

## John Andrew Ellis

REDACTED



6 July 2004

The Very Rev Mgr Brian Rayner  
Vicar General, Chancellor and  
Moderator of the Curia  
Catholic Archdiocese of Sydney  
Polding Centre  
133 Liverpool Street  
**Sydney NSW 2000**

by e-mail [chancery@ado.syd.catholic.org.au](mailto:chancery@ado.syd.catholic.org.au)

Dear Monsigneur Rayner

### **Re: Towards Healing Complaint, Mr John Ellis and Rev Aidan Duggan OSB**

I refer to my recent discussions with Mr Raymond Brazil in relation to the proposed facilitation meeting set down for 20 July 2004 at 2.00pm at the Professional Standards Offices in the Polding Centre, which I understand you will attend with Mr Michael Salmon, Director, Professional Standards, on behalf of the Archdiocese.

The meeting arises out of my complaint made formally on 3 June 2002 concerning sexual abuse by Fr Aidan Duggan OSB over the period from about 1975 to 1986, during which time Fr Duggan was a priest for the Archdiocese. This complaint was the subject of a report by Mr Michael Eccleston dated 24 November 2003.

Mr Brazil was, as I understand it, appointed as "Facilitator" shortly thereafter, and I have had a number of meetings and telephone conversations with Mr Brazil since January this year with the intent of setting up a facilitation meeting with representatives of the relevant "Church authority" (which I am informed is the Archbishop of the Sydney Archdiocese, Cardinal Pell). I understand now that you are the authorised representative of His Eminence.

During one such meeting in April this year, the question of what was described by Mr Brazil as a "financial gesture" by the Church authority was raised by Mr Brazil. It was made clear that any such gesture would be in the form of a gratuity, as a tangible gesture of atonement, directed to some tangible assistance with dealing with the effects of the abuse, and was not intended as "compensation" or "damages" in the legal sense. Mr Brazil explained something of the structure of the system for such "gestures", that there was an inflexible arbitrary "cap" on the quantum of the gesture, that a gesture towards this cap would only be made in what were adjudged to be the most serious of cases, and that in fact, the maximum amount had never been given.

Mr Brazil explained that in his opinion it was desirable for discussions regarding an appropriate tangible gesture to take place prior to the facilitation meeting, rather than at the meeting itself, and for him to act as an intermediary for this purpose. This would allow the meeting to focus on the less tangible aspects of the complaint, the effects of the abuse upon myself and my family, and the Church's response. This appeared to be appropriate to me also.

Consequently, my wife and I discussed with Mr Brazil what would be, in our opinion, an "appropriate" gesture in all of the circumstances of my abuse and its effects on each of us. I understand that this was put to yourself by Mr Brazil. On 20 May, Mr Brazil reverted to me and informed me that after discussions with yourself, he was authorised to advise me that the Church authority was prepared to make a gesture in the amount of \$25,000. He stated at that time that the Towards Healing process does not exclude any other means of redress.

At that time, I was able to inform Mr Brazil regarding an additional impact which had crystallised since our earlier meeting – that being that I had since been terminated from my employment of the past 14 years. On 12 June 2004, Mr Brazil informed me that after further discussions with yourself, he was authorised to advise me that the Church authority was prepared to increase the amount of the gesture to \$30,000. He also discussed with me how that figure had been arrived at.

I had a further discussion with Mr Brazil on 16 June regarding the agenda and desirable location for the facilitation meeting. The terms of the financial gesture were not discussed at that time, although Mr Brazil did question me as to whether it was "acceptable", to which I replied that I had already indicated what an appropriate gesture would be. In my view, the amount of the gesture is therefore now a matter for the discretion of the Church authority (or those making decisions on His Eminence, Cardinal Pell's behalf). I had two further discussions with Mr Brazil in June regarding the location and date for the facilitation meeting.

On 1 July, Mr Brazil informed me that the financial gesture would not be made at the facilitation meeting on 20 July. In that context, he informed me for the first time that the Church authority would require a deed of release to be signed as a condition of any financial gesture. He was not clear on the terms of the proposed deed. Hitherto, I had understood the gesture to be totally unconditional. The need for a deed of release was given as the sole reason that the gesture would not be made on 20 July.

Given my present circumstances, and the length of time which has elapsed since my complaint, I would appreciate greatly if any financial gesture the Church is prepared to make were to be made at the facilitation meeting. I would also take this as a mark of good will and a symbol of the sincerity of the gesture.

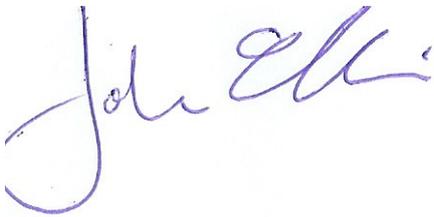
Towards this end, I have requested Mr Brazil to convey to you my request that any conditions on the gesture be advised to me as soon as possible. Given that the meeting is on 20 July, I would appreciate notice of the conditions (if any), and any proposed deed or other document you require to be signed by the end of this week (ie **Friday 9 July**). This would allow me to return the documents to you well before the meeting on 20 July 2004, thereby removing any bar to the gesture being made on that day, as part of the Church's total response to my complaint. I am happy to receive any documents by facsimile or e-mail to the addresses shown above.

As the time periods to achieve this are now relatively short, and given my experience of delays to date in the Towards Healing process, I thought it best to also convey this request to you directly in writing. I trust that you do not consider it inappropriate for me to have done so.

I apologise for the length of this letter. However, I appreciate that you are busy, and the salient facts of this particular matter may not be at the forefront of your consciousness. I therefore trust that it is of assistance rather than a burden that I have sought to set them out in some detail.

I look forward to hearing from you shortly in relation to the above.

Yours sincerely in faith

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "John Ellis". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "John" being larger and more prominent than the last name "Ellis".

John Ellis

cc Michael Salmon  
Director, Professional Standards  
pso@cathprofstandards.com