

REDACTED

23rd October 1996

Dear Bishop Brian

I do hope you are feeling rested after your holiday. I know this holiday was booked 12 months in advance but I felt very much alone and deserted when you left town so soon after the pastoral letter was published and picked up by the Courier Mail. To read that you said the allegations against priests and nuns were scurrilous allegations made my heart ache. It confirmed what I had always suspected, that you never believed a word I had told you.

When I couldn't contact you I tried Noel Hynes but it was not a convenient time for him to talk. He asked me to phone back or he could contact me but I told him not to worry. He obviously didn't, as he made no attempt to track me down. We are the only REDACTED in the phone book, not only here but Qld. wide!

I now realise that I made a big mistake in only talking about the affect the abuse has had on me and have never really spelt out what actually happened. All along I have been sensitive to the church and Reg and have never done anything to harm Reg's "character and good name," as you yourself call it. I didn't send the survey into to Broken Rites as they requested the names of the clergy who had abused as I believed that to be gutter tactics. So much for my sensitivity!

My abuse with Reg started the Christmas of 1959 when I was still 11, and continued until I entered the convent in 1965 when I was 17. We are NOT talking about a little touch up, we are talking about FULL PENETRATION. After I was abused I was made to confess my sin to my perpetrator. I was asked if I was sorry for my sin and told NOT to sin anymore. I was always made to believe it was my fault. When I left the convent I worked at Neerkol at Reg's request. Yes, no doubt I SHOULD have exercised my free will, but on 2 occasions, I was told by Reg, that he would kill himself if I didn't love him fully. I moved into the presbytery with him and his mother. Each night he would give his mother several sherries combined with sleeping pills and would then lock her in her room. Each morning I would have to kneel in front of him and confess my sin. After several weeks I moved to Brisbane to work at Xavier Hospital. He came south and begged me to go back to him and after 3 months I did. When I was working for a Chemist in East St. I was met for lunch almost every day. I was picked up in Quay Street and made to crouch down on the floor of the car until we left the city and arrived out in the country. Yes, once again I SHOULD have exercised my free will and NOT gone with him. I knew that if this sordid affair continued I would burn in the fires of hell and if I stopped seeing him he would kill himself and I would have to live with that on my conscience. Looking back, maybe that would have been less traumatic then the horrendous memories that haunt me every day.

Each night I would pray to my God to release me from the chains that bound me. I would pray that He would take me to be with Him.

I felt like a fish trapped in a net, flapping this way and that but with no way out. My release finally came when Bishop Rush phoned us one night in July 1967 to tell us Reg had been in a serious car accident. As I prayed the rosary my heart was skipping with relief and I had to be careful that my parents didn't see the smile on my face. I WAS FREE AT LAST.

I was 19 1/2 years old and had never been out with anyone my own age and had never had a boyfriend. Reg never allowed me to go to school functions in case I got in with the wrong crowd. Now I could truly experience life to the full as Reg was in the Mater Hospital for several weeks and in Sydney for several months.

During this time I met REDA and knew at once that he was my God given gift. Our friendship blossomed but it was nearly 13 years before I had the courage to tell him of my sordid past. The first years of our married life were riddled with sickness and depression and I knew that I would lose RED if I continued on this path. I decided to write to Reg and tell him how I was having great difficulty dealing with my past and made arrangements for him to meet me at my girlfriend's house in Albert St. When he arrived 40 minutes late, he asked me if I wanted to go to Confession at the Cathedral. How terribly insensitive could he be. After that meeting, I came home and told my beautiful husband everything. Thank God he still accepted me warts and all.

In the June of 1982 I went to see Archbishop Rush. I told him that I was abused by a Priest for several years but that I didn't want to tell him who it was. He asked me straight out if it was Reg. Maybe you realise now that I have not just got on the band wagon and turned all this around and said that it happened to me too. I don't believe for a moment that anyone would lodge a complaint like this if it were not true and I don't believe for a moment that when Reg says he is innocent that he is telling the truth.

When I met with Reg, Noel Hynes and Myoline, I asked that Reg no longer say public masses. Noel Hynes told Myoline that he was retired. I know that he still says public masses and I know that he has relieved for Marty at Clermont and he still takes Communion to my parents. Through all of this horrible muck I have tried to be Christ like and have tried to do everything quietly and gently but where has it got me? Now that my 3 sisters know the full extent of what happened they feel terribly betrayed as well. REDAC and RED not only had to put up with Kevin Bagley mauling them they now have to come to terms with the fact that the priest who has been part of our family for 40 years, the priest who had most meals at our home, the priest who spent every Christmas with us, the priest who went on holidays with us and the priest who married them, abused and used the sister they love and care for. It is really hard for them to accept as you have probably noticed from the tone of RED's letter.

I can't apologise for their behaviour as they are entitled to feel the anger and rage which they are experiencing. Of course they want to see that justice is being done. I really do believe they think I have been too soft and too caring and worrying too much about the feelings of everybody else at my own expense.

Early September, I went to Rockhampton for my Dad's 85th Birthday and to tell them the truth about me but several things were against me. The 60 Minutes Programme on the Christian Brothers was news then and my father switched the television off saying people should get on with lives and forget about what happened 50 years ago. If only life could be that simple. Reg phoned them twice and sent Dad a Birthday card which he signed "From your sincere old friend". How could anyone who had the gall to abuse someone's daughter for so many years sign a Birthday card like that? I still can't come to terms with that.

My parents think the world of Reg, especially my mother. As I told you before she spoke to Reg as he abused me whilst I shared a double bed with my mother in Reg's family home in Bundaberg. It was dark at night, but my mother tells me how well she can see at night without her glasses. Is it any wonder that I fear my mother would choose him over me. My nightmares have nearly always had my mother calling me for Reg and I have always felt that she served me up to him on a silver platter.

I have enclosed an article for you to read by Dr. Peter Horsfield and one by Marie Fortune. This is the best I have read so far and I am sure that you will agree after reading this that JUSTICE MUST BE DONE . You may like to pass it on to Berneice Loch as she too seems to be terribly out of touch.

Bishop Brian, I don't want to be a thorn in your side, but I do want you to know how hurtful your statement was. Scurrilous means, abusive, indecent and foul. Surely you must agree that what happened to me is SCURRILOUS. If you want me to take a lie detector test I will gladly agree. Many men are behind prison bars for doing far less then Reg did. I said before I would willingly meet with Reg again and maybe he would like to tell Mum and Dad personally how he screwed their daughter and how he raped her soul and mind.

May you be given the strength and courage to do what must be done.

Yours sincerely

AYB

