



28 July 1999

Dear Sisters

**Re: *Integrity in Ministry***

Please find enclosed a copy of the new *Integrity in Ministry* document which all Religious Leaders in Australia have been requested to circulate to all their members and ask their acceptance of its provisions. The National Committee for Professional Standards is urging ownership of this document at the local level. Therefore, it is important that each one of us takes time to read, reflect and apply all the new insights and supports that this document is offering. Issues, such as self-care for the sake of mission, pastoral relationships, personal skill development, affective supports, ongoing formation and support in celibacy etc, are presented in a healthy and encouraging manner.

I am sending this document now to be part of the reading matter of this next phase of Chapter because I see it as an integral part of our discernment process as we consider Leadership. In the *Preliminary Report on Pastoral Governance – March 1999* on page twenty the "Strategies for the Future" foreshadow a continuation of understanding and education in the area of Professional Standards. On page eleven it is stated: "There have been new learnings gleaned from the principles of Professional Standards". In this new *Integrity in Ministry* document the principles are clearly described and demand from us a new way of doing many things, both in our local communities and in our ministries and congregationally, about the way we make community and ministry appointments and how we set up processes of responsibility and accountability. We all need to learn more in this area as we nurture our own and each others' health and wellbeing for the sake of mission in this changing world.

Page eighteen of this document states:

*Bishops and religious leaders share a responsibility for the health and well being of the clergy and religious they lead and serve.*

*Among the behavioural standards that might follow from this principle are:*

- *creating structures, resources, environments and opportunities in their communities or dioceses to support the spiritual, physical and emotional health of those in their care.*

I therefore commend *Integrity in Ministry* to you and trust that you will appreciate its significant relationship to the question of Leadership in this next phase in our discernment as Chapter.

Enclosed with this letter is a suggestion for process in community and an acknowledgement form for each sister to sign. I would be grateful if you could return the acknowledgement form to me here at the Glebe Offices no later than 3 September 1999.

Yours lovingly in Christ

*Sonia*

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