

The Diocese of Newcastle

File Note

Personal Attendance Fr Graeme Lawrence & CKA
Location Bishop's Office – Newcomen Street
Date 13 June 2003
Subject CKA

CONFIDENTIAL

The Dean and I met with CKA on 13 June 2003 from 11am-12.30pm.

I thanked CKA for attending and explained that the meeting was being held at his request. CKA thanked us for the opportunity of meeting and indicated that he was keen to speak to us about an event in his life that had caused him deep anguish. He was dissatisfied with the legal process. He believed that on a matter of technicality the matter had been aborted. We noted that he had made appointments to meet us in the past and had not kept them, also that he had pursued the matter in the criminal justice system and that there was no other avenue in law or in the Diocesan protocol that could further progress a case against Fr Parker.

We listened to CKA describing his childhood, the involvement his family and he had with the church, his interest in serving at the altar and in youth ministry. He described Fr Parker's close association with the family and that he had been abused by Fr Parker. He had told his mother who had spoken to Bishop Shevill. He had found out only during the process of investigation that his younger brother had also been abused as had another young person who had subsequently committed suicide.

He described the emotional, spiritual and mental trauma he had suffered. I explained that the files contained no reference at all to a complaint being made but that given the culture of the time it is feasible that the Priest could have been called in and warned. There was no other complaints recorded concerning Fr Parker and discreet inquiries in the Parishes he had served in subsequently had also not brought out any evidence.

CKA went on to tell us how this event had affected his whole family and that he believed his marriage had suffered as a consequence. He had lost his faith in God and in the Church. He had presumed that the Church had defended Fr Parker with top QC's and lawyers, though he had learnt since that this was not factual.

The DPP had decided not to proceed and he felt devastated.

All he wanted from the beginning was an acknowledgement by Fr Parker of his actions and an apology. He was not interested in money or compensation but in an honest acknowledgement by Fr George and the Church.

I indicated that Fr George had denied any and all of the charges and that was his position and that it was difficult to determine the facts when it was one person's word against another.

CKA accepted the current situation and the Dean asked if there was a way of moving on from the present impasse. The Dean offered to see his father and stepmother and CKA was appreciative of this offer. He was glad to have met us and that he hoped he could move on from the present state to full recovery.

He hoped that this meeting could help him perhaps return to Church one day.

Roger Herft

HR
13/6/2003