
 DIOCESE OF WOLLONGONG



DIOCESAN CURIA

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24 September 2008

His Eminence
 Cardinal William J Levada
 Prefect
 Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith
 Piazza del S Ufficio-II,
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Your Eminence

Earlier this month I forwarded documentation in relation to Rev John Gerard Nestor, a priest of the Diocese of Wollongong.

In 1996, pending the hearing of an appeal against his conviction of sexual assault, Fr Nestor either alone or in the company of one/two men, visited the homes of altar servers or former altar servers seeking to enlist them as potential witnesses at the appeal hearing. A number of these boys and members of their families experienced these visits as intimidating.

Because of this, when I wrote to Fr Nestor to inform him of the investigation under the *NSW Ombudsman Act 1974*, I included the following: "I must reiterate, John, that the Diocese has made and will continue to make every effort to ensure that confidentiality is maintained throughout the process. To this end, the Diocese has sought assurances of confidentiality from all parties concerned and I ask that you, too, maintain this same level of confidentiality. A breach of confidentiality will be taken seriously. The Diocese has also sought and will continue to seek to make certain that there is no intimidation of any person involved, thus preserving your dignity and that of others". I repeated this on three other occasions, the most recent being 12 June 2008.

On Friday, 12 September 2008, my office was contacted because Fr Nestor had called at the residence of Mr ABO [redacted] at about 4.45pm on the previous day, 11 September 2008 (Fr Nestor had had no contact with the family since 1996). ABO [redacted] was not at home when Fr Nestor called and Fr Nestor subsequently telephoned the residence at about 8.30pm that night. ABO [redacted] spoke to Fr Nestor only briefly and then passed the telephone to his eldest brother, REDACTED [redacted], who was visiting at the time. Fr Nestor wanted to speak with ABO [redacted], "man to man and head off the rumour going around the Diocese" that he [Fr Nestor] had done "something bad" to ABO [redacted]. Fr Nestor's contact with the REDA [redacted] family was both uninvited and unwelcomed and

was experienced as intimidation. REDACTED told Fr Nestor not to contact him or any member of the family.

I was disturbed to learn that Fr Nestor had approached the REDA family, particularly in view of my repeated comments in relation to the perceived intimidation of any person involved in the process. Personally, I am not aware of any "rumour going around the Diocese". Fr Nestor has been informed directly of his alleged sexual assault of ABO .

I was also disturbed because Fr Nestor has claimed on several occasions that the Diocese has put "pressure" on people to bring evidence against him. I have been unable to find any evidence of this, however, Fr Nestor's visit to ABO can be interpreted as Fr Nestor himself putting alleged victims and their families under pressure. I have written to Fr Nestor and asked him not to approach any member of the REDA family or any other person involved in this matter. A copy of this letter is enclosed.

In view of the documentation before you, I think it wise that you have this information.

With sentiments of esteem

Yours sincerely



Most Rev Peter W Ingham DD
BISHOP OF WOLLONGONG

Enc.