

PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL

REDACTED



4 February 2008

Fr John Usher
Chancellor
Archdiocese of Sydney
Polding Centre
133 Liverpool Street
Sydney NSW 2000

Dear Fr John,

I am writing to follow-up a request that I made last week for an appointment to meet with you. When I rang I was advised that you were very busy but that someone would get back to me and perhaps an appointment could be made within a couple of weeks.

I indicated that the reason that I was asking to see you was regarding a 'personal matter'. This personal matter is about my grave concerns for my husband, John Ellis. While he and I live separately because of his psychiatric condition, I have done all I can to support him over the last 8 years. Given the sensitivity of this matter, and because I have not had a response to my call, I thought it might assist if I indicated more clearly why I am asking to see you.

I was advised last week (on the day that I called your office) by John's solicitor, David Begg, that correspondence has been received from Corrs Chambers Westgarth in relation to the costs being claimed by the Church subsequent to John's legal claim. The amount being claimed appears to be in the region of \$750,000. Neither David Begg nor I have told John about the Corrs correspondence because we are both very concerned about the potential impact on his already fragile psychological state. He has, in the past, had a history of self-harm and is very fragile emotionally. Inevitably, John was very shaken by the refusal of the High Court to grant leave to appeal and he is slowly coming to terms with the impact upon him of that decision. David Begg will be in correspondence with Corrs about the costs being claimed.

For my part, as you know, I am a lawyer, however my practice has always been in areas of social justice (obviously including child protection) and my preference has always been for non-adversarial, restorative resolutions. As soon as David

showed me the Corrs letter, my thoughts turned to seeking advice from you because of my very great concerns for John's wellbeing.

As well as losing re. the High Court appeal, 2007 was in other ways very difficult for John. In particular, the death of his only son, Mitchell (aged 18), in February 2007, was devastating. It was thought that Mitchell probably died due to accidental alcohol toxicity or aspiration. It is nearly a year since Mitchell's death and there has still been no final decision from the coroner or the Police so this is an ongoing cause of considerable anxiety and upset for John.

Hence my request to meet with you to seek your advice. John does not know that I am seeking to meet with you. I am not asking to see you in your formal capacity as Chancellor, but because of my experience of you, from CCER and elsewhere, as a man of great heart and compassion and it would help me if you and I could talk.

My best contact number is REDACTED Thank you for considering my request.

Yours sincerely,


Nicola Ellis