

Archdiocese moved money from parishes to pay abuse victims

Michael Kelly | Catholic News Service | Sep. 23, 2011

DUBLIN -- The Dublin Archdiocese has admitted that money from parishes has been transferred into a special fund used to compensate victims of clerical sex abuse.

However, Archbishop Diarmuid Martin insisted that "none of the funds that have come from parishes have been used for that (compensation) as yet."

Information about the transfer became public after minutes of a May meeting of the Council of Priests were leaked and published in *The Irish Catholic* newspaper Sept. 22. The minutes revealed that the fund used to cover the cost of abuse claims is running a deficit.

The minutes reported that "it is proposed that the deficit is eliminated by donations from parishes with cash surpluses."

"Significant progress has been made to date, with almost 40 percent of the targeted amount generously donated," the minutes said.

In an interview with Irish state radio, Archbishop Martin confirmed that money from parishes had been transferred to the general fund which, he said, "is used for many purposes, not exclusively for covering clerical sexual abuse."

He said he was unsure how much money the diocese will need to compensate clergy abuse victims.

"There are more and more claims coming in because more and more people were abused by priests," he said.

Archbishop Martin also said he had "a responsibility to see that people who were abused within the church community are comforted and supported."

The most recent figures from the archdiocese were released early in 2011 and show that 172 civil actions from people alleging abuse have been filed against 44 archdiocesan priests; 117 cases have resolved at a cost of \$18.2 million, with 55 remaining to be settled.

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