



# Centacare CATHOLIC FAMILY WELFARE

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Archdiocese of Sydney

August 22 1990

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Father Wayne Peters  
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Dear Wayne,

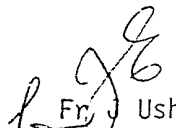
Further to our recent conversation in Sydney I wish to reiterate my views regarding the reappointment of a Priest to a pastoral post in the diocese of Armidale who has been before the courts in relation to child sexual assault. I am aware that the Priest in question was acquitted of the charges but it is vital that a Bishop make a personal assessment of the case irrespective of the outcome of any trial, before making such an appointment.

The Priest in question is known to me and I have interviewed him in relation to the alleged offences. His personal manner and his ongoing need to spend time with children is a matter of grave concern to me. During my interview with him I gained the impression that he was unable to understand the seriousness of the matters with which he had been charged and was arrogantly dismissing the whole affair as a figment of other people's imagination. The events, serious as they were alleged to be, did not seem to distress him greatly. His behaviour, therefore, indicated that his feelings were repressed and that he had developed certain defence mechanisms which enabled him to cope with such stressful events by denying that they had any basis of truth at all. Of course, denial is a trait of many child sexual assault offenders and it is not uncommon to witness complete disinterest in such people in relation to their behaviour. I am not suggesting that the Priest in question is guilty of such behaviour but his personality traits indicate some deep-seated disorder. During the single interview I had with him I was in no position to make any comprehensive assessment nor would it would appropriate for me to do so.

I understand that he has had counselling from Mr Garry Boyle and that Mr Boyle has provided the Bishop with some assessment of the man in question. I believe that it would be very appropriate, in view of the seriousness of the allegations and in view of the man's own personality, that a further assessment be sought. If Mr Boyle's opinions are confirmed then there would seem to be no good reason not to proceed with a pastoral appointment. If, on the other hand, there is some doubt about this Priest's ability to hold down such an appointment in an appropriate way, the Bishop may have to consider some other intervention.

I trust that these comments are helpful and if you require any further observations from me do not hesitate to let me know.

Kindest personal regards,

  
Fr. J. Usher  
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