

Parents' Joint Letter,
 C/o 14, Redstart St.,
 Doveton,
 3177.

26th August, 1991

Dear Father Doyle,

As you may be aware, the Parish of Holy Family, Doveton is in a very disorientated state, owing to the manner and deliberate actions of the Parish Priest, Father Searson.

We are writing this joint letter to you, as extremely concerned parents of children at Holy Family School, and St. Johns College, Dandenong, in the hope that you may be able to help. While many people, parents and teachers alike, have made numerous serious complaints about this person, the Melbourne Archdiocese continues to allow him to exercise complete control over Holy Family School and Parish.

Among the many allegations against this man since being in Doveton are:-

Producing a gun against a young boy who was cleaning the School at the time.

Pulling childrens' hair.

Forcing children to go to reconciliation.

Putting children's heads on his knee.

He does not demonstrate real compassion.

A lot of children (and adults) are afraid of him.

Blackmailing older children into being altar boys by means of "helping" parents with school fees problems or wanting to get entry into St. Johns College.

Hitting altar boy twice with candle-suffer.

Frequenting boys toilets.

Observing boys going through showers on camp.

Taking children into the presbytery at lunchtime without teachers or parents permission.

Parents do not want him near their children.

After a bird had been rescued from a spouting by a teacher, demanding the bird and stabbing it with a screwdriver in front of many children.

Refusing to give communion to a child who did not attend his church.

COPIES
 For the VG.

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A young woman in the Parish who was unemployed and helping her widowed mother and family was approached by Father Searson as he considered she was not giving enough to the sacrificial offering. Consequently the girl got irate and stopped giving altogether. Father Searson then told the girl that if she ever wanted to get married or have children baptized or attend the School, it would cost her \$1,000 for every year that she didn't contribute to the sacrificial giving campaign. More blackmail.

Rudeness to parents unable to pay school fees.

Withholding maintenance allowance from parents.

Refusing to accept a child into the School unless parents promised to pay into Thanksgiving campaign.

Directing School money towards his new church and presbytery, in disadvantaged area.

Building a brand new church and presbytery for himself while School is in need of renovations. (A recent Health and Safety check listed approximately 92 items of concern.)

Misappropriating \$1,000 from St. Vincent de Paul in Doveton and refusing to pay it back, despite requests from H/O.

By his rude, insensitive and judgemental attitudes, many children are growing up learning to distrust the Priesthood of the Catholic Church and are losing their faith.

Not long after he came to the Parish, the Parents and Friends from Holy Family School took their complaints to the Arch Bishop Sir Frank Little. Nothing was done about the situation at the time because the Association was told it had got insufficient evidence.

To sum up the above, the actions of Father Searson have driven many families away from the School and Parish altogether. If this situation continues, many more families will leave the School at the end of this year.

In view of the unstable history of this man, we request confidentiality of this letter, as we fear recriminations by him against children and families in the Parish.

We wish to discuss this matter with you further, as it is inconceivable that a person such as this can exercise such psychological and material manipulation of a Parish school for so long, and nothing be done about it.

Yours faithfully,

Father Doyle,
PO Box 146,
E. Melbourne,
3002.

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