

From The Secretaries of

The Irish Episcopal Conference

The Most Reverend Kieran O'Reilly S.M.A., D.D., Episcopal Secretary, Archbishop's House, Thurles, Co. Tipperary.

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10th April 2018

Mr Vincent Doyle,

Dear Vincent,

Thank you for your letters of 5th, 6th and 21st February 2018 which were circulated to all members of the Irish Episcopal Conference at the March 2018 Bishops' meeting.

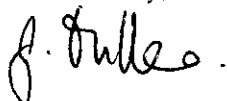
Regarding your query about the possible responses to addressing situations where a priest has fathered a child, it is clear from the statement of principles which was sent to you last May that, "each situation requires careful consideration". Therefore it is not possible to rule out, at the beginning, any possible response to these situations which involves a simple default position of insisting that a man "leave the priesthood" or that he automatically be permitted to continue in active ministry. All reasonable and fair options should be considered as possible, so this neither rules in or rules out various outcomes.

The bishops have noted the Coping procedures about mandatory reporting.

I hope that this is helpful to you.

With every blessing for the Easter season, I remain,

Yours sincerely,



Monsignor Gearóid Dullea

Executive Secretary

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21st December 2017

Mr Vincent Doyle,

By email with original by post

Dear Vincent,

Thank you for your letter of 15th November 2017 which was circulated to all members of the Irish Episcopal Conference at the recent Bishops' meeting.

The Bishops are of the opinion that this query requires much more information than they have. It is a detailed question which does not immediately admit of answers. They feel that they do not have adequate information to provide an answer to the question posed.

However, as the Bishops pointed out in the statement of principles sent to you last May, each situation requires careful consideration, with certain key points presenting themselves on which the decision of the priest should be made:

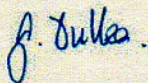
- The best interests of the child
- Dialogue with, and respect for, the mother of the child
- Dialogue with Church superiors
- Taking into account civil and canon law.

These principles give valuable guidance in addressing situations which may arise.

I hope that this is helpful to you.

With every blessing for the Christmas season, I remain,

Yours sincerely,



Monsignor Gearóid Dullea
Executive Secretary