

This Week
**The following correction sent Sunday 29.11.09 at 15:28 after
comments on the programme**

Dear RTE News Editor,

On the most recent *This Week* show, dated Sunday, 29th November:

1. Mary Raftery said“Limerick there has always been a problem”

When similar comments were made on Drivetime 21st July last, the following correction was issued by the Diocese of Limerick:

The safety of children has the highest priority in the Diocese of Limerick. A child safeguarding committee operates in the Diocese of Limerick. There is no shared child protection committee between the Diocese of Limerick and the Diocese of Cloyne. Within the diocese, and in every parish of the diocese, there are trained and committed people to ensure that children and young people are safe. The diocese meets with An Garda Síochána and the Health Service Executive several times a year to review all cases. If Mary Raftery is aware of information which would cause concern it should be reported to the Gardaí and HSE. The Diocese itself would also be most anxious to receive any such information.

The Gardaí and HSE confirmed at its most recent joint meeting (16th October 2009) that they had not received any new information and it was clarified that all information on diocesan files matches theirs.

2. During the discussion the presenter referred to Bishop Murray’s homily. The presenter referred only to the Council of Priests’. He then allowed the discussion to continue as if Bishop Murray had referred only to a group of clergy. The full extract from the homily is

“.....I will be guided by the priests and people of the diocese. We have many bodies that represent groups and areas in the diocese -- the Priests’ Council, the Parish Pastoral Councils, the Diocesan Pastoral Council, the Pastoral Areas of the diocese and the Diocesan Child Protection Committee. They guide me and advise me. And they will be guided and advised by you in your parishes and areas.”

I trust you will agree that this was a serious misrepresentation.

End of Correction

Explanatory note regarding the initial comments on *Drivetime*

Transcript of *Drivetime* 21st July

Mary Raftery: One case is a very interesting case, we’ve actually been able to forensically analyze his file. I have read his file because of civil action taken through the courts. We can see the extraordinary level of detail Archbishop’s house had about this particular pedophile, Thomas Naughton. He had a career which began in Wicklow, in Vallemount. There were reports and concerns that allegations raised there. He was moved to Donnycarney, again there were allegations made there. Here he admitted to abusing children. He was then referred to a psychiatrist. He lied

to the psychiatrist about how little he was involved, saying it was a single incidence of abuse. The psychiatrist sent a report back to Archbishop's House to Msgr. Alex Stenson, who is very much at the heart of lot of these cases. He was the Chancellor, the administrator in the Archdiocese. The centre wrote back to him saying: *"If what he is telling me is correct, if Thomas Naughton abused one child, only once. Perhaps he is not a great of reoffending. You can send him back to the Parish."*

Mary Wilson: What timeframe are we talking about?

Mary Raftery: We're talking about the 1980s.

The interesting thing about this is that Archbishop's house and Alex Stenson knew Thomas Naughton admitted to abusing one particular child. They knew there had been previous allegations of in appropriate behavior and abuse from his parish, none of which they seem to have shared with the psychiatrist. Their knowledge of this, they held from the Gardaí even when the Gardaí went to investigate criminal charges 10 years later against this priest. For 10 years they knew about the crimes against children perpetrated by this priest and the kept absolute silence.

Mary Wilson: I suppose given what we know even what we know at this stage, that behavior is not surprising?

Mary Raftery: No. And it's repeated time and time and time again. The level of cover up has been so damaging to the victims of abuse as if what happened to them as children wasn't bad enough. What they experienced when it was reported and very often their parents and they indeed even as children went and reported to Archbishops House, they were greeted with a Church that, in the first instance, generally accuse them of telling lies and in the case of one of Thomas Naughton's victim, he was 10 at the time, and Monsignor Alex Stenson insisted that he interview him on his own in Archbishop's House and the first thing he said to him was *"You're telling lies."* A ten year old. And, you know, again, we're not talking about the dark 1950s here. The kind of attitude that they displayed towards victims, towards parents, and as I say, in many cases, towards their own priests, who were guilty of nothing at all except to provide a decent Ministry for people, was absolutely shocking and I think the thing that people will find most difficult to deal with in this is the sheer numbers of Bishops who are involved in this because in the case of Thomas Naughton we have the Bishop of Limerick, for instance, who knew about the abuse. Because parents and adults came to him when Thomas Naughton was in Wicklow and said *"Listen, we have real concerns about this priest"* and all he did was pass it up the line only to his Archbishop at the minute who was Archbishop Ryan. The level of responsibility that was not taken on board by people who were then Auxiliary Bishops in Dublin and are now full Bishops all over the country. It begs questions as to their concepts of right and wrong, the concepts of coconscious and crucially the concepts of, importantly, protecting children

Mary Wilson: Judge Yvonne Murphy has chaired this Commission. Do we expect her to make recommendations? Because the Church has put certain structures in place now albeit in the last two to three to five years. Have they already prepared the ground for the types of recommendations that Yvonne Murphy may well make?

Mary Raftery: Well, indeed the Church has put protection mechanisms in place, some Dioceses are better than others. I think it's generally accepted that the Dublin Archdiocese has become particularly progressive and, you know, doesn't tolerate anything, in fact, certainly people and priests have felt that is has gone too far the other way. Other dioceses we know have significant problems with it, particularly in

the context of Cloyne, which the Dublin Commission is now investigating. I would suggest that there are serious problems in Limerick as well that should also be examined in fact by a Commission of enquiry because we became aware of some of the difficulties in Limerick through Cloyne and some shared committees they had. You know, really, if you're asking me Are children safer now in terms of their contact with Church officials I'd say they are but could they be safer in the future as a result of the strict recommendations Judge Yvonne Murphy could make and should make as a result of this Commission Report, I think absolutely and there should be mandatory reporting of all cases to the civil authorities, which at the moment, there isn't.

Mary Wilson: And just briefly Mary, with criminal proceedings still in train, when are we likely to see some form of publication of the report even if it is in sections?

Mary Raftery: This is very difficult to tell. I think it would be a tragedy if, in fact, were published in sections and I think particularly given the nature of the cover up of involving the particular priests we're talking about here are still facing criminal charges. They are key priests.

Mary Wilson: Would you prefer to see it published in full rather than in sections?

Mary Raftery: For us again, if were published urgently and if it could be published with the names of those particular priests anonymised this would probably be the best but if were published in sections, we would fail to get a full appreciation of the nature of the cover up because, as I say, these priests are really key and they're key in terms of the numbers of Bishops who knew what was going on and knew the kind of cover up that was taking place and we know that with regard to their previous convictions. For that to be removed I believe that would be a tragedy.

Mary Wilson: OK, Mary Raftery, we may know soon because the Minister for Justice has received the report today so we may well hear from him as what he intends to do.

The following correction was issued by the Diocese of Limerick to on Drivetime 21st July at 18:00 to drivetime@rte.ie and followed up with a phone call to ensure it was received by Drivetime:

"The safety of children has the highest priority in the Diocese of Limerick. A child safeguarding committee operates in the Diocese of Limerick. There is no shared child protection committee between the Diocese of Limerick and the Diocese of Cloyne. Within the diocese, and in every parish of the diocese, there are trained and committed people to ensure that children and young people are safe. The diocese meets with An Garda Síochána and the Health Service Executive several times a year to review all cases. If Mary Raftery is aware of information which would cause concern it should be reported to the Gardaí and HSE. The Diocese itself would also be most anxious to receive any such information."

This correction was not read out on the Drivetime that evening. The Diocese contacted Drivetime the next day, the 22nd seeking to have the correction read out. Initially the Diocese was told by Drivetime on the 22nd July "we will not be reading the requested clarification on today's Drivetime".

The Diocese replied with the following:

“In your email reply you do not address the fact that Mary Wilson did challenge Mary Raftery to substantiate her charge against the Diocese of Limerick. I don’t question Mary Raftery’s right to comment but the issue of truth and editorial balance should not be ignored by RTÉ. Mary Raftery has made a very serious charge – using the present tense – about her concerns about “serious problems” in the Diocese of Limerick. Especially as the public service broadcaster you have a responsibility, in terms of truth, accuracy and balance to address this matter of public concern. On another point the impression given yesterday was that the shared committee still operates between the diocese and this is not the case.

Emails from other listeners are sometimes read out so why not from the Diocese of Limerick on this issue? At the very least can I ask to revisit your decision for today’s programme and broadcast this shortened version which reflects the salient points from the original reply:

The safety of children has the highest priority in the Diocese of Limerick. If Mary Raftery is aware of information which would cause concern it should be reported to the Gardaí and HSE. The Diocese itself would also be most anxious to receive any such information.

If we were living in Northern Ireland, anyone with concerns about “serious problems” is obliged to inform the civil authorities. I would ask you again please to consider this request.”

Eventually Drivetime came back with the following:

Your clarification, with “anyone” substituted for “Mary Raftery” was broadcast on Drivetime at 17:46 this evening.

No acknowledgement or reply had been received by the diocesan spokesperson from RTÉ when this correction was posted to the website on the

9th of December 2009