

BISHOP JOHN NOBLE
DIRECTOR OF MINISTRY EDUCATION

JAN 02

Confidential.~~January 5, 2016~~

The Most Reverend Phillip Aspinall
Archbishop of Brisbane
St Martin's House
373 Ann St
Brisbane Q 4000

Dear Archbishop,

I am writing to report to you on my visit to the Parish of Sunnybank on Sunday last [10th March].

I met with perhaps a dozen parishioners, and the Rector and the Assistant Priest. The group included present and past churchwardens and a number of people whose involvement in the Parish and in the life of the Diocese is of long standing and of a high standard.

Some of the discussion focussed on John Elliott and **REDACTE**. It was reported at the meeting that during the previous week a number of people had been in contact with some who attended the meeting, to say that they would not be attending but were deeply concerned about the possibility that their own sons had been abused or that they knew they had but felt unable to take any further action or make a formal complaint.

Several of those present expressed similar sentiments, largely that the victims concerned, now young men, felt unable to take the matter further. There were no allegations that we had failed to act in the past on complaints, though the view was expressed that we and they had been too trusting of people and that safeguards now needed to be very much more stringent.

I reiterated our policies with respect to reporting matters to the police, and the use of the protocol and of the processes of the Diocese for making a complaint or taking action against a clergyperson.

I also reiterated the offer of counselling to victims who approached us in relation to the actions of an officer of the church.

There was the opportunity for people to express their feelings and to offer mutual support and encouragement. There was strong affirmation for the policies and processes you have now initiated.

There were however some matters which require particular attention.

There was nothing specific about John Elliott. Some allegations were made about **RED**. One young man will put a complaint in writing and will most likely take it to the police. It will be difficult to substantiate, however. None of the people I mentioned to you previously who had contacted me in 1988 were present and their whereabouts is now unknown.

RED has apparently had no contact with children in Sunnybank since being wanted off by me. He keeps the Soccer Pitch used by the Sunnybank Saints Church League Soccer Club and dispenses the keys to people who use the field. That club has very tenuous links with the parish, but would still in some way be a church organization. I have advised Michael Ingali to warn the club of the allegations against **RED**.

In a listing I gave you a couple of weeks ago, of people in the Diocese I knew had had complaints made about them, I mentioned the matter of one **REDACT** listed in the year book as PTO.

A couple present at the meeting related how their son had been abused by this man. [they spoke to me about him by name privately after the meeting]. They said the son did not wish to press charges, but he had been in therapy, had a failed marriage and believed this man should be removed from the opportunity to continue offending. They were quite distressed and angry. They are very credible people who are leaders in parish life and in the Mothers Union. The alleged offences occurred in a number of places. The offender had met the family when a curate at Sunnybank. They said he had been 'moved on' from his appointment at **REDACTE** later, when some offence may have occurred, and was made associate at Dayton. Some of this may be why allegations arose in Gympie about him, though the man's wife also 'went public' there as well. {see my earlier letter}

I suggested to the couple that their son seriously consider going to the police.

Later on Sunday the son, who is known to me, rang me and discussed the matter. I think he may well attempt to contact Taskforce Argos, and report **RED** [without revealing his own identity]. He may decide to make a more formal complaint. The couple and son have not given me permission to reveal their names or his to you, though I must say they spoke freely of it in the meeting, without revealing **REDACTED** name. There will be some who were present who will deduce it was **RED ACT** they were talking about.

Under the circumstances, I must advise you strongly to now withdraw **REDACTED** Permission to Officiate. **RED** would be no stranger to these allegations, and I suspect it would come as no surprise to him if we did this, though it may make life difficult for the Rector of Gympie with the number of centres he must cover. I am happy to discuss this more fully with you.

As **RED ACT** left us for a time and was a priest of the Anglican Catholic Church, it may be necessary for us to warn them of the allegations and of our action.

Another person spoke to me. This was **REDACTED**

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Mrs [REDACT] did not speak in the meeting but was in tears most of the time. After the meeting she spoke to me. She said she was approaching me because I had mentioned the availability of counselling for those who were victims of abuse at the hands of officials of the Church. She told me that in the early 50s, when a child of 10 being prepared with her sister for Confirmation in the parish of Proserpine in North Queensland, she was repeatedly abused by the priest there whose name was [REDACT]. He is listed in the Directory as being still alive [87 years old] and in the Diocese of [REDACT].

Mrs [REDACT] undoubtedly has had an unhappy life, including a divorce in the last 10 years. She is asking us to assist her with the costs of psychiatric counselling. I have contact details for her. I would like to discuss this further with you. It requires some positive response on the part of the Church, I think.

Yours sincerely

+John Noble

ST MARTIN'S HOUSE 373 ANN ST BRISBANE 4000