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REDACTED Street
Oatlands, NSW 2117

23 April 1999

The Right Reverend Roger Herft
Bishop of Newcastle
PO Box 817
Newcastle, NSW 2300.

Dear Roger,

I felt that I should write to let you know where REDACTED and I are now at with our lives since leaving St John's College. I have just signed a contract with a company in the Sydney region and am now going into my sixth week there. Having re-entered the industry, after having had a two-year break, it is easy to see how much I have missed. It has taken a while to find this position and I can now imagine how people who have been unemployed for years feel looking for work and taking so long to find it. I know you keep them in your prayers. Can I make a constructive suggestion for the future? For the sake of candidates who will be going through this process is it possible to make a decision and warn them earlier in the year to give them a better chance of finding employment, if they will be leaving. It also gives the community a chance to say goodbye to them. We were not able, financially, to accept the offer of the diocese to continue on, because as the college indicated we were going to have to pay for things like electricity etc, and rightly so. It was conveyed to us by the Administrator and Principal that we were expected to have moved out by the time that term began. This was a reasonable request, and our intention, but not being employed unfortunately slowed the process down. Thankfully my sister was able to take us in. This did not give us time to say farewell to everyone and has left us both feeling rather flat. It would be helpful to future students (if it could be arranged) for them to be allowed time to say their goodbyes.

I have received comments from people indicating they have received letters from you indicating that REDACTED and I are happy and relieved with the decision. I have not seen the letters but, if the reports are accurate, I feel obligated to clarify my position. I accept that the diocese has the right to make whatever decision it sees fit in regard to its future and the clergy it has performing God's work. I will abide by its decision. I have to say however that I am neither relieved about it nor accepting of it. If I gave that impression when we had our one, and only, meeting about the issue, I can only say that it was the sheer shock and bewilderment about the issue. From my discussion with REDACTED REDACTED and having read this, he feels the same way.

I acknowledge that I was considering taking twelve months off in relation to training at the college, but that was to sort out a number of personal issues that I now need to work on. One issue is dejection. I still find it difficult to believe that REDACTED was moved to the same parish as me considering that the Archdeacon of Newcastle knew how he felt toward me. I was asked if I minded REDACTED coming to the parish but I was unaware until at the retreat of the following Easter, that he was in love with me. Then not to have him immediately removed, but to have him remain there for 4 more months, was unbearable. I had constant contact with REDACTED during classes, on the weekends, and at nights when he and REDACTED would come around and fight out their marriage problems. The only support I had was my support group, whom I (apparently mistakenly) told in confidence after REDACTED left. After this I was called into the registry to explain myself because REDACTED had written to you saying I was telling everyone in the parish. In our interview you mentioned that I seem to have lost my passion... is there any wonder?

As you can see there is a lot that I need to deal with and work through, but one thing that is coming through is I have some role in the Church.

I am working through it and will persevere.

May God's peace be with you,

Ian Barrack