



Most Rev Philip Wilson DD JCL
 Archbishop of Adelaide
 Catholic Church Office
 GPO Box 1364
 Adelaide 5001
 South Australia

Telephone: (08) 8210 8108
 Facsimile: (08) 8223 2307
 Email: phwilson@adelaide.catholic.org.au

April 20, 2005

Archbishop,

Tony Fuller, Sue Cain
 & Jane Swift have
 looked over this letter
 & have approved its
 contents for signing.

39 Wakefield Street
 Adelaide SA 5001

Mr LS and Mrs LR

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Dear LS and LR,

I am very conscious of the time which has passed since I received correspondence from Johnston Withers, who were then your lawyers, on October 20, 2004. They provided a number of questions that they requested answers to. I apologise for this delay, however these are very complex issues and I wish to respond in the best way possible.

I acknowledge your advice to me that Johnston Withers are no longer acting for you and that you have requested that any future communications be made directly with you.

I have considered your requests in depth. Rather than respond individually to each question, I want to respond to the main issue which underpins all of your questions. That issue is the application or otherwise of *Towards Healing* to your son LG's situation.

Towards Healing is intended as a process designed to accommodate grievances and to respond to them appropriately. It is not a strict code like an Act of Parliament. Some aspects of it are very precise, whereas other aspects are less specific in their terms and more general in their application. Some flexibility is therefore allowed with the application of the process.

Even considering this flexibility, the circumstances of the former students of St Ann's Special School were not able to be accommodated appropriately. To demonstrate the point: clause 36 of *Towards Healing* assumes that the person who has a complaint is able to provide either a written or an oral complaint even if he/she suffers from an intellectual or psychiatric disability (as noted in clause 40.3.5). Apart from the three cases in which Brian Perkins admitted abusing the students, the remainder of the students (including your son LG) have been unable to comply with clause 36.

Mr [LS] and Mrs [LR]
April 20, 2005

That led to the most unfortunate consequence that the former students were not able to make out a sufficient case for consideration under *Towards Healing*.

If *Towards Healing* had been applied to any specific extent at all to your son [LG]'s case, the complaint would have failed immediately.

I could not allow that outcome to occur, so I made the decision to distribute gifts of money to many of the former students and to offer pastoral care and support to all former students and their parents, guardians or carers. I made that decision after a great deal of thought as to how I might best respond with compassion to the particular issues and vulnerabilities of the many former students and their families who have been affected and who would not have been assisted by the *Towards Healing* process.

Your son [LG] has received a gift of money and on a number of occasions I have offered you pastoral care and support. While I respect your decision not to take up that offer, it remains open. I would welcome the opportunity to meet with you at any convenient time so that this support can be discussed.

The making of monetary gifts could never by itself take away the hurt or damage which may have been suffered - and it was never anticipated that it would do so. The concept of the gifts was developed as a practical way of providing those former students and their families with the capacity to enhance their quality of life in some material way, in conjunction with reaching out to them by way of pastoral care and support.

I have been moved by the warmth and sincerity of the vast majority of the families who received the gifts and pastoral support, many of whom have told me of the joy, the relief and the sense of closure they have experienced as a consequence.

I would very much like to assist you wherever possible and reiterate my offer to meet pastorally with you. Please phone my personal assistant, Mrs Sue Vieceli, on 8210 8108 if you would like to arrange a meeting.

With prayers and best wishes.

Yours sincerely,

+ Philip Wilson.

Most Reverend Philip Wilson DD JCL
Archbishop of Adelaide