample allegations. Bishop Casey, who denied the allegations, later said he was 'utterly amazed' by the speed of the decision from the DPP, claiming he had only been interviewed by gardai a few weeks previously. Documentation seen by the MoS reveals numerous attempts by Ms Donovan in the intervening years to ensure her alleged abuser did not have access to, and could not potentially abuse, any other children. In particular, she strove to ensure sanctions and restrictions imposed by the Catholic Church on his ministry were adhered to.

Bishop Casey was received in 2001 by the Limerick Diocese. This later resulted in a settlement, which was confidential at the time. Separately, the Kerry Diocese described the one complaint it directly received against Bishop Casey in 2005 as a historical child

safeguarding concern. But this was recorded as a child sex allegation on the Galway Diocese's files. In 2005, Patricia Donovan also made her complaint, believing she was the first person to report her uncle. She also claims that she was abused while he was Bishop of Kerry and that some of the alleged abuse happened in the Kerry Diocese. Her initial complaint was not filed directly with the Kerry Diocese. The complaint the Kerry Diocese received is distinct from Patricia's. The two other complaints in 2001 and 2005 had not been publicly reported at that time. But others would follow. In 2019, the MoS revealed two complaints of alleged child sexual abuse against him in the Limerick Diocese later resulted in settlements. One of these was the complaint made in 2001. This resulted in a settlement made through the Residential Institutions Redress Board after the plaintiff dropped her High Court action against Bishop Casey. As a condition under the terms of the Redress Board, the woman was legally prohibited from speaking about the case. However, the MoS revealed details of her story in 2019, and in tomorrow night's documentary – called Bishop Casey's Buried Secrets – further details will be heard about the specific nature of her alleged complaints of sexual abuse for the first time. This newspaper also previously revealed how another case taken by a Limerick woman later went to the High Court after she also alleged she was sexually abused as a child. She was awarded a settlement of more than €100,000. Her complaint was reported to the diocese in 2014 and relates to alleged abuse in the 1960s within the Diocese of Limerick. Ms Donovan, who lives in the UK, also made a criminal complaint to British police in November 2005, alleging she was abused from the age of five for more than a decade. anne.sheridan@mailonsunday.ie

Less than a decade after his affair, child sex abuse complaints followed

By Anne Sheridan

LESS than a decade after Eamonn Casey was forced to stand down as Bishop of Galway due to his infamous affair with Annie Murphy, new complaints against him, this time of alleged sexual abuse of children, were beginning to arrive at the Vatican. The first complaint to arrive, **SEX ABUSE:** Eamonn Casey was banned from ministry

that we can establish, was back in 2001, followed by two more in 2005. Two further complaints were made in 2014, all relating to alleged child sexual abuse in the three Irish dioceses he served in from the 1950s to the 1980s. The child sexual abuse complaints made against Bishop Casey, as well as other allegations which will be

revealed by RTÉ on Monday night, were received by the Vatican from 2001 right up until after 2016, a period covering three serving popes: John Paul II, Benedict XVI and Francis, the current Bishop of Rome. Pope Benedict XVI was the head of the Catholic Church when the Vatican reiterated the ban against Bishop Casey's ministry in 2007, after considering at least two allegations of child sexual

abuse. Further allegations made after 2007, details of which will also be revealed in RTÉ's documentary, were not part of the Vatican's decision in restricting his ministry. These allegations were made during the Pope Francis's tenure. After reading the Vatican's statement on restricting Bishop Casey's ministry, canon law expert Fr Aidan McGrath said: 'That would lead me to believe that there

was a formal document. I imagine that would come in the form of a decree. That would have put down the actual restrictions on his ministry and the reasons why, and that decree would have had to have been made known to the pope, because it involved a bishop.' Decrees for any member of the clergy restricted in ministry would set out certain conditions such as: that he could not celebrate Mass in public, he could not hear confession, and could not

be involved in the celebration of any of the other sacraments. He could only say Mass for himself, in the privacy of his own home, or attend in public as a member of the congregation. Canon law experts said it appeared that Church authorities chose a simple administrative procedure, and not a full judicial trial, which would have seen testimonies and witnesses put before three judges. Fr McGrath added: 'In my understanding, this is more of a

disciplinary matter, perhaps a precautionary measure, because there is no indication that there was a formal full canonical investigation or punishment meted out.' Nonetheless, he acknowledged that others might view it as a 'cover-up'. Given Bishop Casey's advancing years and his frailty, experts said the Church could also have lifted the ban if they deemed he posed no further risk. However, it was still in place when he died in 2017, aged 89.

Shielded by secrecy, disgraced Eamonn Casey repeatedly said Mass despite his ban

EXCLUSIVE

By Anne Sheridan

BISHOP Eamonn Casey flouted restrictions imposed upon him by the Vatican in several dioceses and for years after the ban on his ministry was imposed.

The disgraced former Bishop of Galway was not permitted to exercise public ministry, including saying public Mass, by the Vatican from 2005 up to his death in 2017, after several child abuse allegations were made against him.

But such was the level of secrecy in the Church, the Vatican's ban was not communicated to some dioceses in Ireland, and nor were the public informed.

A major documentary by RTÉ in association with the Irish Mail on Sunday – Bishop Casey's Buried Secrets, which airs tomorrow night – reveals that, after he was formally removed from ministry in 2007, Bishop Casey officiated or concelebrated Mass in three different dioceses on numerous occasions over at least three years.

Bishop Casey's niece, Patricia Donovan, who reported him in 2005 for alleged sexual abuse, had repeat-

Dioceses and public kept in the dark about Galway bishop's child sex abuse allegations – with many thinking bar was due to his affair

'I reported him... but they stopped listening'

edly tried to hold the Church to account since the ban on his ministry was imposed – particularly after he apparently officiated at her own mother's funeral in February 2007. She also sought to ensure that he would uphold these restrictions.

Ms Donovan told RTÉ: 'I reported him here [in the UK], and as soon as it went over to Ireland; that's when they stopped listening to me. I absolutely believed that he would never say Mass in public again, and that the Church would actually enforce that.'

Ian Elliott, the former head of the Church's board for safeguarding children in the Catholic Church in Ireland, also told RTÉ: 'Whether he is concelebrating or whether he was positioning himself in a situation where he was wearing clerical garb, where he was looking to present himself as someone who was in good standing in the Church; that's wrong and shouldn't have happened.'

Bishop Casey breached the Vatican's order in the Galway and Limerick dioceses on a number of occasions, following his return to the Galway Diocese in February 2006. He was forced to leave the Diocese of Arundel & Brighton in England in 2006, on foot of the allegations by his niece in 2005 – and retired to Shana-



ABUSE: Our 2019 story details child sex allegations against Bishop Casey

glish in south Galway. The Galway Diocese ultimately had canonical responsibility for him.

A spokesman for the Galway Diocese stated: 'He was prohibited by the Congregation [for Bishops] from exercising public ministry and this prohibition was repeated to him and maintained throughout his years of residing in the diocese.'

'This prohibition was a source of upset to Bishop Casey and on a few publicly documented occasions it is known he violated this prohibition. To the extent that such instances became known to [then] Bishop of Galway [Martin Drennan], the prohibition was renewed formally to Bishop Casey.'

The Limerick Leader newspaper also reported in June 2007 that Bishop Casey returned to Limerick and officiated at a jubilee Mass. On that occasion, he was pictured

2007



wearing vestments and standing on the altar with Fr Seamus Power as he posed for photographs.

A spokesman for the Limerick Diocese confirmed: 'Bishop Casey did not seek or obtain permission from the diocese to be involved in the jubilee Mass in Holy

Rosary Parish in 2007. It appears from our enquiries that Bishop Casey arrived unexpectedly, sat at the side of the sanctuary and did not concelebrate or officiate at the Mass.'

The Limerick Diocese also confirmed it was 'not notified of any

restrictions' that were in place at that time on Bishop Casey – restrictions that remained in place up until his death. Speaking about his appearance at the funeral Mass of his sister, Josephine 'Patsy' Donovan, Patricia Donovan's mother, Limerick Diocese denied that he



2010

SISTER'S FUNERAL: At Patricia Donovan's mother Josephine's funeral in February 2007 in Limerick, Patricia and other eye-witnesses believed he was officiating in some capacity. Limerick Diocese denied that he concelebrated the Mass. (Not pictured).

PRIEST'S JUBILEE: The Limerick Leader newspaper reported in June 2007 that Bishop Casey returned to Limerick and officiated at a golden jubilee Mass. He is pictured wearing vestments and standing on the altar with Fr Seamus Power, left.

GRANDNEPHEW'S FUNERAL: Three years after the Vatican formally reiterated the ban to him, Dr Casey took part in the funeral Mass for his grandnephew, above.

had concelebrated the Mass. A spokesman for the diocese said it now has more stringent controls to ensure that priests banned from ministry cannot breach guidelines.

'These include the priest being required to show a Celebret or letter from his own diocese and signing the sacristy register.'

In April 2010, three years after the Vatican formally reiterated the ban to him, Dr Casey took part in the funeral Mass for his grandnephew, killed in a crash in Co. Wexford.

Despite the restrictions, he delivered a passage of the Gospel of St Matthew and gave out Communion.

He also joined in the Eucharistic prayer with local priest Fr John Carroll. Fr Carroll, the priest officiating at the funeral Mass, told RTÉ he was not aware of any restrictions on Bishop Casey's ministry at that time. Fr Carroll said in a statement: 'Permission was neither sought from – nor given by – Ferns Diocese

(nor from or by any other group) – as I was not aware of any restrictions on his ministry.'

The sanctions imposed by Rome were eventually enforced, but due to the Vatican's strict secrecy in handling sexual abuse allegations, few people knew why Bishop Casey was forbidden to say Mass.

Some had presumed wrongly it was due to his affair with Annie Murphy, and many parishioners and members of the clergy believed the Church was being unduly harsh.

Canon law expert Fr Tom Doyle argues the public had a right to know why Bishop Casey was formally removed from ministry 'so that the people who continued to defend him, to put their trust in him would know what was really going on and also to avoid this from happening to anybody else, which did not seem to have been a consideration, with the Vatican at least'.

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REPORT OF 2001 CHILD SEX ALLEGATION 'WENT MISSING' FROM UK FILE

By Anne Sheridan

THE first known child sex abuse allegation against Bishop Eamonn Casey went 'missing' after it was reported from one diocese to another, the Irish Mail on Sunday can reveal.

The allegation was sent from the Diocese of Limerick to the Diocese of Arundel & Brighton in the UK, where he was then working, and also to the Vatican in June 2001.

The receipt of that complaint and the potential child safeguarding risks it posed should have resulted in his suspension from his ministry in England, pending further investigation. It should also have been reported to police in the UK.

However, neither of those actions were taken and Fr Casey, as he was then known, remained active in ministry in the Diocese of Arundel & Brighton for another four years – until his own niece, also living in the UK, made a complaint of alleged child sexual abuse.

The failure to take action against Bishop Casey will feature in a major documentary, Bishop Casey's Buried Secrets, which airs on RTÉ One tomorrow at 9.35pm.

The programme is the result of a joint investigation with the Irish Mail on Sunday, which first revealed in 2019 that four separate women had made complaints of alleged child sexual abuse against him.

When the Diocese of Arundel & Brighton was asked by RTÉ what action, if any, it had taken on foot of the 2001 complaint, a spokeswoman said it could find no record of that complaint in its files. In a statement, a spokeswoman said: 'Recent communications with RTÉ and the Diocese of Limerick have established that a member of our diocese was

informed of a safeguarding allegation concerning Bishop Eamonn Casey in 2001, four years earlier than we had previously believed. 'Had this allegation been made today the police would have been informed immediately. We are deeply disappointed that this course of action does not appear to have been taken in 2001,' the statement added.

After being alerted to this earlier allegation by RTÉ, the diocese said it would conduct an internal investigation into why no record of the complaint was on its files.

'Regrettably, given the passage of time, we have been unable to locate relevant written records or to speak to anyone able to shed light on Limerick Diocese's communication in 2001,' it said.

Dr Casey was suspended from ministry when his niece, Patricia Donovan, reported him to UK police and gardai in 2005 for alleged sexual abuse.

The first known child sexual abuse allegation against Bishop Casey was made in 2001.

A spokesman for Limerick Diocese confirmed it informed the Diocese of Arundel & Brighton on June 7, 2001. The Vatican and the gardai were also informed.

The spokeswoman for the Diocese of Arundel & Brighton said it is 'not aware of any safeguarding concerns being raised in relation to Bishop Casey while he was in ministry within our diocese'.

The diocese said that when the

NO TO CASEY: Cardinal Basil Hume had 'many reasons'

complaint by Bishop Casey's niece was received in 2005, it took swift action.

'Nationally agreed safeguarding protocols were implemented with support offered to the person involved. The allegation was reported to statutory agencies with Bishop Casey immediately removed from public ministry,' it said.

Dr Casey moved to the Arundel & Brighton Diocese in 1998 after Church leaders in Ireland and the UK were reluctant to accept him back after he was moved to the missions in Ecuador, following revelations in 1992 that he had fathered a son with his distant American cousin Annie Murphy.

In 1998, a spokesman for Cardinal Basil Hume at the Archdiocese of Westminster said there were 'many reasons' it would not be appropriate for Bishop Casey to go to London on his return. These reasons were not detailed.

The Archdiocese of Westminster has repeatedly refused to comment on whether it has received allegations relating to Eamonn Casey's time in London as a priest in the 1960s.

Bishop Kieran Conry, now 73, was consecrated Bishop of Arundel & Brighton on June 9, 2001 – two days after the Limerick Diocese sent the complaint.

A spokesperson for Arundel & Brighton said: 'He has no recollection of the events in question.'

In September 2014, Bishop Conry announced his resignation as Bishop of Arundel & Brighton when it became apparent that the MoS was about to reveal he had allegedly been having an affair with a married woman.

Bishop Conry denied that affair but admitted another previous relationship had been sexual.

