

# M the Maitland Mercury

INFORMING THE HUNTER SINCE 1843



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Wednesday, October 20, 2010

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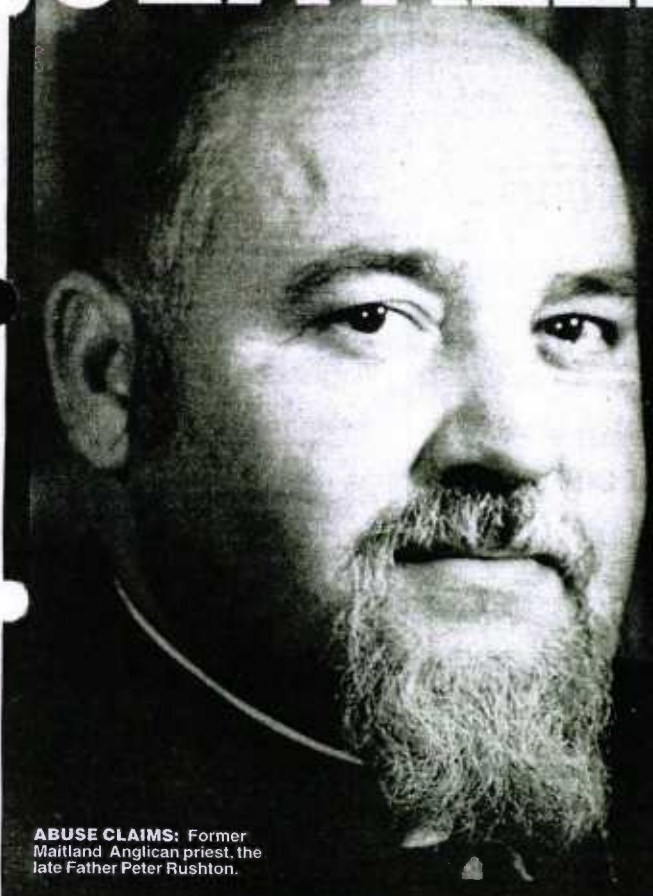
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# SEX ALLEGATIONS

## Church investigates claims former city priest abused boys



EMMA SWAIN

The Anglican Diocese of Newcastle has issued a public apology to the four male victims of serial paedophile and former Archdeacon of Maitland Father Peter Rushton.

Bishop of Newcastle, The Right Reverend Dr Brian Farran, has publicly apologised to the four Hunter men who were "adversely affected by these deeply regrettable events" and has urged anyone with information about the abuse to come forward.

Significant allegations and information of concern were brought forward in relation to Fr Rushton's involvement in the sexual abuse of minors following the priest's death in 2007.

"I am deeply saddened by these events," Dr Farran said last night.

"The church is supposed to be a place where people can go to feel

safe and secure, but in these circumstances this was not the case.

"I have met with the four men and heard their stories and that was a hard thing to do, but I do believe the men now feel validated in their actions of coming forward.

"Therefore it is important for me to come forward and publicly acknowledge these matters."

Dr Farran said the victims were aged about 12 when the abuse took place during the 1980s.

Fr Rushton became Archdeacon of Maitland on August 1, 1983, and resigned 15 years later.

"It has been extremely important for these men to come forward with their stories and it's imperative that others do the same if the same thing has happened to them. This is an extremely important part of the healing process," Dr Farran said.

**ABUSE CLAIMS:** Former Maitland Anglican priest, the late Father Peter Rushton.

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