

Irish High Court allows chapter of abuse report to be published

DUBLIN - Ireland's High Court ruled that a previously withheld chapter from a report on the Catholic Church's mishandling of child abuse can now be published.

Chapter 19 of the 2009 Murphy Report - which detailed how the church dealt with charges of abuse by victims and their families in the Archdiocese of Dublin from 1975 to 2004 - was omitted when the report was published a year ago because the individual involved was still awaiting trial.

Clearance for publication was given after a former priest, Tony Walsh, was sentenced to 16 years in prison in early December for abusing boys decades ago.

Walsh was laicized in 1992 and earlier served another sentence for abuse.

The unpublished chapter is expected to detail how allegations of abuse first emerged against Walsh in the 1970s. The minister for justice and law reform was expected to publish the chapter before Christmas.

When the redacted report was published in November 2009, it sent shockwaves across the country and within the church in Ireland. Two bishops named in the report resigned within days of its release. Two other bishops also named, but not criticized, offered their resignations, but Pope Benedict XVI declined to accept them.

Judge Yvonne Murphy, for whom the report was named, found in her investigation that some church leaders frequently neglected to report known abusers to the civil authorities and had consistently put the reputation of the church and the avoidance of scandal ahead of the needs of victims.

Another chapter in the report, Chapter 20, remains heavily redacted and refers to one individual and his brother. Judge Paul Gilligan said the redaction should remain in place until at least July 5, indicating that criminal proceedings may be pending.