



CONGREGATIO  
PRO DOCTRINA FIDEI

00120 Città del Vaticano,  
Palazzo del S. Uffizio

19 December 2006

PROT. N. 425/2006 - 24469  
(In responsione fiat mentio huius numeri)

**CONFIDENTIAL**

Dear Bishop Connors,

The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith has received your letter regarding **Reverend Paul D. RYAN**, a priest of your diocese who has been accused of the sexual abuse of a minor.

The summary of the case that you have provided, while helpful, is insufficient to proceed with your request that Rev. Ryan be dismissed from the clerical state. We would be grateful, therefore, if you could arrange to have each element of the summary supported by the relevant documentation either in the original or in an authentic copy.

In the meantime, this Dicastery proposes that you meet with Rev. Ryan and invite him to petition Pope Benedict XVI for the grace of a dispensation from the obligations of the priesthood, including celibacy. A request for such a dispensation should denote that the cleric recognizes the seriousness of the matter and that he is penitent for his actions. Before proceeding with this case, the Congregation will await the above-mentioned documentation and the results of your consultation with Rev. Ryan.

With every best wish as we celebrate the Nativity of Our Lord, I remain

Yours sincerely in Christ,

✠ Angelo AMATO, SDB  
Titular Archbishop of Sila  
*Secretary*

---

The Most Reverend  
**Peter J. CONNORS**  
*Bishop of Ballarat*  
P. O. Box 121  
Ballarat Vic 3353  
AUSTRALIA