

Professional Standards Office

Established by the Bishops and Leaders of Religious Institutes
Of the Catholic Church
in South Australia

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19th April 2004

LS [redacted] & LR [redacted]
[redacted]
[redacted]

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Dear LR [redacted] and LS [redacted]

I am writing to confirm the most recent phone conversation that I had with LR [redacted]. I also write as requested by you both, to confirm that the Towards Healing principles and procedures have been considered in responding to the matters arising from St Ann's.

When the St Ann's matters were first raised, we embarked on the prescribed procedure under Towards Healing. In accordance with that procedure, as Police were involved in relation to the alleged offences, it was not permissible to proceed further with Towards Healing process at that time. However, in keeping with the spirit and intention of Towards Healing, counselling was offered to former students and their carers, which was in many cases accepted and provided during this time.

We were formally advised by Mr Donal Craig that a number of carers of the former students of St Ann's for whom he acts were intending to take civil action against the Church on behalf of the students. While it is certainly every ones' right to do so, and indeed people are encouraged to do so if that is what they wish to do, as outlined in Towards Healing any further process is precluded under Towards Healing.

As you know, a Taskforce was established to deal with issues in relation to the St Ann's matter, as contemplated by Clause 33.4.

In spite of the embargos imposed on Towards Healing by the Police action and the foreshadowed civil action in respect of some of the complaints, the Church felt strongly the need to respond to the former students of St Ann's in a manner that reflected the principles of Towards Healing.

This response was one that Archbishop Wilson, the St Ann's Taskforce and I (as the Director of Professional Standards) carefully considered.

In any event, for a number of reasons, including particularly the intellectual disabilities of most of the former students, it was apparent that a great deal of stress and further grief may be caused for many (particularly having regard to the evidentiary requirements), with little likelihood in some of the cases of achieving an appropriate outcome if the strict procedures of Towards Healing were applied.

Out of pastoral concern for former students Archbishop Wilson then looked to a method to achieve an outcome, which might otherwise have been impossible to achieve. The Archbishop decided to offer an unencumbered gift to many of the former students, irrespective of whether they had made a complaint under Towards Healing. This gift

was not made under the Towards Healing process but rather was guided by the spirit and philosophy of Towards Healing in its pastoral response.

The primary goal of Towards Healing and the response of the Church is one of assisting people to find healing. I am saddened to hear that both of you have concerns in relation to the response which you say prevents you from moving on. The Archbishop and I are anxious that you should reach some conclusion in respect of your concerns for your son

LG

Towards that end, I have spoken to Archbishop Wilson who offers to meet with you and me, to provide you with an opportunity to express your concerns.

I hope that this in some way can assist you. As I said on the phone, the St Ann's matter has been a unique and complex one and any feedback is always welcome.

Please advise me if you would like a meeting with the Archbishop and me to be organised. Please note Archbishop Wilson has a number of commitments and will return from overseas in of June. Due to his heavy commitments in June, the earliest availability would be July.

I look forward to hearing from you at your convenience.

Yours sincerely,



Sue Cain
Director