

Introduction

36.1 Fr Daryus was ordained in the 1950s and served in a number of parishes throughout the Archdiocese, finishing as a parish priest. He died in the 1990s.

36.2 In the early 1960s, another priest reported to the Archdiocese that Fr Daryus was involved with a young girl. It is not known what age she was and there is no documentary evidence about the matter. Fr Daryus was treated by a psychiatrist in the 1960s but there is no evidence that this was related to child sexual abuse.

36.3 There were complaints against Fr Daryus in relation to aggressive and arrogant behaviour in the early 1990s and the Archdiocese was considering removing him from his position when complaints of sexual abuse emerged.

Complaints

36.4 In October 1994, two complaints of sexual abuse were made against Fr Daryus. One was from a woman who complained that she had been digitally raped by him in the late 1960s when she went to him for advice about becoming a nun. She was 18 years old at the time. Fr Daryus admitted that he had abused her but played down the extent of the abuse. This case does not involve child sexual abuse so the Commission did not undertake an examination of how it was handled. However, the Commission notes that the Archdiocese was kind and helpful to this woman and that she was extraordinarily charitable towards Fr Daryus.

36.5 The other complaint, which was also made in October 1994, was one of child sexual abuse. A young man complained that he had been abused by Fr Daryus in the mid 1960s while he was an altar boy. The abuse involved groping and fondling his private parts. The complainant believed that others were abused as well. The priest was known to the boys as “sexy [Daryus].”

36.6 Bishop O’Mahony met the former altar boy complainant in October 1994. In November 1994, he met Fr Daryus. Bishop O’Mahony was not

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This is a pseudonym.

then aware of the woman's complaint. Fr Daryus denied the young man's allegations and pointed out a discrepancy in dates. Bishop O'Mahony believed the priest's denial. Subsequently, the complainant corrected his assessment of the dates and said that the abuse occurred in the late 1960s. In December 1994, the complainant asked Bishop O'Mahony to do nothing further about the complaint.

36.7 Fr Daryus was persuaded to resign in December 1994. The usual letter of thanks for his service was issued.

36.8 In October 1995, the complainant contacted Bishop O'Mahony again and said that he stood over everything in his statement of 1994. Arrangements were made for counselling for the complainant. Bishop O'Mahony and Monsignor Dolan met Fr Daryus. The situation is rather confusing but it seems that Fr Daryus denied the allegation when he met Bishop O'Mahony and Monsignor Dolan on 23 October 1995. Subsequently it appears that Fr Daryus admitted the allegation to Bishop O'Mahony. This admission was not immediately known to Monsignor Dolan and this initially caused confusion when Monsignor Dolan was dealing with the complainant.

36.9 In any event, Monsignor Stenson reported the allegation to the Gardaí in November 1995.

36.10 The complainant made a statement to the Gardaí in March 1996. Fr Daryus was interviewed in the presence of his solicitor and he did not answer any questions about the allegations. In August 1996, the DPP decided not to prosecute because of the lapse of time since the alleged abuse had occurred – approximately 30 years.

36.11 The complainant issued civil proceedings against Fr Daryus and the Archdiocese in May 1996. Later in 1996, a settlement was reached with Fr Daryus and the case against the Archdiocese was discontinued. The Archdiocese paid the priest's legal costs. A short time later, Fr Daryus died.

36.12 The complainant contacted the Archdiocese again in 1998. He met Archbishop Connell in 2002. He was in touch with the Child Protection Service in 2005.

The Commission's assessment

36.13 This priest was effectively removed from his position as soon as the allegations were made in October 1994. The fact of two unrelated complaints probably facilitated this move. Initially Bishop O'Mahony dealt well with the altar boy complainant but the Commission is concerned that Monsignor Dolan was not immediately informed of Fr Daryus's admission in October/November 1995.