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27th. February, 1986

Private and Confidential

My dear Archbishop,

Under separate cover I have sent you today a copy of my letter to the Secretary of the Diocesan & Extension Maintenance Fund. It was written with right good will and, I hope, in full accord with your pastoral and reasonable request.

You will surely appreciate that after some 6 years or so without a proper holiday plus two confrontations with you into the bargain, I am presently in need of a break to which as you would be the first to remind me, I am entitled. I propose to leave Gardenvale at the beginning of next week for England to visit my family and friends and for a rest.

Out of kindness and appreciation, most of the Australian Bishops and Major Superiors encourage their members from overseas to return home for 3 months every 5 years. I hereby request leave of absence, with faculties and commendation, for the period of three months as from Monday, the 3rd. of March, 1986. I shall of course, Your Grace, keep you informed of an earlier return or otherwise request an extension of leave in accordance with your offer made some two or three years ago when you summoned me for the first correction.

Fr Mark Reynolds is in residence here, as you know, I shall do my best to obtain supply priests in addition for the three month period of my absence.

For my peace of mind and soul I think that we should have another talk prior to my departure. I would not put in writing more than this since I know that you have given copies of personal correspondence to others, such as Corr & Corr, your solicitors, all contrary to loyalty between you as bishop and the writer as a trusting priest.

Donald Pickering
Priest

2/2/86.