

REDACTED

Most Rev. John Bathersby DD
 Archbishop of Brisbane
 Archbishop's House
 790 Brunswick St.,
 NEW FARM 4005

9th July 2001

Dear Archbishop Bathersby,

I feel compelled to write to you after receiving the most recent correspondence from Thynne and Macartney, Solicitors. In this letter John Moore stated that the position regarding the amended Deed of Release was "non-negotiable" and that, in fact, the amendments were in my "best interest".

Although I found the initial Deed of Release to be most restrictive and did not necessarily agree with the contents, I could understand and accept these conditions. However, on the other hand, the amended Deed of Release, in particular, Clause 9, severely limits my ability to continue healing into the future and I find this totally unacceptable.

One of the biggest hurdles in my healing process has been my past reluctance to acknowledge, accept and talk about my abuse. In the last few years, with considerable counselling assistance I have shared details of my abuse with close family, trusted friends and colleagues. This for me has been a most liberating and freeing experience. I had spent nearly half a life time hiding my abuse and living with the fear that others would not accept me if they knew of my past. It has been a major breakthrough in my healing that I can now accept myself as I am and to trust that my close friends will do the same. The support and compassion I have received from these trusted family and friends has been truly critical to my current emotional well being. Therefore, I have to reject the suggestion that disclosing details of my abuse for genuine therapeutic treatment purposes only is "in my best interest". I reserve the right to share the experiences with significant others in my life, now and in the future, or risk severe repercussions to my emotional health.

You, yourself, Archbishop Bathersby, recognise the enormous significance of this right in the healing process. I take this opportunity to remind you of a media statement you made on 20th October 1998 in regard to sexual abuse victims.

"The needs of the victim are a priority The Church wants an open environment where the victims of abuse are encouraged to talk openly, and begin the long journey to complete healing with the help of professional counsellors, family and friends.." The second Deed of Release, particularly Clause 9, does not, in its current form, afford me this right.

As a person of values and integrity I am unable make a commitment to an issue which I believe to be fundamentally wrong or to give an undertaking that I may not be able to keep. However, I am prepared to negotiate a mutually acceptable position, on this issue should you be prepared to do so.

Yours sincerely,

Joan Isaacs

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