

Memo: Telephone call taken by Father B. J. Fleming.

ANONYMOUS - against Father Pickering and his housekeeper for borrowing \$200,000 from defenceless widow, REDACTED REDACTED - being banked today in his Melbourne account. Caller said she was not Catholic, her sources are unimpeachable but cannot be named. Top press people are interested and would love to authenticate the story and publish it, to scandal for the Catholic Church.

I rang Jim Briglia who knows the lady; she REDACTED has given him \$40,000 for the Church and money for a scholarship for Josepha Dunlop. I asked him to investigate.

Father Briglia rang back later; REDACTED is far from a defenceless widow, being conned, she is a highly intelligent independent and filthy rich widow whose husband (now dec'd) was converted by Father Pickering. REDACTED paid for the bells at the Gardenvale Church. Yes, the housekeeper did approach her some time ago and in Father Pickering's name, secured a bridging loan to Father Pickering who would pay the agreed interest rate and the loan was for \$200,000 to enable him to purchase the property in Hobart where he (and the housekeeper) would reside.

REDACTED has adopted(?) / fostered children; they resent Pickering, the Church and donations to it, clearly because they might impinge on any legacies to them.

Father Briglia had been told by REDACTED in vague and broad terms about the loan which was made some little time ago. He will go back and see her, mentioning phone call made to me and the accusations given. He is unaware of the length of time, and the conditions attached to the loan; what happens if Pickering can't sell his properties - which are under the control, not of the housekeeper but of the lady Rhonda to whom he has given power of attorney.

I told Father Briglia that if any further calls are received, we will say the matter is under investigation and is in very capable hands. (Jim Briglia loved that).

22nd June, 1993.