

CKA

At approximately 8:45pm on Friday January 8<sup>th</sup> I received a telephone call from a gentleman claiming to be <sup>CKA</sup> of the Mercy Convent at Gateshead. He gave his telephone number as <sup>REDACT</sup>

Mr <sup>CKA</sup> alleges that when he was 14 years of age he was a server at St. Anne's Edgeworth and St. Jame's West Wallsend. He further claims that the Rev'd George Parker sexually interfered with him and other boys.

In a somewhat emotional conversation <sup>CKA</sup> did not make it clear to me where these alleged offences took place or if there was one or more incident. He did, however, state that he had (with others) been a visitor to the Gateshead Rectory.

<sup>CKA</sup> said that his Mother had brought this to the attention of Bishop Shevill and that he had spoken to Bishop Appleby but that "the matter had been swept under the carpet."

He told me that his marriage had failed in recent times, that his three children now lived in <sup>REDACT</sup> <sup>REDACTED</sup> "How can I put my life back together?"

As we spoke he threatened to go to the Newcastle Herald and/or to the Police. I affirmed that he had every right to do so. "The Catholic Church had to face the facts about Fr. Ryan now it is the Anglican Church's turn" is a phrase he used on more than one occasion.

Fairly early in the conversation I was aware that <sup>CKA</sup> had spoken to me before. I asked him this but he said this was not the case. My records, however, show that he did speak to me in late April 1996. A copy of my report was sent to the Bishop of Newcastle in May 1996.

<sup>CKA</sup> said that he wished to speak to the Bishop personally. I said I would speak to the Bishop and then contact him. He made further allegations that I simply wanted to "sweep it under the carpet". At all times I assured him that the Church had a Protocol for dealing with such allegations and that I remained ready to help him.

He asked a number of times if I knew George Parker and if he was a friend of mine. I told him that I knew George but that he was not a close friend. He said he knew George was in Melbourne and I told him he was in Victoria but did not give him George's address.

The call concluded about 9:10pm.

I spoke to Bishop Roger Herft on Saturday morning and informed him of the details of the call. Later in the day, I phoned <sup>CKA</sup> who said he did not want to see anyone else but the Bishop. On Monday I reported this to Bishop Herft.

-2-

CKA was very emotional during both calls and said that I didn't care about his problem and that "we" were making him "the victim". I tried to assure him that this was not the case and that in fact in April 1996 I was ready to help him but that he had not kept an appointment with me and that at that time he had not given me a telephone number or address.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Graeme Lawrence". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Graeme Lawrence  
12<sup>th</sup> January 1999

GRL:mh

22<sup>nd</sup> January 1999

Mr <sup>CKA</sup>  
REDACTED

Dear <sup>CKA</sup> ,

I regret that you were unable to keep the appointment I made for you with Bishop Herft on Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> January. We telephoned two or three times that afternoon but there was no answer. I had hoped that by now you would have made further contact with me.

As I believe I have tried to make clear to you during our conversations on Friday January 8<sup>th</sup> and Saturday January 9<sup>th</sup> and previously in April 1996, I am willing to be of assistance to you and to offer you the facilities which the Church has, in any helpful and positive way.

Each time we have spoken, you have expressed the fear that in some way the Church would want to sweep your complaint under the carpet. I assure you that neither the Church in general nor the Diocese of Newcastle in particular, has any wish or intention to do as you fear. We have a protocol for dealing with the type of complaint you raise and have in fact produced 2 leaflets which I enclose for your interest and attention.

I assure you again that the allegations which you make are treated by us as very serious and it may be that these allegations amount to criminal conduct. We acknowledge that it is your right to report this matter to the Police and we would not in any way wish to dissuade you from any such course of action.

Whilst emphasising that these are matters entirely for you, I would encourage you to consider counselling and advice from some source - not necessarily from the facilities of this Church - before you take such a course. Ultimately any decisions you make in these regards should be dictated by your own long term interests.

I recall from our conversation your reference to publicising your complaint and as I believe I affirmed to you in our telephone conversations, you have every right to do so.