

March 30, 1995

P D Ryan

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Dear Paul David,

I have been advised by Brian Finnigan of the contents of your letter to him of March 13th and understand that he is responding to the issues which you have raised in that letter. In the meantime I am writing about a more serious matter which came to my attention on March 23.

I received a letter from the Vicar for Priests of the Diocese of Richmond in Virginia which communicated information relating to a complaint made by a person who claims to have been molested by you during your time at Star of the Sea Parish. The letter from the Vicar for Priests indicates that in your time there you were accused of having molested one young man and perhaps two others and that when this was discovered Father Gaughan told you to leave. Father Gaughan met with several families regarding the incidents in question. Last year a young man came forward with these accusations and is requesting financial support for counselling expenses past and future. It appears that this Diocese will be asked to make a considerable financial contribution to the settlement of this case.

Needless to say I am deeply disturbed at this development, both because the incidents took place and also because neither you nor Father Gaughan did me the courtesy of indicating that there had been any problem during your time in Star of the Sea Parish. I should have thought that you would have let me know that complaints had been made and not had me learn of that fact in the manner in which I have done so.

I have replied to the Vicar for Priests at Richmond and trust that this matter will be able to be settled. However, I feel that it is important to let you know that the situation has arisen. This does of course reinforce the conclusion which I conveyed to you in my letter of November 29th, 1993 that I cannot see that your future could be lived in priestly ministry.

I am disappointed to have to convey this information to you. In the light of it, I urge you in fairness to everyone concerned to consider very seriously making an application for laicization.

Yours sincerely in Christ,

Bishop of Ballarat