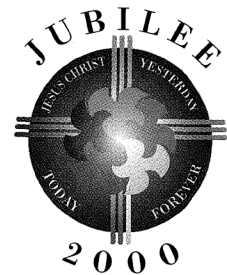


CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF ROCKHAMPTON

Bishop's Office



02 November 1999

Mrs AYB
REDACTED

Dear AYB

I have received your fax and I am sorry that once again you are distressed over my action, or lack of action. I must assure you that I have not made false statements but there was a mistake. Let me set it out as I see it.

I did apologise to Neerkol victims in February 1998. In the rush of media enquiries following Reg Durham's last Brisbane trial, an incorrect date for the Neerkol apology was given to me, it was not May 1997. I take responsibility for the error, I should have checked it but it was an unintentional error. You are correct in saying in February 1998 there was an apology only to Neerkol former residents who had suffered abuse.

At the time of the outcome of Reg Durham's trial relating to charges following your complaints, I decided not to make a public statement because there were further charges yet to be heard. In our conversations and in my visits to your parents, I believe I was privately offering a sincere apology. In our meeting at Centacare Brisbane, I certainly apologised to you in the presence of the witnesses, for the abuse you had suffered.

Regarding the last trial, I did make an apology to all who had suffered any kind of abuse in this Diocese.

AYB, you express disappointment that I may not have heard what you are saying. Permit me to say that I feel the same way when you accuse me of false statements, having no compassion and not being able to listen. I do try to appreciate the deep pain you have experienced and the ongoing trauma and I do pray that you will be able to walk away to new horizons and try to leave it behind, hard as it is.

Let us continue to pray for one another in trust.

Yours sincerely

Brian Heenan
Bishop of Rockhampton

faxed 02/11/99
4.18pm