

28/8/91

To the Vicar General,
Dear Sir,

Unfortunately my letter is a formal complaint as to the concern of our Parish Priest. The area is Our Ladies help of Christians, of Eltham, Father Bill Baker is the reason for this complaint.

Apart from what I have seen & heard in the 2½ years belonging to this parish, (after just recently becoming a Catholic, my catechumen days were with St. Dominics of Bundoora, which I very much enjoyed). When I moved to Eltham, for some reason I didn't feel as comfortable at the new parish but I tried for my family, as I have 2 Girls at Our Ladies school & a son to follow in the next 2 years.

Father Bakers masses are very, very old fashioned & from what I have observed the parish becomes bored & not interested, from 2 years ago there are very few new faces and attendances have dropped in No's. Many people are going to Montmorency Parish or refusing to go at all!

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He can be rude & have many mood swings, his recent upset proves that he has quite a problem & we, the parish & especially the children of the school are now suffering because of it.

I believe that there are people involved with sorting out this problem (Board of review), but I felt if you heard from the people themselves (who make a parish), or at least, my story (or experience) you could have a little ~~at~~ different perspective of things.

My experience begins with - 3 weeks ago my husband lost his job as a manager of 14½ years with the one firm - we were shocked & feeling a little down, then last Saturday evening we went out for a few hours, returning to our house being burgled, they took all our Electrical & personal belongings, such as jewellery which belonged to my children received from Baptism Gifts. We were even more disturbed to discover that our insurance policy had expired a month prior. We understand that this is part of life & we have each other & our health which is more than some have. A little

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nervous after the break-in and a bit teary about my hubby unemployed, I woke up this morning feeling positive. My 10 year old daughter (who just recently did her 1st Communion at Eltham) asked me to attend a Paritytery at 9.15. I said yes which always pleases her & I felt it would help me through my difficult time and I could pray for myself & my family, & need to be close to God, reassured. When I arrived, there were a group of 4 or five mums outside the church (a normal attendance for our childrens masses unfortunately). I was then told that there would not be a childrens mass in the church as Father Baker is refusing to do any because of some dispute with the school & many run-ins with the P.F.O.L.

He seems to intimidate many people or turn them away. My argument is that I thought that his job was to help serve the ~~family~~ Community, not turn them away. But even more importantly, no matter how big a dispute, why should the children of the

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School be turned away, their mass was apparently held in the school hall.

Not many Parents are aware of this current event, but I'm sure they would be as upset as I. After all why are we paying for a Catholic Education? Isn't the Church a part of this? The prep's also have a mass in the Hall this week.

(I will state that later this evening I was informed by another mother that there was a ^(9.15) mass held by Father at that time without the children.)

I was extremely upset, it all got too much for me at the time that went to complain to the Principle Mrs O'Donnell who was very nice & consoled me.

It seems to me that everybody (including Sr Eileen) is doing their job, & Father Baker is always complaining instead of getting on with the job, I have never met anybody like him (priest or no priest), he is unapproachable & unreasonable. I know he hasn't been well but how long do the children (our future parish) have to put up with his antics!

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I don't normally complain Vicar, but I just feel so strong about this matter & something must be done for us to be a happy Parish.

I would be grateful for your help. Please don't let me lose faith, we all need it in these hard times.

Thank you.

Regards

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