



Catholic Commission for Employment Relations

leadership through service to strengthen work relationships

CONFIDENTIAL

27 October 2004

Mons WJ Peters
Vicar-General
Diocese of Armidale
PO Box 93
ARMIDALE NSW 2350

Our ref: CP-15-01-01232

Dear Mons Peters,

RE: John Joseph Farrell

I refer to your previous correspondence in this matter. A number of allegations have arisen in respect of John Farrell;

1. 1984 – when he was an Assistant Priest in the Parish of Moree. It appears that those allegations were made by four (4) or five (5) boys. John Farrell was removed from the Parish of Moree immediately and had some sessions with Mr Gary Boyle, a psychologist in Sydney. There is no report or information with regard to those meetings.
2. Mid 1987 – formal charges of sexual misconduct were laid by the Police against John Farrell. The allegations were made by ^{CPH}. On 18 February 1988, a Magistrate at a committal hearing in Narrabri declined to commit John Farrell to trial on the grounds that a jury was unlikely to convict on the evidence available.

John Farrell has never received another appointment in the Diocese of Armidale since that court case. We note that on 13 July 1988 Mr Gary Boyle, Psychologist, issued to Bishop Kennedy of the Diocese of Armidale, a favourable report with regard to John Farrell recommending that he be returned to full ministry with the church. However as noted, he has never been given another appointment as a Priest in the Diocese of Armidale.

On 10 November 1989, John Farrell was appointed by Bishop Heather of the Diocese of Parramatta to be an Assistant Priest at St Madeline's Parish, Kenthurst, in the Diocese of Parramatta effective from 18 November 1989.

On 30 June 1992, Bishop Heather formally advised John Farrell that his appointment with the Diocese of Parramatta was to be terminated, formally to take effect from 15 August 1992. It appears that John Farrell was terminated from the Diocese of Parramatta because of the language that he had used towards children.

Since that date John Farrell has never received another appointment as a Priest in the Diocese of Armidale or anywhere else.

3. A further allegation of acts of indecency was made against John Farrell by REDACTED REDACTED. All charges were dismissed by Magistrate at Armidale Court on 4 February 1999.
4. On 14 August 1988, a further allegation was made by a young man stating that John Farrell had assaulted him.
5. In 1992, there was an allegation of "off-colour" jokes made by John Farrell.
6. On 1 June 2002, Bishop Matthys received a letter from CPD alleging that John Farrell has sexually abused him during 1982 to 1984.

Allegations 1 and 2 appear to have arisen when John Farrell was an employee but prior to the enactment of Part 3A of the *Ombudsman Act, 1974*. Allegations 3 to 5 arose, after John Farrell ceased to be an employee. We are therefore of the view that these allegations are not reportable to the Ombudsman's Office.

We note that John Farrell is not permitted to carry out any ministry. We further note that the allegation has been notified to the Commission for Children and Young People ("CCYP"). It is important in terms of procedural fairness that you advise John Farrell of the notification to CCYP. Please let us know if we can assist you with drafting a letter to him.

Further, in discussions with Ms Kylie Symons, Principal Investigator of the NSW Ombudsman, Ms Symons indicated that if a person has not been employed working with children since the enactment of Part 3A of the *Ombudsman Act* in 1999, the allegation is not reportable to the Ombudsman's Office, especially as the matter has been notified to CCYP.

Yours faithfully,



Michael McDonald
Executive Director