

THE DIOCESE OF WOLLONGONG AND FR JOHN GERARD NESTOR (JGN)

- 30 April 1996: JGN was stood aside from the exercise of public ministry until further notice as a result of an allegation of a serious sexual nature received by the Diocese. At the time, JGN was exercising his priestly ministry at St John Vianney's Parish, Fairy Meadow (in which there is a parish primary school). There were no restrictions on JGN's ministry prior to him being stood aside.
- 1 May 1996 JGN was charged with aggravated indecent assault (person under 16 years) and aggravated indecent assault.
- 12 December 1996 Wollongong Local Court (Magistrate Paul Johnson): JGN found guilty of charges.
- 18 February 1997 JGN was sentenced to a sixteen month gaol term. He was also granted bail pending an appeal of the conviction.
- 22 October 1997 NSW District Court of Appeal – Criminal Jurisdiction (Judge J B Phelan): JGN's appeal was upheld and he was acquitted of the charges.
- 7 November 1997 Bishop Philip Wilson (+PEW), then Bishop of Wollongong, initiates an assessment process focused on the question of JGN's suitability for a future pastoral appointment in the Diocese or elsewhere. JGN was required to remain on administrative leave until the process was completed.
- 24 November 1997 Following a personal request, +PEW acknowledges JGN's willingness to stand aside from public ministry.
- 19 December 1997 In the light of new information received by the Diocese, +PEW repeated his personal request for JGN to continue to stand aside from public ministry and informed him of his intention to instigate an assessment in accordance with Section 6 of *Towards Healing*.
- 8 January 1998 +PEW appointed Elizabeth Hannan and Howard Murray as assessors.
- 22 January 1998 Following an occasion when GJN celebrated a Mass publicly, +PEW issued a decree instructing JGN, under obedience, to cease functioning publicly as a priest in any place until he is given permission to do so.
- 29 June 1998 The NSW Professional Standards Resource Group issued its report and formal advice to +PEW as a result of the *Towards Healing* investigation.

- 7 August 1998 +PEW issued a decree concerning JGN restricting him from celebrating the liturgy publicly (applying to all places within and without the Diocese) until such time as it is abrogated by a decree of the Bishop of Wollongong. A second decree, issued by +PEW on the same date, required JGN to undergo a full appraisal by *Encompass Australasia* as a prerequisite to any further ecclesiastical appointment.
These decrees have never been rescinded and the Diocese continues to act in accordance with them.
- 4 October 1998 JGN took recourse against +PEW's decision to the Congregation for the Clergy (Vatikan), asking the Congregation to set aside +PEW's decree.
- 21 December 2000 The Congregation for the Clergy upheld the recourse of JGN and instructed the Diocese to restore JGN immediately to the full exercise of his priestly ministry.
- January 2001 JGN moves to the United States of America
- 22 February 2001 The Diocese of Wollongong took recourse to the Apostolic Signatura (the Supreme Tribunal of the Catholic Church) against the decision of the Congregation of the Clergy.
- 15 August 2003 In a letter to JGN, +PI confirmed that he continues to act in accordance with the decrees issued by +PEW in August 1998.
- 18 March 2006 The Apostolic Signatura issued an interim decree upholding the recourse of the Diocese against the decree of the Congregation for the Clergy. A definitive decree confirming the decision (and any action flowing from it) would be issued at a later date.
- 23 March 2006 GJN informed +PI via email that he has returned to Australia.
- 5 July 2006 +PI and JGN met. +PI informed JGN that he is not able to give JGN an appointment as he was awaiting the definitive response from the Apostolic Signatura.