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PART 3:

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ADDENDUM TO Part 1:**1.1****Background: Pre-1992.**

In Dec 1984, I graduated as a mature age student with a Diploma of Teaching (Primary) from the Institute of Catholic Education, Christ College, and Chadstone, which later evolved into the Australian Catholic University.

In 1985 I was employed as Teacher Aide at Winlaton Girls Youth Training Centre. I worked in Triad peer group counselling programs with the girls, in the Education Centre in various classroom and excursion situations, and as a Librarian. At the time it was recognised that half to two thirds of the girls had been sexually abused.

In 1986, I worked as a Community Liaison officer on a (MACMEE) project, a Ministerial Advisory Committee project on Migrant and Multicultural needs in Education. This project was based in two schools combined in Noble Park North, St, Elizabeth's Catholic Primary School, and Silverton Government Primary. St Elizabeth's school instigated and steered the project. The local Catholic Education Area Consultant, [REDACTED] and the two Principals, wrote glowing references regarding my work on this project.

Approximately half way through Term 1 1987, I commenced teaching at St Mary's, Catholic Primary School, Dandenong, thus beginning my teaching career in Catholic Education. Several weeks later I was [REDACTED] recruited as Community Liaison Officer/Teacher as advertised in the Melbourne Age, for the role of Special Resource

Person on the Disadvantaged Schools Program (DSP) at Holy Family Primary School, Doveton.

Prior to my interviews for the position, the Principal [REDACTED] and my local parish priest, both indicated there had been problem at Holy Family School but neither was able to tell me what the problem was when I enquired. Unknown to me at that time was the fact that the previous Principal, Graeme Sleeman had resigned over the problem. Parishioners and parents had sent an ultimatum to the Archdiocese to remove the priest within a fortnight.

In effect Allan Dooley, knowing of the ongoing problems and allegations regarding the priest, happily filled a staffing vacancy when several staff managed to move out of Holy Family at the time Graeme Sleeman left.

At my job interview with the priest, Peter Searson, he tested me with some very strange remarks [REDACTED]. I did not fully understand this at the time, but felt very uncomfortable. I almost decided to give up the opportunity of the position. However, with a family of four teenagers, I needed the job so took the position with the idea of moving to another school as soon as possible.

The Special Resource role on the Disadvantaged Schools program was an overall role that provided me with me a broad experience of the school, children, classrooms and local community. The atmosphere in the school was one of vibrant learning, a glowing legacy left by the former Principal Graeme Sleeman. However, beneath it all ran an air of hyper vigilance. Teachers came to me one by one to advise me of problems surrounding the priest, Peter Searson. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

In 1987, not long after the former principal, Graeme Sleeman had resigned at the end of 1986, a Representative from the Catholic Education Office, (CEO), [REDACTED], attended a staff meeting. The specific purpose of the CEO Representative's attendance was to instruct the staff at the staff meeting at which I was present, at Holy Family School.

Our instructions were that because there were problems surrounding Fr. Searson, we were required to report each incident of concern regarding the priest. The information was to be recorded in notebooks to be held by the Principal, who was charged with passing the information on to the CEO Area Representative. These documents were kept secure from the priest. The general belief [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] was that this material would "get lost" [REDACTED] The principal and Assistant Principal managed the situation during the next few years.

In 1990 when funding of the Disadvantaged school program was discontinued I commenced full time classroom teaching.

In 1991, the three year 5/6 teachers, with the blessing of the Principal, [REDACTED] and Assistant principal, went to Archbishop Pell, to complain about the danger to

the children from the priest who had adopted the practice of frequenting the boys' toilets several times daily. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

1992:

Children's pleas for safety from the priest, their efforts to protect themselves and each other, desperation and violence of the priest, teachers efforts to protect children, collusion and cover up, particularly by the CEO.

In 1992, my third year of full-time teaching, I commenced teaching a year 5/6 composite class, for the first time. At this level I was exposed to the problems of the boys who were required to serve on the altar at mass. The second week of the school year a teacher of another year 5/6 class sent a student to me. This student complained of not liking the way the priest was touching him, begging for help to stop this happening. He waved his arms about as he spoke, as if attempting to push someone away from around his shoulders and body. He mentioned "hugs for a long time." I advised him to go and tell the principal, to tell his parents and that he did not have to serve on the altar if he did not want to. I reported to his teacher and maintained heightened vigilance.

In 1992 the staff had not been advised of any changes to the instructions we had received from the CEO Representative in 1987, nor had Mandatory Reporting been introduced.

Each year the Doveton Hallam Community Health Centre (DHCHC) was contracted to teach a sex education program in the school, so in June 1992 the DHCHC Worker conducting the sex education class, with myself, the classroom teacher present. We both witnessed the same child react with body language and a statement that was extremely concerning. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Separately, The DHCHC worker and I reported all of this to the Principal. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

I asked the Principal for pastoral care for staff caring for children, in the light of the children's disclosures. The principal, [REDACTED], advised me there was no pastoral care available but that I could talk to the DHCHC worker. Two mornings later, The Principal, [REDACTED] rang me, calling me out of an in-service, to tell me [REDACTED] that "it was being handled." [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

The DHCHC informed me they had formed a committee to work with the Police person with the purpose of having Searson removed, and introduced me to the Police person. The DHCHC worker, Police person, and I liaised regularly concerning various complaints brought forward to me by the children. This Police person [REDACTED] had been involved with the problems of Peter Searson during the time Graeme Sleeman had been Principal up to the end of 1986, long before I started work at the school. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] The DHCHC management and the police person, and I myself, all desperately hoped that this time someone would press charges and the priest would be removed. We collaborated towards this goal.

A year or two later, a Police Officer in charge of the Searson matter, a Sergeant Kilpatrick, interviewed me at Dandenong police station. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

In the second part of 1992, I frequently received complaints and pleas for safety, from children, a Cottage Parent Social Worker, other teachers, and eventually the Police-In-Schools officer. Countless incidents occurred as the priest tried to get children, [REDACTED], into his control.

One day this formerly happy level-headed child ran inside to escape from Searson who had singled him out and was trying to make him go into the presbytery to discuss the problem of why he refused to serve on the altar. In a hysterical condition this child made another disclosure to me. Another time the same child reported to me at about 8.30 one morning that Father was in the hall with two girls vacuuming and the door was locked. I followed up immediately. The children did everything they could to resist Searson, looking out for each other, and begging teachers for help. Searson appeared to be becoming more violent and dangerous. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Many of the teachers did the best they could to keep the children safe, knowing the children were terrified and completely vulnerable, and that nothing was being done to remove Searson.

After some deep soul-searching and with the realisation that my job could be under threat, in mid-August 1992, I complained to Fr. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] I explained about the danger to the children, and reported their pleas for safety from the predatory priest and asked for him to be removed. Fr. [REDACTED] advised me "something would be done" but did not explain at all what this would be. The children became more desperate as the priest put pressure on and tried to single out certain individuals, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] The children became more and more distressed by incidents with the Searson. A parent [REDACTED] came to see me. She also went to the DHCHCentre who notified the police. The community policing Squad interviewed a number of the children on a Saturday morning. Police contacted me to advise they did not get enough information on which to lay charges, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] The children became even more distressed that Searson was still in the parish the following week and indeed for another five years. Searson made another effort to recruit for the altar, with little success, and became even more aggressive and violent. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]. The CEO Area Consultant, [REDACTED] had visited the school and consulted with the Principal [REDACTED] the morning they issued me with the letter. In November 1992, I was studying at night school to complete the last four units of my B. Ed. at Deakin summer school, with the aim of seeking a position in another school as soon as possible, when this took place. My body reacted badly effectively ending my study at the time. At this point various health problems began for me which I now live with.

[REDACTED]

In the hope of saving my career, soon after I received the letter I located a CEO Pastoral Care department at the CEO office. I aimed to enlist their aid to help me relocate to a job in another school for the following year. The Pastoral care person stated that they knew there

were problems with the priest at Doveton but that they did not know the exact nature of the problem. [REDACTED]

At that meeting with the Pastoral Care person I was encouraged to look for work outside the field of education. [REDACTED]

1.4

Several reasons why I actually obtained a settlement almost eighteen years later.

This highlights the difficulty for victims in dealing with The Melbourne Response

- I. I worked almost full time on it for two years.
- II. In September 2010, when I received my [REDACTED] written response from Peter O'Callaghan regarding acceptance of my case it did not sound very promising [REDACTED] that he did not think he would be able to help me. So I called Peter O'Callaghan and advised him of three pieces of information that I had discovered regarding the actions and responsibilities of the church, which strengthened my claim.
- III. At the time of the church's celebrations of the Canonisation of Mary Mckillop I wrote to Dennis Hart drawing a parallel between Mary McKillop's case and my case. I advised him that in her case she and her order had been reinstated after five months. I was still waiting 18 years later. My case was settled within weeks.
- IV. I had not gone away but deliberately remained a dignified, determined, intelligent problem to them till my case was settled.

RECENT MEDIA

NOV 2012.

Knox Weekly: [Church ruined my career.](#) and

Dandenong Journal: Church ruined my career, Haunted by priests' dark past.

Issues: Discussion on Protocols developed by priest and parishioners highlights the need for dialogue and healing of individuals victims, communities and pastors, the need for funding for this work, possibly a work of groups like *fortheinnocents*.

- These articles highlight the need to establish and fund Education Programs in Child Protection throughout the community.
- Of particular interest is the change in focus in the Dandenong Journal article highlighting the pain and need for dialogue and healing left behind in Doveton in the "Haunted" article.

RECOMMENDATION: The church's assets should be channelled by government legislation and action to support healing of individuals and of communities, and broad education in Child Protection across the community.

Carmel Rafferty, Dec. 11th 2012.

Media Articles follow.



Media re Doveton .
Thursday November 29, 201
Royal commission: Church 'ruined my career'

By TARA McGRATH
Nov. 21, 2012, 2 a.m.

The Boronia resident — known as Mrs Giddings during her teaching life — taught at Holy Family in Doveton for five years from the late 1980s, before being appointed as a senior school teacher in grades 5 and 6. It was during this year that her pupils started coming forward to tell her that they were uncomfortable with the way the priest, Peter Searson, was touching them.

It's because of her experiences more than 20 years ago that Ms Rafferty was "overjoyed" to hear the federal government's announcement of a royal commission on institutional responses to allegations of child abuse. As the senior teacher at the time, she became the focus for an issue that had persisted for decades, long before Searson, who is now deceased, was appointed to the parish.

She had some forewarning of problems at the school when she accepted the job: "[I was] asked if I knew about the problems, but no one would say what it was."

Some, however, had known. Shortly before Ms Rafferty began teaching at Doveton, the principal Graeme Sleeman, who told his story to The Age newspaper recently, had quit in a vain bid to force the church into acting against Searson.

In her time, she was left in no doubt what that unspoken problem was. "Then everyone was coming to me — students, parents, police, social workers, other teachers," she said.

Ms Rafferty went to Catholic Education Office representatives with her concerns but says she was shut down and, like many others, effectively told to shoulder the blame.

The outcome for her was the same as it had been for Mr Sleeman. She said: "I lost my teaching career over paedophilia in the Catholic church."

She said, however, that the royal commission was a chance to change the future and ensure past victims are better looked after.

"If a child was abused during their school education, they didn't have a chance to provide a decent life for themselves or their family."

Compensation for victims and better legislation to protect children are two outcomes which Ms Rafferty would like to see arise from the commission.

She said the current laws in Australia made it very easy to be a paedophile.

"The church adheres to a different law and priests can use that to stay in their positions."

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The former teacher also believes there needs to be more education right across the community "to make it very difficult for people who want to interfere with children".

Ms Rafferty said her experience with the Catholic Education Office and church "changed everything" about her faith: "I've lost most of my respect for the Catholic church."

But she believes the commission will be part of a healing process for victims of child abuse. "It brings those wounds more to the surface than reopening them. But they need to be. They want a chance to be believed, heard and recognised — it will help take away the isolation and loneliness."

She urged any victims to come forward to the police and tell their story. "There are excellent police programs now — they've put a lot of effort in."

THE DANDENONG JOURNAL

Church 'ruined my career'
Nov. 23, 2012, 4:48 p.m.

Haunted by priests' 'dark history'

By CAMERON LUCADOU-WELLS

FATHER Michael Shadbolt says a "dark history" of child sex abuse by rogue priests still haunts his Holy Family parish in Doveton.

The parish had become an alleged "dumping ground" for "problem priests" — four in the 1970s to '90s have been accused child sex abusers.

That past still causes pain, and stirs the parish's current priest Father Shadbolt to tears.

Last week, he said the parish, given its history, may be in the "hot seat" at the recently announced federal royal commission into child abuse.

Father Shadbolt described the parish today as vibrant and healthy with a flourishing attendance of 700 at Mass. But, although it had been 20 years since its last child abuse accusation, "all are aware of the past record".

"Some people in the media think we're walking around in denial about it but here it's not true. We're broken by it. As we speak, you are hearing my tears. Our pain is nothing like the pain of the victims but it's nonetheless real."

The most recent accused priest at the parish was Father Peter Searson, who was there from 1984-97. Searson, who has since died, was banned from taking children into the confessional and his presbytery at his previous parish in Sunbury, and was investigated in the 1980s for allegedly touching children.

"It's very shaming," Father Shadbolt said. "It's come as a shock that so many of our priests were abusers. I think these guys were sent here because it's a poor, working-class, immigrant enclave parish.

"They were sent here because they had serious personality disorders but I don't believe they were really known as abusers at the time."

Three other parish priests accused of child abuse were transferred to Doveton in the 1970s and 1980s. Two of them did not face trial until the 1990s and one never faced trial.

In a statement issued to parishioners in September, Father Shadbolt said child abuse had been a "serious problem in society at large, and, as we know too well, a serious problem in our church".

"We are under the gravest moral obligation to do all in our power to combat and stamp out this evil. The failure of church leaders to deal with the problem [is] almost beyond belief."

Nov. 23, 2012, 4:48 p.m. TARA McGRATH and CAMERON LUCADOU-WELLS

Church ruined my career.

CARMEL Rafferty was silenced, shut down and bullied in 1992 when she dared to question the behaviour of a parish priest at Holy Family School where she worked as a teacher.

Known as Mrs Giddings during her teaching life, she taught at the Doveton parish school for five years from the late 1980s, before being appointed as a senior school teacher in grades 5 and 6.

It was during this year that her pupils started coming forward to tell her that they were uncomfortable with the way the then-priest, Peter Searson, was touching them.

It's because of her experiences more than 20 years ago that Ms Rafferty was "overjoyed" to hear the federal government's announcement of a royal commission on institutional responses to allegations of child abuse.

She also praised current parish priest Michael Shadbolt for devising protocols but described them as inadequate.

"It is counterproductive, because it will lull people into a false sense of security, which by its very nature is therefore even more dangerous."

She said the protocols lacked an education component. "People need to be educated about grooming.

Paedophiles spend months or even years preparing to assault a particular child.

"People need to know how and what to recognise, and how to name these events before they can recognise and deal with them."

She had some forewarning of problems at the school when she accepted the job as senior teacher: "[I was] asked if I knew about the problems, but no one would say what it was."

Ms Rafferty went to Catholic Education Office representatives with her concerns but said she was shut down. "I lost my teaching career over paedophilia in the Catholic church."

HOLY FAMILY PROTOCOLS

OVER the past two years, Holy Family's parish priest Michael Shadbolt and the parish leaders have penned their own protocols to prevent child abuse.

These include:

- All staff and parish volunteers likely to come in contact with children to have an up-to-date Working With Children check.
- Any suspicion of child abuse should go to the police.
- Never be alone with children except your own.
- Any church staff acting inappropriately with women should be reported to the diocesan independent commissioner.
- No child or young teenagers in the parish or priest's house unless accompanied by a parent or official guardian.
- The doors of the sacristy in the church left open before and after Mass. Two adults to stay until all altar servers have left.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

END