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Response to articles in The Age in relation to allegations against Marianist Brother

Tuesday 6 December 2011

The Vicar General has responded to articles in *The Age* of 3 and 6 December 2011 which report allegations of sexual abuse against the Marianist Brother, Brother Bernard Hartman SM.



The Age in two reports on 3 & 6 December 2011 refers to allegations of sexual abuse against the Marianist Brother, Brother Bernard Hartman SM, while he was a member of the staff at St Paul's College, Altona.

St Paul's College, Altona, was a boys' secondary College conducted by the Marianist Brothers from 1965 until 1985 with the Brothers leaving the College at the end of 1986.

The Vicar General, Bishop Les Tomlinson, said:

"The Marianists provided members of their congregation from the USA to lead and staff St Paul's College, Altona.

"The Archdiocese and the Catholic Education Office have checked their records and inquiries have been made of the Parish Priest from Altona during the 1990s and there is no record of any complaint of abuse having been received in relation to Brother Hartman.

"The allegations of Ms Mairead Ashcroft reported in *The Age* of 3 December 2011 were investigated by Towards Healing.

"The allegations of the anonymous complainant referred to in *The Age* of 6 December 2011 states that the woman claims she was told by unidentified Church officials that Brother Hartman would be 'monitored' by the Church in the US. While no allegation in relation to Brother Hartman has been officially made to the Archdiocese, there is also no record of the Archdiocese committing to Brother Hartman being monitored in the US.

"While Youth Worker, Les Twentyman, who taught at St Paul's, Altona, with Brother Hartman in the 1970s, is quoted as stating 'that several students complained to him of Brother Hartman's inappropriate behaviour', Mr Twentyman does not state that he reported his concerns to the Police.

"All victims of abuse are encouraged to report allegations of criminal conduct to Victoria Police."



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Statement in the Case of Bro. Bernard Hartman

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE December 5, 2011

The Archdiocese of Cincinnati recently learned that Marianist Brother Bernard Hartman, SM, who was accused of and admitted to abusing a minor in Victoria, Australia in the 1970s, is living within the Archdiocese of Cincinnati.

According to Brother Joe Kamis, SM, Assistant Provincial of the St. Louis-based Marianist Province of the United States, Brother Hartman lives in a community of fellow Marianist brothers in Dayton. He is required to follow a safety plan approved and recently reaffirmed by Praesidium, Inc., an independent abuse risk management company that accredits the Marianists as well as many other religious groups, youth services organizations, schools, nursing homes, etc.

Brother Hartman's safety plan specifies that he cannot be involved in ministry settings with children, adolescents, or vulnerable women, nor can he ever be alone with, or visit families with, children and /or adolescents. His current ministry is performing clerical work for the Province's spiritual enrollment group, which involves no young people. His supervisor within the community, a senior Marianist priest, is responsible for Brother Hartman's adherence to the plan.

The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Cincinnati is the 38th largest Catholic diocese in the country, with almost 500,000 Catholics, and has the eighth largest network of Catholic schools in terms of enrollment. The 19-county territory includes 214 parishes and 113 Catholic primary and secondary schools.