

13 November 2006

His Eminence  
Cardinal William Joseph Levada  
Prefect  
Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith  
VATICAN CITY

Your Eminence,

I write with reference to the matter of Paul David Ryan. I attach an information sheet, which provides some information concerning Paul David Ryan.

I enclose a letter written by my predecessor, Bishop Ronald Mulkearns, on the 29<sup>th</sup> of January 1992 to Father Peter Lechner, which sets out the history of Paul David Ryan in the Diocese of Ballarat.

I also enclose material taken from the Website of the organization *Broken Rites*, which sets out relevant information concerning the manner in which the Diocese of Ballarat dealt with Paul David Ryan from the time of his ordination until 1994. The organization acts on behalf of victims of sexual assault by Catholic priests and brothers, in particular. I have no reason to doubt the accuracy of the report, because the victims who gave evidence to the Police that lead to the recent conviction of Paul David Ryan would have had access to Paul David Ryan's file and were supported by Broken Rites.

In 1994 after investigations conducted by the Diocese of Ballarat, it was decided to commence the process for laicization of Paul David Ryan. However from my reading of the huge amount of material it would seem that this matter was never concluded. Anecdotally, it is said that he asked for a large amount of money from the Diocese before he would sign the Petition.

Presently Paul David Ryan is in a Prison reserved for sex offenders and for police who receive a custodial sentence. I have never met Paul David Ryan but if you believe that I should do so I will endeavour to bring this about.

I also enclose newspaper articles published at the time when Paul David Ryan was given a custodial sentence of eighteen (18) months in the Magistrates Court at Warrnambool in this Diocese of Ballarat.

-2-

There is a huge amount of material in Paul David Ryan's file in this diocese. I was required to hand over all the material to a member of the Victorian Police to ensure that the investigations could proceed without any accusation of interference by myself. I am also told by the Victorian Police that they are convinced that there are other cases involving Paul David Ryan, but that it is not likely that the victims will come forth to lodge a complaint in the criminal court.

I should also wish you to know that I have met the mother of a victim who committed suicide as the result of the sexual assault by Paul David Ryan when he was transferred from the Parish of Peshurst to the Parish of Ararat. I have assisted the mother of the suicide victim with payment of counselling and also for the cost of the burial of her son.

It is my firm conviction that Paul David Ryan should be reduced to the lay state as soon as possible.

I anticipate that I shall meet the two victims of Paul David Ryan mentioned in the proceedings in the Magistrates' Court in Warrnambool. I also expect that they will seek from me an apology on behalf of the Catholic Church, assistance with professional counselling and also an ex-gratia payment.

If you should require further information concerning this matter, I shall be pleased to oblige.

With sentiments of profound respect,

Yours sincerely in Christ

**Bishop of Ballarat**