

**Introduction**

56.1 This case involves a priest who had difficulty with the vow of celibacy which he took when he was ordained. He did parish work for a number of years and left this to work in the public service. He has ceased active ministry and was recently laicised.

**Complaints**

56.2 In 2003 a woman told the bishop of the area where Fr Augustus was then living that, in 1984, when she was 17 years old, she had had sex on two occasions with Fr Augustus. She said that she and her boyfriend were friendly with him and they stayed with him on a number of occasions. On two occasions she visited him alone and she spent the night with him. She said that, while the sex was consensual, she felt emotionally manipulated. She stated that her boyfriend had made a complaint to the Archdiocese at the time, in 1984, but that nothing was done about it.

56.3 The Gardaí were notified about this complaint and they interviewed the young woman but she was adamant that no criminal activity had taken place and did not wish to pursue the matter.

56.4 The bishop told the Archdiocese and Fr Augustus was interviewed by archdiocesan officials. He told them that he had great difficulty with celibacy in the earlier years of his priesthood and that he had had two brief relationships with women. He had spoken to his auxiliary bishop on a regular basis about his struggle and he was encouraged to pray through it. The auxiliary bishop arranged extensive psychosexual therapy for Fr Augustus.

56.5 Fr Augustus admitted having had sex with the woman in question. He also admitted that he had had a sexual relationship with another woman in 1987. He said that this woman was over 18 years old but that the matter had been reported to the Archdiocese at the time and a full statement taken from the woman.

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<sup>124</sup>

This is a pseudonym.

56.6 This matter was also reported in 2004 to the Gardaí. The woman in question refused to make a complaint to the Gardai and their file on the matter was closed.

56.7 The health board in the region where he was living was notified but did not consider that there was child sexual abuse involved.

#### **The Commission's assessment**

56.8 The Commission is satisfied that the complaint made in 2003 was dealt with appropriately by the Archdiocese, the other diocese, the health board and the Gardaí.

56.9 The Commission is concerned that the church files contained no reference to the complaint made in 1984 or to Fr Augustus's discussions on the issue with the auxiliary bishop. Both the complainant and Fr Augustus claim the matter was known to the Archdiocese.