

STATEMENT OF MONSIGNOR VINCENT CASEY

TAKEN ON 9 JULY 1999

I am 91 years of age and have been a Priest in the Diocese of Maitland since 1932.

I have held various positions as Parish Priest and for periods served as one of the advisors or consultants to the Bishop. I was Vicar General for 16 years. Discovered the periods of Bishop Toohey and Bishop Clarke. I was Vicar ??? and most of both of their terms of Bishop.

After Bishop Toohey died Monsignor Clarke was appointed as Vicar Capitular. During the time that Monsignor Clarke was Vicar Capitular, I remember speaking to him just as we were walking into a meeting. He told me that there had been trouble with Father Vincent Ryan and that he was being sent to see a specialist in Melbourne. My recollection is that Monsignor Cotter told me that there has been some trouble with the altar boys although I do not recall whether or not Monsignor Cotter told me details of what that trouble was, I just don't remember now.

I am not sure whether I asked Patty Cotter anything else about Vince Ryan after that.

While I was the Vicar General to Bishop Clarke, no report was ever brought to me regarding Father Ryan or his conduct.

I never received any complaint about Father Ryan after Bishop Clarke came to the Diocese nor did Bishop Clarke ever discuss the problem that had arisen with Vincent Ryan with me while I was his Vicar General.

Vince Ryan was placed into the marriage tribunal because he had done a study in Canon Law in Rome. We had very few Canon lawyers in the Diocese and it is usually a Canon Lawyer who is appointed to conduct a marriage tribunal. As Vince had those skills it was natural he be appointed to the marriage tribunal, it could not be considered to have been a place where he was put because he couldn't be trusted with children in a Parish. That is certainly not correct.

While I was sitting as a consultant, and we were discussing the business of Priests of one Parish to another, there was never any discussion regarding any perceived impediment for Father Ryan being moved or placed in a particular Parish.

During my entire period as a consultant, which lasted for 16 years, I never had to deal with any question regarding inappropriate sexual contact by one of the Priests with any children in the Diocese.

In 1995 when it became known that one of the priests in the Diocese was in trouble, I immediately felt that it was Vince Ryan simply because he was the only person that I had been in the position of responsibility whom I had heard any adverse comment about. During the period of Bishop Toohey's term and when Bishop Clarke became Bishop, it was the practice to have two Vicars General and I remember with Bishop Toohey I was one Vicar General and another fellow Monsignor Ford was the other. After Bishop Clarke came to the Diocese I was one Vicar General and Patty Cotter was the other.