



## THE BISHOP OF TASMANIA

The Right Reverend Phillip K. Newell, A.O.

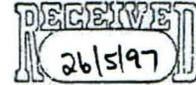
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### **PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL**



The Right Reverend George Browning,  
Diocese of Canberra and Goulburn,  
GPO Box 1981,  
**CANBERRA ACT 2601**

Dear George,

### **Re: Louis Victor Daniels**

We have had some conversation about this person but I now feel compelled to be more explicit.

It is with deep regret that I must write to you in relation to the person, the activities of whom within the Diocese of Tasmania have caused much grief and anxiety and have brought the Church into grave disrepute. The need to write to you arises because I have become aware that Daniels is now a resident of the ACT and has engaged in some lay leadership of the intercessions, and perhaps other activities, at the Church of the Holy Covenant, Jamison. He has also obtained a teaching position with the Public Education Authority of the ACT, to which I have separately written in the terms a copy of which I enclose.

The essence of the problem in relation to Daniels is that in the past he has exhibited a pattern of behaviour that is intolerable, involving predatory sexual contact with young males into contact with whom he has come in the course of his calling as a priest of this Diocese. This conduct ultimately led to Daniels resignation as Rector of the parish of Burnie and Archdeacon of the Burnie region, which occurred on the 21st day of November, 1994.

I first became aware that Daniels might have a behavioural problem in the early 1980's, when I was called upon to deal with a complaint made against Daniels by two young males. These allegations concerned a sexual impropriety that was towards the lower end of the scale of that kind of offence, and neither of the young males wanted the matter referred to the police or to their parents. They were anxious only that I was aware of the matter and that I should take some action within the Diocese. I required Daniels to cease his involvement with the Anglican Boys' Society and to amend his ways, and that he be counselled by another priest. I was satisfied at the time that the occurrences were isolated and that the action taken was sufficient.

As I was satisfied that Daniels had amended his ways and he was otherwise an outstanding candidate, I later appointed him Rector of the parish of Burnie and Archdeacon of the region of Burnie.

Subsequently one of the young males who had first complained, having grown to manhood, instructed solicitors to act for him and threatened proceedings against Daniels and the Church. This occurred in the early 1990's, and the matter was settled on terms that were confidential to the Church, Daniels and the complainant. The terms included the payment by Daniels of a substantial sum to the complainant.

As a result of the further complaint I again counselled Daniels and issued to him a letter of solemn admonition, with the terms of which he agreed to comply.

About two and a half years ago, very shortly prior to the resignation from his position from Burnie, I received a further complaint concerning Daniels. This complaint alleged sexual impropriety of a serious nature, again against a male minor. The complaint was made to me by the step-mother of the minor, and I understand that the matter was referred to the police and a formal statement made by the minor. The facts alleged, if true, put Daniels in breach of the criminal law and of his letter of solemn admonition and clearly evidence lack of amendment of and repentance for his prior conduct. I required Daniels to resign and he did so.

I understand that the police investigation is continuing but that the police are reluctant to extradite Daniels from the ACT in the absence of evidence making the case against him "watertight". My advice is that there is some legal difficulty about this, and that it is now unlikely that the case will proceed.

I have very recently received a further complaint. The complainant, now a young man employed in a responsible position in Hobart, alleges that in or about 1973 or 1974, when he was about 11 years old, Daniels engaged in sexual contact with him that included requiring the boy, at least on one occasion with a degree of force, to perform oral sex upon him. On more than one occasion after that had occurred Daniels purported to blame the boy and to absolve him by hearing his confession and granting him absolution. This complaint has also been referred to the police but, as I understand it, is unlikely to proceed further.

I am very anxious that the Church does not again permit Daniels to be in a position to abuse the trust of the young people, males in particular. He will not be re-licensed to act as a priest in Tasmania, nor will I permit him to be clothed with the authority of the Church in any respect, and I request that you adopt a similar stance in your Diocese. It is clear to me that, even as a lay person or group leader, he may again succumb to temptation. I have made the Primate aware of the position with a view to ensuring the Daniels does not again become licensed anywhere in the Church in Australia.

I would be happy to discuss any of this with you. Be assured of my special thoughts and prayerful support.

Yours sincerely,



Phillip K. Newell