

1, June 1993

Father P D Ryan  
C/ Catholic Presbytery  
P O Box 92  
ARARAT 3377

Dear Paul David,

~~I am addressing this letter to you c/o the Ararat Presbytery since I understand that you are staying there for the moment. In fairness to Brendan Davey I feel that I need to write to you about your position in the Diocese in view of the fact that I have had no contact with you since your return.~~

In the first place I have to say that I am extremely disappointed that you took a unilateral decision to return to Australia without affording me even the courtesy of any discussion of this move with me and in the face of the assessment by the Saint Luke Institute that a period of residential treatment there would have been helpful to you. A great deal of energy and of money has been expended on efforts to discover effective ways of addressing problems associated with your priestly ministry and it now appears that there was never much real prospect of your being willing to accept appropriate assistance.

You are probably aware of the fact that a complaint has been made by the mother of a person who claims to have been molested by you in the past. In the Protocol accepted by the Bishops of Australia for dealing with accusations of this kind it is standard procedure for the accused to be given administrative leave pending the resolution of the matter. In your own case, this means that you do not have a current appointment in the Diocese. Moreover, I have to formally advise you herewith that you no longer have the Faculties of the Diocese and have no authorization to perform any public priestly functions. You may celebrate Mass privately, but not in such circumstances as could be construed as indicating that you have a parish appointment.

I am sorry that we have reached this stage where it is necessary for me to make it clear to you that there is no priestly ministry available to you in the Diocese. I do think that, having taken the decision to return from America, you now have to take a further decision about what you intend to do with your life. I know that Dan Torpy remains willing to assist you in any way he can in the area of personal therapy/counselling. But any such assistance has to be on the basis that it has no implication regarding future employment as a priest in the Diocese.

You have probably become aware since your return that the priests of the Diocese are going through a very hurtful time at present. Whilst I know that Brendan is a most hospitable person, I do not think it fair that he should be placed in the position of being associated with any complaint which might be lodged against yourself.

Accordingly I do think it desirable that you look for alternative accommodation as soon as you can. The Diocese remains committed to providing you with some reasonable level of support whilst you sort out your future. However, residence in a Presbytery is too open to misunderstanding of your position in ministry to be a viable option at this time.

No doubt you have been giving serious consideration to your future since your decision to return from America. I trust that you will be able to find something fulfilling and satisfying. I deeply regret that I cannot see it being within the context of continued priestly ministry.

With an assurance of my prayers.

Yours sincerely in Christ,

Bishop of Ballarat