

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

The Constitution of the Church of Ireland requires parishes to have, and to keep, registers of baptisms and burials, as well as a Marriage Record Book.

No similar requirement exists in relation to records of Confirmations which take place in a parish. Many, but not all, parishes do keep records of Confirmation or maintain a Confirmation Register. Many do not. It appears that the pattern of practice varies between dioceses and within dioceses of the Church of Ireland.

Certification of Confirmation may be required at times in life including, for example, when someone offers him or herself for training for ordained ministry, or for training as a reader. Members of the Church of Ireland who have lost the Confirmation Certificate issued at the time of their Confirmation frequently turn to clergy, bishops and/or diocesan offices seeking certification of their Confirmation. This may or may not be available depending on the practice of or within particular parishes and dioceses.

The purpose of this Bill is to ensure that records of Confirmation which take place in a parish are recorded within that parish and uniformly in parishes throughout the Church of Ireland.

Accordingly clause 2 seeks to make the necessary amendment to Chapter III by inserting into Chapter III a new section 25(1B) which would require the Select Vestry in each parish to provide a Confirmation Register in which are recorded confirmations by the Bishop in that parish;

Clause 3 seeks to make the consequential amendments by substituting a new section 25(2) into Chapter III to include reference to registers of confirmation.

THE BISHOP OF CLOGHER
VEN ADRIAN WILKINSON

BILL

To amend Chapter III of the Constitution.

WHEREAS it is desirable that Confirmation Registers should be provided in parishes to enable records to be maintained of those who are confirmed;

AND WHEREAS for such purposes it is necessary to amend Chapter III of the Constitution;

BE IT ENACTED by the Archbishops and Bishops and the clergy and laity of the Church of Ireland in General Synod assembled in Limerick in the year 2017 and by the authority of the same as follows:

1. In this Statute Chapter III means Chapter III of the Constitution of the Church of Ireland.
2. Immediately after section 25(1A) of Chapter III there shall be inserted:

25(1B) The select vestry shall also provide in each parish a Confirmation Register in which the incumbent or other member of the clergy officiating in the parish shall maintain records of those who are confirmed by the Bishop in that parish.

3. For section 25(2) of Chapter III there shall be substituted:

- (2) Every incumbent or other member of the clergy officiating in the parish, who shall have the custody for the time being of any registers of baptisms, or of confirmations, or of marriages, or of burials, shall at all reasonable times, on demand, allow search in such registers, and shall give a signed certified copy of any entry or entries in the same, on payment of the fee hereinafter mentioned; that is to say, for every search in a register of baptisms, or of confirmations, or of burials and for every single certificate of baptism, or of confirmation, or of burial the fees prescribed from time to time by the Standing Committee of the General Synod; and for every search in a register of marriages, and for each certified copy of an entry therein, the statutory fees prescribed by the State in which is situated the church to which the relevant register of marriages pertains.