



PARENT ADVOCACY INC.

C/o Port Adelaide Community Health Service, Cnr Dale & Church Streets Port Adelaide SA 5015
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24 April 2002

Fr David Cappo
Catholic Church Office
GPO Box 1354
ADELAIDE, SA 5001

Dear David,

Further to what the parent group consider to be a most unsatisfactory outcome of their meeting with you, Pauline Verity and Allan Dooley on 8 April, they would now like to draw your attention to the procedures set out in "Towards Healing" regarding resolution of this serious matter.

The parents are unclear about the level of commitment the Church has in regard to this document. In particular, where the families of victims fit into these procedures based on the lack of thought and unwillingness to a written undertaking to previous correspondence (21 February, 2002) outlining what they require from the Church.

The Archbishop's letter to parents states that he is "committed to the attainment of truth in the course of the investigations and to ensuring that justice is done". It is their understanding that the Police investigations, prosecution and judicial system are proceeding. Further, although 37.4 states,

"No Church investigation shall be undertaken in such a manner as to interfere in any way with the proper processes of criminal or civil law"

and 37.5

"The Director of Professional Standards shall endeavour to establish a protocol with the police in each relevant State or Territory to ensure that church assessments do not compromise any police action".

Nowhere does it say that an internal investigation **shall not** take place until the judicial procedures have been completed, which has been the reason given ad infinitum by the Church for further delay.

The parent group is of the opinion that if the Church is sincere in its "commitment to know the full extent of the problem of abuse" they would expect that there would be a far more compassionate intent to see the matter investigated and dealt with as expeditiously as possible, given that it is at least 10 years since the offences occurred and were known by the Church authorities.

The parents note that a public apology has been given and offers of assistance have been made in accord with 41.1 although the specifics have not been outlined in writing as requested.

Reference is made in "Towards Healing" to a Resource Group and various personnel appointed to undertake specific tasks such as Assessors, Facilitators and Reviewers. The parent group has not been given any advice regarding access to these procedures.

Assessment

The group wonders if an assessment is to take place?

40.2 states,

“The purpose of an assessment is to investigate the facts of the case where there is a significant dispute as to the facts, or where there is a need for further information concerning the complaint”.

They consider this would be an appropriate beginning.

Facilitation

With reference to the Outcomes Relating to the Victim, point 41.3 states,

“Facilitation shall be the normal means of addressing the needs of the victim. The Church authority and the victim shall **mutually agree** on a Facilitator from the approved panel.”

- 41.3.1 “The Facilitator shall **arrange and moderate a process for communication** between the victim and Church authority....This may involve a meeting, under the direction of the Facilitator, in which ... unresolved problems (can be) addressed.”
- 41.3.3 “The Facilitator shall seek to know the **ongoing needs** of the victim and the response of the Church authority to these needs.”
- 41.3.4 “The Facilitator shall also seek to know the **needs of the victim’s family** and of the community in whose midst the abuse occurred.”
- 41.3.5 “The Facilitator shall seek to **identify any outstanding issues where the victim is not satisfied with the response received** and shall explore with both parties the best means of dealing with such issues.”
- 41.3.6 “Issues concerning **reparation** may either be dealt with in a facilitation, addressed through a compensation panel or dealt with through some other such process in order to reach a resolution on this aspect of the matter.”
- 41.3.7 “The Facilitator shall ensure that there is a **record of any agreement** reached and of any outstanding areas of disagreement.”

further,

- 41.5 “If the victim remains of the view that the response of the Church authority is unsatisfactory, the victim shall be informed about access to a **review of process**.”

Ten years after the appalling events, which were known by the Church authorities at the time, parents are still waiting for answers to be given, justice provided and evidence that “the Church authority shall listen to victims concerning their needs and ensure they are given such assistance as is demanded by justice and compassion.”

In consideration of these delays and the seriousness of the issues, we expect a response within 14 days otherwise the parent group will have no option but to seek alternative means of reparation.

Yours sincerely,



Linda Clifford & Karen Rogers
Parent Advocates
On behalf of the St Ann’s Parent Group

Cc Archbishop Philip Wilson
Mr Ailan Dooley
Ms Pauline Verity