

CATHOLIC ARCHDIOCESE OF MELBOURNE

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21 March 1997

Mrs Geraldine Croagh

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Dear Mrs Croagh

Some months have now passed since I announced the appointment of Peter O'Callaghan QC as Independent Commissioner, the establishment of Carelink and of the Compensation Panel and the other initiatives that together make up the Archdiocese's response to allegations of sexual abuse. It is my hope that these initiatives will in time heal the hurt of victims, restore the Church's credibility and convince all people, both Catholic and non Catholic, of the Church's determination to deal with the issue comprehensively, in terms of both prevention and cure.

I am grateful to you for agreeing to join the Compensation Panel which, as you know, is to be chaired by Alex Chernov QC. It is perhaps somewhat surprising that in the weeks and months following my announcement last October, there have been relatively few applications for compensation from victims. However, as you will have learned from the recent correspondence from Alex Chernov and Richard Leder and your discussions with them, that situation has now changed.

I see the role of the Compensation Panel as pivotal in the overall healing process. It will be through their contact with the Compensation Panel that victims will be convinced either to accept your recommended settlement, or to press on with litigation in the civil courts, with all of the difficulties and publicity that they will encounter from that process.

It is appropriate for the terms of your appointment as a member of the Panel to be finalised. The Archdiocese will meet your professional costs, and I would ask you to contact the Archdiocesan Business Manager, Mr E W Exell on 9667 0375 to discuss your requirements.

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The other terms of your appointment will be as follows:

1. The basis upon which recommendations will be formulated by the Panel will be resolved between the members of the Panel and the Chairman, subject to the previously announced limit of \$50,000 per person.
2. To apply for compensation, a victim will be required to complete an application form. That application form provides in part that the application is made on the basis that Panel members will not (save as required by law) disclose to any person, or rely or seek to rely in any arbitral or judicial proceeding on communications, statements or information made or provided in the course of or in relation to the Panel's deliberations.
3. The application form also provides that each Panel member will, unless otherwise compelled by law, preserve total confidentiality in relation to all matters arising in the course of or in relation to the Panel's deliberations.
4. Your appointment is honorary and does not create an employer-employee relationship. It can be terminated by your resignation or by me at any time without notice.

To confirm that you agree to the above terms, I would be grateful if you would sign a copy of this letter and forward it to Richard Leder at Corrs Chambers Westgarth.

Please be assured of my support for the success of these initiatives and of my gratitude to you for having accepted the appointment.

Yours sincerely in Christ,

George Pell

Gerardine Heenan

ARCHBISHOP OF MELBOURNE