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Your Ref:

Professor R. Ball
Academic Unit in Forensic Psychiatry

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Dear Professor Ball,

I thought it appropriate to write with a small post mortem with regard to our common client, Father Gerry Ridsdale. I have now noted the results of the Court. Interestingly, I did not attend and my absence was at the request of counsel as I had indicated to counsel my embarrassment in relation to Father Ridsdale's admissions to me of continued offending past the date for which he was presented. Obviously under cross examination, if I was asked about my feelings in relation to further offending, it may have unfortunate repercussions on Father Ridsdale. On the other hand however, it is sad commentary on the criminal justice system that the fact he has offended past those for which he is presented in Court are withheld. It is almost an ethical dilemma where certainly I would not like to cause Father Ridsdale any further concern, but on the other hand, there are obvious offences which he is not charged with of which one is fully aware.

This dilemma comes up periodically and while one does not initially race to the DPP, I try and make a point of indicating to defence counsel my concern. The ethics and moral dilemma involved in this seems to be totally outside the code of ethics of the Australian Psychological Society who I cannot look to for guidance in such dilemmas. I feel that one day, with the development of forensic psychology, such must at some point be addressed.

Overall I found Father Ridsdale to be a somewhat typical example of persons on such charges, a very gentle man, quite effeminate, and certainly fits the psychological profile of such offender classically. Hopefully in the future the Church will be able to ensure this man does not reoffend, but I do not know how they are going to do that as they have not to date.

Thank you very much for referring this case to me. I hope I was of some assistance to him overall.



IAN A JOBLIN