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PRESS RELEASE FROM MOST REV. MICHAEL KENNEDY
CATHOLIC BISHOP OF ARMIDALE

RE: FOUR CORNERS REPORT ON 'FATHER. F'

The recent reports (both on television and in local and state newspapers) regarding events which occurred in the 1980s and 1990s concerning a person described as "Father F" have disturbed me deeply.

As in my Statement to Four Corners (and published in newspapers) I again extend my deepest sympathies to the individuals and their families affected by the reported events.

The man in question had his priestly faculties removed on 1 July 1992 and has not been authorised to perform any priestly duties since that date. In addition on 18 November 2005 he was laicised (i.e. was removed from the priesthood.)

Although these matters occurred many years ago (and well before my recent appointment as Bishop) I intend to arrange for a full investigation into certain matters raised in the reports.

I am in the process of appointing an independent expert to review all available records and to report back to me.

I encourage any victims to please contact the police. I am, of course, always willing to co-operate with the appropriate authorities.

I share the community abhorrence of all child abuse and am keen that perpetrators are brought to justice, and that victims are able to receive justice and pastoral care.

In view of the nature of the matters raised and of the action I am in the process of taking I do not feel I should comment any further at this time.

For immediate release