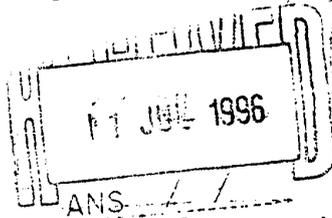


*St. Thomas More's Parish*

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Dear Gerry,

July 8th 1996.

Thanks for the opportunity last week to discuss my letter of 12/6/'96.

I also thank you for your very open and trusting acceptance of the distressing material that was tabled.

I was pleased to hear that you passed a copy of my letter to the Archbishop, and that you were also intending to table it with the Curia the next day.

In our conversation I suggested three strategies:

- 1) A confidential enquiry (prepared by competent professionals) to each individual priest of the Archdiocese of Melbourne seeking any information regarding sexual abuse of children by clergy.
- 2) A Public Enquiry similiar to that currently being conducted by the Department of Foreign Affairs. The conditions of the enquiry, as published in "The Age" on 22/6/'96 could well be the same conditions of enquiry in the name of the Catholic Church of the Archdiocese of Melbourne.
- 3) Psychological assesement of suspected offenders where they could be removed from their office, not on legal grounds, but on the level of being unfit to hold office.

Of these options I strongly prefer the first. The second could be a good public relations exercise, but I suspect would need to be done on a more general level than a specific Diocese. The third has difficulty insofar as the offender could probably appeal to canon law. Also as there are no sanctions involved, it could become very difficult to actually remove a person even if he is deemed as unfit for public ministry.

The advantage of the confidential enquiry is the opportunity for the authorities to confront the suspected offender with the mass of allegations against him.

Although this would probably result in initial denial, I suggest that mention that the next stage must be to place this information in the hands of the police might just cause a change of attitude.

I do appreciate there was an effort made at internal enquiry when the Deans telephoned each Parish Priest. However, as I mentioned to you, the questions were too specific to have the desired effect of getting information.

Hoping that you enjoy your holidays at the end of the week.

All the best,

*Phil O'Donnell*