

REDACTED

14th October 1998

Archbishop John Bathersby
Bishop's Residence
Wynberg
Brunswick Street
New Farm

Dear Archbishop Bathersby

I was interested to hear that you were to offer a Mass in support of the Christian Brothers at St. Stephen's Cathedral on Tuesday night. I wish to acknowledge the good that some of the Brothers have done for the many people who have passed through their doors, but at the same time bring to your attention the many who have been abused and traumatized at the hands of some of the Brothers less Christian.

Is it too much to ask that you consider holding a liturgy for the very many people who are victims of clergy abuse? To my knowledge there has not been a service for these people, and I am left wondering where the justice is in this.

You see, I am one of these people and I feel very alienated from my Church. I dared to support **REDACTED** but was ostracized from my community because I was seen to protect a pedophile. If only people knew the dark secret that I had in my closet. For many years a priest who was part of my family sexually abused me. When I reached out to another priest for help he too abused me. When I was a little girl a mission priest fondled my breasts and 10 years ago when on retreat and dared to open up to a religious brother, he too abused me. So, you see I believe I am well and truly qualified to speak.

In the past, I have tried to get an appointment to see you but I have been told that you are a very busy man and even you yourself told me that there was only one of you and that is why you have auxiliary bishops. Sadly, I am a white Australian so I guess I don't really count. When one of my sisters turned to one of your bishops 2 years ago he assured her he would keep in touch but to this date she has never heard another word from him. Where is the care and compassion?

I feel quite confident that if you do decide to hold a liturgy for people such as myself it would be well attended.

Thank you for listening
Yours sincerely

AYB