



## Diocese of Armidale

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Dear Mary Jane,

Your email of the 14<sup>th</sup> June mentions the tragic case of **REDACTED**. Whilst I have only recently become Bishop of the Diocese, I have been made aware of his plight. I offer my deepest sympathies to his family and friends.

As far as I can ascertain, the Diocesan Authorities became aware of alleged incidents of abuse by John Farrell on the 13<sup>th</sup> August 1987 when he was arrested. He was immediately stood down from all public ministry. The Church paid for his legal fees since every person accused of a crime is entitled to a defence.

John Farrell was later permitted to undertake ministry in the Parramatta Diocese since the charges against him were dismissed and since a Clinical Psychologist's 1988 report indicated that he did not present any problem to children. I have no knowledge of any sessions between John Farrell and Rex Brown as you mention.

John Farrell last worked as a priest in 1992 when on the 1<sup>st</sup> of July his priestly faculties were removed by the then Bishop of Armidale and he was forbidden from undertaking any public ministry. The diocese took this course of action because, although the charges against him were dismissed, there were continued rumours about him. Subsequently the Church's Special Issues Resource Group (forerunner to Towards Healing) formed was of the opinion that he should not undertake public ministry due to these continued rumours about him.

John Farrell was formally laicised on the 18<sup>th</sup> November 2005 and no longer has any priestly status in the Church.

Yours faithfully,

Most Reverend Michael Kennedy  
**Bishop of Armidale**