

11/7/2011

LETTER TO EPISCOPAL STANDARDS COMMISSION

"Dear Mr Lloyd,

Although I was expecting to receive the complaints about me that were referred to in the Newcastle Herald, it nevertheless caused me anguish when I read the contents of the enclosures to your letter of 16 June.

As you doubtless realize being a bishop in the Anglican Church places one in a very exposed position. The Bishop has to govern the Diocese to extend the Kingdom and must do that even though there will be those who oppose his method of seeking to achieve that goal. This is difficult enough at the best of times. However, as you are aware, I was forced to take action against certain clergy who were the subject of adverse findings by the Diocesan Professional Standards Board. A Bishop has to take notice of the findings of such a Board: the public expects our clergy to live lives that are beyond reproach.

As you know the part of the matter to which I refer is currently the subject of Supreme Court proceedings.

One of the clergy involved is an extremely popular man, especially with the cathedral congregation. The present Dean does not as yet seem to be anywhere near as popular.

The complainants are among those who are supporters of the popular defendant and who blame me for proceeding against him and seeking to remove him from holy orders after the Board's decision. They also blame me for their perceived shortcomings of the current Dean.

Thus, you may not be surprised to realize that the current complaints were lodged a few days before the hearing of the Supreme Court proceedings was to commence and that the fact that the complaints were made was told to the Newcastle Herald, almost certainly by the complainants or their associates.

I would urge you to take into account when the Commission is evaluating the complaints that there is a strong case for saying that they are motivated by a desire to gain public approval for their friends and prejudice against me in the litigation.

Although the complainants and their associates are strongly opposed to me, I have to remember that I am still their bishop and have the duty, with my priests, to care for their souls. Thus you will understand that in this communication I will not make any criticism, state negative facts or make negative allegations against them unless it is absolutely necessary to do so.

Turning now to the complaints, you have invited me to address (a), (c), (f) and (g). I will address them in reverse order as that appears more logical. However, before doing so, I will make a general comment.

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