

The 2001 procedural rules

4.29 A further instruction came from the Vatican in May 2001 entitled *Sacramentorum Sanctitatis Tutela*. Unlike the 1922 and 1962 documents, this document was made widely available. This initiative represented a major change in Vatican policy. It provided that all allegations of child sexual abuse, which have reached the threshold of “*a semblance of truth*” should be referred directly to the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF) in Rome. That body would either elect to deal with the matter itself or would advise the bishop on the appropriate action to take in canon law. The Commission has been informed that this policy was adopted in order to ensure a co-ordinated and uniform response to allegations of child sexual abuse against clergy throughout the Roman Catholic world. The chancellor, Monsignor Dolan, gave evidence that the policy was subsequently modified as Rome was unable to deal with the vast numbers of referrals. The position now, he said, is that all cases brought to the attention of the Archdiocese before April 2001 and which were outside prescription (see below) were not going to be dealt with by the CDF. It was up to the bishop to apply disciplinary measures to the management of those priests. Monsignor Dolan told the Commission that, up until 2007, 19 cases had been referred by the Archdiocese of Dublin to the CDF. These did not include most of the very serious cases such as those of Fr Bill Carney (Chapter 28), Fr Jovito* (Chapter 19), Fr Ivan Payne (Chapter

24), (Chapter 20) or others that had already been dealt with by the Archdiocese.