

Colleen L'Huillier,  
 REDACTED  
 Parkdale. 3194.

Rev. Mgr. G. Cudmore,  
 Vicar General,  
 Archdiocese of Melbourne,  
 Cathedral Place,  
 EAST MELBOURNE. 3002.

25th June, 1993

Dear Monsignor,

I am thirty six years of age, married with four young children aged between five and thirteen. I am in my final year of a Diploma of Teaching course at the Australian Catholic University and am currently on a teaching round at Holy Family at Doveton.

I am a practising Catholic and have great respect and belief in the Catholic teachings and its leaders. I regard Parish Priests as the front line troops in this sometimes very difficult society in which we live. When I was a child, my Parish Priest was like an all consuming favourite person and I hung on every word he spoke. I believe, I think quite rightly, that what he said was gospel. This thinking of a young child, I am sure, still holds true even today.

Monsignor, with this as my background, the following facts I am about to reveal to you are both saddening and frightening. If we can, but for one minute, become the small child and see it from their eyes and not ours.

REDACTED, a grade six student at Holy Family, did not want to serve Mass with Father Peter for reasons unknown to me. The retribution for this, by Father Peter, against REDACTED was witnessed by me.

On Monday, 21st of June, I was talking with a teacher who had asked REDACTE and another boy, REDACTE to do an errand for her. The children came back and told us that Father Peter had strongly rebuked REDACTE for being in the company of REDACTE and not to play with him.

The following morning, several children came into the classroom commenting that Father Peter had visited their homes the previous evening. On casually questioning the children, I found the main reason for his visits was to invest his wrath against REDACTE and strongly recommended disassociation by his friends. Let me say at this point, that REDACTED is very bright, level-headed and a delightful child. He is from a strong Catholic family and is loved very much by all who meet him.

Father Peter's comments at one of the children's homes, could only be described as outright lies. He told the parents, their son, REDAC, should not associate with REDACTE because REDACTE encouraged him to be bad. He also told the boy's parents "that REDAC was cheeky to his teacher (not

true) and the Principal (also not true) and that he was on his final warning at the school. If he did anything wrong, he would be expelled from Holy Family and have to go to Doveton Primary".

Shortly after this discussion between REDAC and myself, the children went for a Physical Education lesson in the Hall. About ten or fifteen minutes into the lesson, Father Peter appeared at the doorway. I saw REDAC pull away and noticed shortly after that he had tears streaming down his face.

After the lesson, I spoke to REDAC and asked him if one of the children had upset him. He said, "No. Its Father. He told me not to play with REDACTE, I'll have no-one to play with". REDAC's parents believe what Father Peter has told them because he is a priest.

Another incident which I witnessed, took place on Thursday, 24th June, when the children were attending morning Mass. The aforementioned REDACTE, came back from receiving Holy Communion terribly upset. REDACTE said "I am never going to Father Peter for communion again". Father Peter had forced the host into REDACTE's mouth when he had obviously been expecting it in his hands.

REDACTE's mother told me a couple of days ago, that when REDACTE was receiving Holy Communion recently, Father Peter had made a derogatory remark.

Monsignor, the pressures on a Parish Priest, I am sure are immense and perplexing, but do we stand idly by and watch a crime being committed. Should we forgive the perpetrator because we know what pressures are present or do we take action and report the situation truthfully and accurately and let the powers that be protect our most valuable of commodities, our young children.

I would not be so bold as to suggest what action should be taken, all I know is that inaction will do untold harm to this child and many more like him.

Please do not choose inaction.

Yours Sincerely,

*Colleen L'Huillier*

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