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Press Release from St Gabriel News and Media

Tuesday January 12th 2020

For immediate release:

Bishops appoint leading canon lawyer to oversee establishment of National Tribunal Service

The Catholic bishops of England and Wales have appointed Dr Edward Morgan, a barrister and an internationally-respected expert in *The Code of Canon Law*, to oversee the establishment of a National Tribunal Service as part of wide-ranging development of safeguarding structures and processes in the Church.

The National Tribunal Service, among the first of its kind to be set up anywhere in the world, is to be established following the 2019-2020 Elliott Review into safeguarding practices and processes within the Catholic Church.

Dr Morgan's legal practice has for many years included the conduct of regulatory and canon law cases. He is a Visiting Professor of Canon Law at the Catholic University at Leuven, Belgium, (where he teaches at post-graduate and doctoral level) and a Fellow of the University of Cardiff Centre for Law and Religion.

The National Tribunal Service will deal principally with regulatory cases, including clergy discipline. Providing a centralised process of adjudication, it will seek to address concerns of interested parties with enhanced transparency and due process.

The National Tribunal Service will provide the Catholic Church in England and Wales with the means and the opportunity to cultivate an internal professional regulatory body for the clergy.

As its name suggests, the National Tribunal Service will provide the means by which cases of clergy discipline and misconduct may be investigated and adjudicated upon at a national rather than diocesan level. With the approval of the Holy See, its rules of procedure will enable the National Tribunal Service to undertake this work on behalf of all of the bishops.

Dr Edward Morgan said: "I am very pleased to be entrusted with this work. Having contributed to the Elliott Review as a member of a working committee with other canonists from Ireland and Italy, I recognise that the National Tribunal Service has a central role to play in the Church's

continued commitment to safeguarding, ecclesial discipline and accountability.

“The decision of the Bishops’ Conference communicates the individual and collective resolve of the bishops to deliver on this commitment.

“As with other professional regulatory bodies, the National Tribunal Service will look to adopt procedures which will contribute to public confidence through the accommodation of the rights of all stakeholders. Prior to adoption, the rules of procedure will, of course, be submitted to the Holy See for approval.”

*The Most Rev. **Malcolm McMahon**, the Archbishop of Liverpool and Vice-President of the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales, said: “We are fortunate indeed to have secured the services of an expert of the calibre of Dr Morgan. This is important work in the development of safeguarding in the Catholic Church and we are grateful for his commitment to the project.”*

***Carol Lawrence**, Project Implementation Director, said: “I am delighted that Dr Morgan is joining the Project Implementation Team. His wealth of experience and outstanding expertise will bring significant strength to the overall project.”*

The bishops in November accepted all the recommendations made by the Elliott Review, a “root-and-branch” examination of safeguarding in the Catholic Church, and wish to adopt them without delay.

The appointment of Dr Morgan comes just weeks after the bishops invited Carol Lawrence, the Financial Director of the Diocese of Shrewsbury, to take up the six-month post of Project Implementation Director with immediate effect to ensure all of the improvements are fully and swiftly implemented.

Mrs Lawrence sat on the panel of the Elliott Review and was a key member of the team that devised the proposed changes.

The bishops are adopting a “One Church” strategy which will place safeguarding in a comprehensive model covering religious institutions and other areas of ecclesial life as well as diocesan parishes and schools and other settings.

The establishment of the National Tribunal Service is part of a suite of measures which will see the transfer from existing structures and the creation of a single Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency with the power to enforce uniformly high standards of protection.

The process of implementing the work of the Elliott Review will involve working closely with survivors, dioceses, Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, safeguarding coordinators, the lay faithful and others to fulfill the recommendations made in the Elliott Review.

For further information

Please contact Simon Caldwell of St Gabriel News and Media on either 07730 526847 or at simon.caldwell@stgabrielnews.co.uk

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Please find attached a picture of Dr Morgan, courtesy of St Gabriel News and Media

To download the Elliott Report and to Ian Elliott discuss the work of the review:
<https://www.cbcew.org.uk/independent-safeguarding-review-published/>

To download the report on the Catholic Church by the Independent Inquiry Into Child Sex Abuse (IICSA): <https://www.iicsa.org.uk/investigations/investigation-into-failings-by-the-catholic-church>

To read or download the response of the Catholic bishops of England and Wales to the IICSA report: <https://www.cbcew.org.uk/statement-on-safeguarding/>

Notes to editors:

Edward Morgan LLB LLM JCL PhD JCD FCI Arb FRSA, is a Visiting Professor of Canon Law at the Catholic University in Leuven, Belgium, where he teaches at post-graduate and doctoral level. He is also a Fellow of the University of Cardiff Centre for Law and Religion.

An internationally-respected expert on canon law and a Catholic, his publications include regular papers to the Canon Law Society of Great Britain and Ireland, published texts on law and religion. In relation to the relationship between Bishops and Priests, his work has included: *The Directory on the Canonical Status of Clergy* (CTS London, 2009) and *Fathers and Brothers - The Legitimate Expectation of Diocesan Clerics in the Light of Canon 384 of the Code of Canon Law* (Peeters, Leuven, 2018).

Dr Morgan is a barrister practising from 9 St John Street, Manchester. He specialises in cases involving corporate liability and directors' duties, professional regulation, clinical governance, confidentiality and data protection, professional negligence, all forms of employment law, inquests and judicial review.

He serves as an Ecclesiastical Judge to the Diocese of Salford and has held fee paid civil judicial office since 2000.

On December 17 2020, it was announced that Dr Morgan is to be appointed Queen's Counsel by Her Majesty the Queen on the advice of the Lord Chancellor.

The Elliott Review was commissioned in October 2019 by the bishops of England and Wales under the chairmanship of Ian Elliott, a highly-experienced independent child protection professional, to critically examine of safeguarding structures and arrangements within Church. The work of the review and its recommendations were published on November 20, 2020, in the Elliott Report.

The bishops have formally accepted the recommendations laid out in the IICSA Report of November 10.

The recommendations of Elliott Report are further reaching than those of IICSA and have also been accepted by the bishops, who wish to see them implemented immediately.

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