

Archbishop Denis Hart
Archdiocese of Melbourne, St Patrick's Cathedral,
Cnr Gisborne St & Cathedral Place
EATS MELBOURNE VIC 3002

Thursday, 28 April 2005

Dear Bishop

My name is Jill Mather and I live and work in the parish of Our Lady's Assumption [redacted] I have lived and worked in this diocese for 28 years and have a close personal and working relationship with several priests and religious who would willingly provide a character reference. The list is attached to the letter.

My concern is my brother Gavan Boyle, aged 56 years, of [redacted]
[redacted]

I am asking you to seriously consider his request to have the papal honours bestowed upon the late Monsignor Penn-Jones expunged from all records, and the plaque in St Patrick's Cathedral honouring him be removed.

I believe that if the facts about this man's activities with altar boys at St Patrick's Cathedral were known at the time, these honours would not have been presented to him. I do not know if there has been a precedent in the church re stripping of papal honours, but there certainly have been many instances in lay life with those convicted of criminal activities losing their medals of honour -- [redacted]

I understand it will not be a simple matter for the Archdiocese of Melbourne to organise such a thing as the man is dead, but I am asking for your full support in the process.

And the reason I am asking is that it is my firm conviction that "outing" Penn-Jones will allow the healing process of my brother to be complete. Money is not important in Gavan's life, and never has been, so financial compensation is not the big issue. Taking away those honours given to Penn-Jones is. And I believe that you have the authority, and ability, to process that request.

For years my brother served St Patrick's Cathedral as an altar boy, particularly at High Mass on Sundays. He had the honour of serving at the funeral of Archbishop Danny Mannix and our family was extremely proud of him always, and especially on that day. However, unbeknownst to his family, Gavan was abused by Penn-Jones some 43 years ago.

It has just come to light and Gavan recently completed the interview process with Peter O'Callaghan QC, and his case is being assessed.

Gav and I speak often on the phone and even though I am not completely aware of all the technical processes he is going through I know the message I am getting is the stripping of papal honours and a public apology are the only two things he really cares about.

As I understand it he will receive a personal apology, and the church places no bar on him making the matter public. It is totally his choice to go public, and I agree with that. So it is up to him to contact the press to make his story known. I believe that will satisfy his desires as he wants others to know about his abuse, so they too can step forward and bring an end to their personal agonies. Through reading a press story Gavan admitted to himself what had happened and contacted Broken Rites. ■ ■

My brother lives a simple monastic, reclusive life with very few personal possessions, no luxuries except a heater and that is his choice. Money is not important and he gives it away and shares it abundantly particularly with the Carmelites who have kept my family in their prayers for years. Gavan retired from teaching at high school level due to ill-health but was renowned for his guidance counselling in all matters, for his special care of kids who were abused, were alienated, or were just lost, and their families. In [REDACTED] he was part of the group which established and ran a multicultural centre for migrant students and their families.

Gavan's life was his students.

But it was not a balanced existence, and many problems ensued.

Through all this the most important aspect of his life was his love of God and faithfulness to the church. His power to hate the act of abuse, but not the man is amazing and am sure that extraordinary gift of forgiveness is the Holy Spirit working in him.

[REDACTED]

So with this synopsis of Gavan's life I hope I have convinced you to act in accordance with what is right and just in this matter of stripping papal honours from a priest who abused my brother.

Yours in Christ

[REDACTED]

Jillianne Rita Mather (nee Boyle)

[REDACTED]

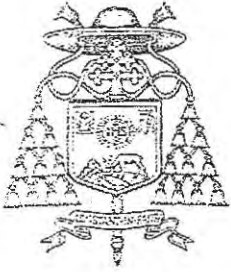
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[REDACTED]



James Goold House
P.O. Box 146
East Melbourne Vic 3002
Australia

12th May, 2005.

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Mrs. J. R. Mather,
[REDACTED]

Dear Mrs. Mather,

Thank you for your letter of 28th April, 2005.

I understand that the Independent Commissioner is in the process of completing his enquiries and that it will then be open to your brother to seek ex-gratia compensation if he so wishes.

With respect to your reference to Papal Honours and a plaque, I advise that the person was given the title of Monsignor upon appointment to an office, but there is no procedure for revisiting that (especially after a person has died), and as far as I know there is no plaque in the Cathedral in his honour.

I thank you for your letter and join you in hoping that the process in which your brother is currently engaged will be beneficial and healing to him.

Yours sincerely in Christ,

+ *Dominic J. Sart*

ARCHBISHOP OF MELBOURNE.

A ROUND-UP OF WHAT HAS BEEN HAPPENING AT LOCAL CCI OFFICES

VICTORIA

Education Director resigns

Monsignor Tom Doyle has resigned as Director of Catholic Education in the Archdiocese of Melbourne after 22 years in the position.

His replacement, Susan Pascoe, will take up the position in January. Ms Pascoe is currently Chief Executive Officer of the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority and prior to that worked for 12 years at the Catholic Education Office in a range of senior positions.

Monsignor Doyle will step down on September 28.

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Pt Pirie Clergy Golf Day

Another successful day was enjoyed at the Port Augusta Golf Club on 24 June.

The day was well patronised with many members of the clergy travelling from far and wide. The Knights of the Southern Cross also attended along with CCI staff John Lemm, Allan Moreton and Charmaine Noble. The event was keenly contested with Fr Alan Winter retaining his title, closely followed by Fr Paul Bourke.

Many thanks to Fr Tony Redden for again organising a most enjoyable day and to the Catholic Women's League for catering the lovely lunch and dinner.

Vicar General heads up Social Inclusion Unit

Premier Mike Rann was delighted to announce in March 2002 that Vicar General, Fr David Cappelletti, would head up the board of the Labor Government's new Social Inclusion Unit.

His initiative is designed to reduce key social problems and improve the life of families in South Australia.

One of the first references has been to develop strategies to combat homelessness, seeking to reduce their numbers by 50 per cent (currently at around 7000). Another initiative is to provide guidance on how best to increase the school retention rate from the current 56 per cent back to 90 per cent as in previous years.

South Australians awarded Papal Honours

Archbishop Philip Wilson announced the Papal Honours Award for the following: Jan Ruff-O'Herne (writer of her autobiography "50 Years of Silence" in which she reveals her shocking secret of being abused, beaten and raped as a sex slave for Japanese soldiers in Indonesia back in 1942) and Cathy Black (a retired counsellor from Centacare).

Fathers David Cappelletti, James O'Loughlin and Robert Egar were appointed "Precious of Honour" by the Pope, with the title of Monsignor.

SA loses 'Icon of the priestly ministry'

Monsignor Tom Horgan passed away on 18 March 2002.

Mons Horgan was born on 8 August 1915 and ordained to the priesthood for the Archdiocese of Adelaide on 27 July 1941 having travelled interstate for his seminarian studies. From 1947 to 1951 he held the position of philosophy lecturer at the St Francis Xavier Seminary, Rostrevor.

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Father Tom had served 60 years in the ministry covering many parishes around Adelaide, including Mount Gambier and Victor Harbour. He served nine of those years as Vicar General and assumed the title of Monsignor during that time.

NEW SOUTH WALES

Office news

Client Liaison Officer Mary Naim and Account Executive David Branley have both marked 10 years with CCI.

CCI welcomes State Safety Manager Harry McNaught, Account Executive Irish Cochrane and Worker's Compensation Claims Clerk Chris Tien to its staff.

Workers' compensation seminars

Following the introduction of the new workers' compensation legislation in NSW, CCI held information seminars around the State in May and June organised by George Darouti and Kerrie Dixon.

Order of Australia

Reverend Father Leo Francis Donnelly of Port Macquarie Parish in the Lismore Diocese was awarded the Order of Australia in June for his work within the Catholic Church.



COPY

James Gool House
P.O. Box 146
East Melbourne Vic 3002
Australia

18th October 2005

Mr Gavan Boyle
[REDACTED]

Dear Mr Boyle,

You will be aware that in October 1996 Archbishop Pell announced a range of initiatives to respond to allegations of sexual abuse concerning the Archdiocese of Melbourne. At that time, he apologised sincerely and unreservedly, on behalf of the Catholic Church, to both the victims and more generally to the people of the Melbourne Archdiocese, for the betrayal of trust perpetrated upon them. He also expressed regret that it had taken the Church a long time to come to grips successfully with these issues.

I understand that, based on findings made by the Independent Commissioner, your claims have been considered by the Compensation Panel. The Panel has provided me with a recommendation, which I accept, and this letter is accompanied by a formal offer made on my behalf.

The Archdiocese seeks to address the issues of sexual abuse of minors and adults in a professional, caring and appropriate manner. In addition, the Church has implemented procedures aimed at preventing any recurrence of sexual abuse, and is confident that these initiatives will go a long way towards addressing this issue, which has shocked all in our community.

Unfortunately we cannot change what has happened in the past. You may never be rid of the memories or the hurt. Services such as those provided through Carelink can assist you in your recovery. The payment of compensation raises difficult and complex issues. It is my hope that my offer, based on the Panel's recommendation, will be accepted by you as a preferable alternative to legal proceedings and that it too will assist you with your future.

On behalf of the Catholic Church and personally, I apologise to you and to those around you for the wrongs and hurt you have suffered at the hands of Father Jones. Whether or not you choose to accept the enclosed offer, I offer you my prayers.

Yours sincerely in Christ,

+ *Chris J. Hart*

ARCHBISHOP OF MELBOURNE

Archbishop Denis Hart
Archdiocese of Melbourne, St Patrick's Cathedral,
Cnr Gisborne St & Cathedral Place
EAST MELBOURNE VIC 3002

March 30, 2006

Bishop

It has come to my attention you were aware there was a plaque in St Patrick's cathedral bearing Monsignor Penn Jones' name when you replied to my letter of April 28, 2005, and I quote, "*as far as I know there is no plaque in the cathedral in his honour*".

There is a plaque bearing Penn Jones name and it reads

"The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is offered on the First Sunday of every month for the deceased benefactors of the cathedral."

And Penn Jones name is underneath. Please see attached pictures.

I call your statement "*as far as I know there is no plaque in the cathedral in his honour*" as a distinction without a difference.

Are you saying that a person who gives money to a cathedral should be acknowledged publicly even though he has significantly damaged the body of the church, Christ's people?

You have formally and legally acknowledged that Penn Jones abused my brother while he served as an altar boy at St Patrick's Cathedral. And Gavan is not the only person to have been recognised as a victim of Penn Jones,

I feel hurt and upset by this presence of this plaque, and I would like to know when you will remove Penn Jones' name from the plaque as a simple act of recognition for the hurt inflicted on my brother and our family by Penn Jones.

[Redacted signature area]

Jillianne R Mather

[Redacted address area]



James Goold House
P.O. Box 146
East Melbourne Vic 3002
Australia

April, 2006.



Mrs. J. R. Mather,
[REDACTED]

Dear Mrs. Mather,

Thank you for your letter of 30th March, 2006.

Your original query related to the bestowal of a Papal Honour and a plaque to record that honour. As I have previously advised, the person in question was given the title of Monsignor. There was and is no plaque in the Cathedral recording that.

It is correct that the person is listed, among many others, recording their financial contribution to the Cathedral. The fact of recording a donation cannot be seen as other than that. In the context of our previous correspondence the matter you were referring to was not related to the recording of a donation.

I have already apologised to your brother for the wrongs he suffered and I repeat that apology most sincerely to you and your family.

Yours sincerely in Christ,

+ *Denis J. Hart*

ARCHBISHOP OF MELBOURNE.

Archbishop Denis Hart
 Archdiocese of Melbourne, St Patrick's Cathedral,
 Cnr Gisborne St & Cathedral Place
 EAST MELBOURNE VIC 3002

22/08/2006

Bishop

As requested in my previous letters of April 2005 and March 2006 I am again asking you, on behalf of my family, to honour my late brother Gavan Boyle's request to remove the name of Penn Jones on the plaque in St Patrick's Cathedral.

Penn Jones, as a priest, and therefore as a privileged man representing God, raped my brother when Gavan was a child altar server in his care and trust. Continuing to display this offending priest's name is consistently abhorrent to our family.

Any plaque in a cathedral bestows public recognition and honour to the person, as it is a form of acknowledgement of the good works of the person by the Church. And to have a plaque showing Penn Jones' name because he gave money to the church is no different. A visitor to the cathedral would immediately think highly of this person whose name is displayed in the Archdiocese Cathedral, for this is its official centre of worship to our God and his Son, Jesus Christ.

Your defence that you thought I referred to a name on a plaque which honoured Penn Jones' title of Monsignor is very weak, as the original letter distinctly asked for two things, separated by a comma. Should I have written two letters so you would not have mixed them up?

It is now highly offensive to our family that you misrepresented the facts about this plaque, and the fact that you have continued to reject our experience in relation to the plaque, of the grave hurt done by your clerical associate to my brother, continues this injustice towards my family.

I draw your attention to *Part 1 of the Towards Healing document – December 2000, and Amendments May/June 2003 - Principals (sic) for dealing with Complaints of Abuse* (i.e. the principles section to which the Melbourne Archdiocese is a signatory), Items 8, 13, 14, 19 and 20 all point to the Church being committed to healing the brokenness caused by clerical abuse.

"8. We recognise that responses to victims by the many Church authorities vary greatly. We express regret and sorrow for the hurt caused whenever the response denies or minimises the pain that victims have experienced. Through this document we commit ourselves to principles and procedures that apply to all Church authorities."

- Your continued implied support of Penn Jones is a response which minimalises the pain Gavan experienced, and his family continue to experience.

"13. The Church makes a commitment to seek to know the full extent of the problem of abuse and the causes of such behaviour within a community that professes the values of Jesus Christ."

- Has the diocese actively tried to find other victims of Penn Jones? Gavan's rape was not an isolated case, as you know.

Penn Jones was the chaplain for the altar boys at St Patrick's Cathedral, the Catholic Scouts Group, and Parade College.

"14. Concealing the truth is unjust to victims, a disservice to offenders and damaging to the whole Church community."

- When will the diocese make it public that Penn Jones was an abuser?

"19. Whenever it is established, either by admission or by proof, that abuse did in fact take place, the Church authority shall listen to victims concerning their needs..." (See below).

The Church authority (in this case yourself, as represented by the QC commissioner, Carelink and the Compensation Panel) did not listen to what Gavan wanted as part of the healing process. He asked for three things:

- a. Penn Jones be stripped of his Monsignor title
- b. The name of Penn Jones be removed from the plaque in St Patrick's Cathedral
- c. Good counselling

He received none of the above.

"Item 19 contd. ...and ensure they are given such assistance as is demanded by justice and compassion. Details concerning the procedures to be followed are contained in the second half of this document."

- Justice and compassion demand victims have real support through the process. No advocate was offered, or appointed to assist Gavan through the ordeal of the Pell Process.


"20. We shall also strive to assist in the psychological and spiritual healing of those persons who, as well as the victims, have been seriously affected by incidents of abuse."

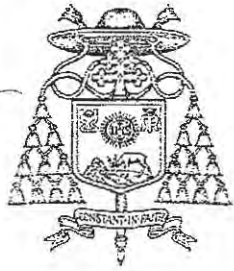
- This matter should be an integral part of the Melbourne Archdiocese scheme as it was not until I had completed my counselling that I understood how Gavan's childhood sexual abuse had so negatively affected relationships in our family.

It was not until my brother Jim Boyle asked for counselling, that we received it. And thank you for that response. However, counselling should be offered by your agents and within your public literature, not sought as part of our secondary survival.

We await your earliest response to our request.

Faithfully,


Jillianne R Mather (Nee Jillianne Boyle, sister of Gavan Boyle)



James Goold House
P.O. Box 146
East Melbourne Vic 3002
Australia

8th September, 2006.



Mrs. J. R. Mather,
[REDACTED]

Dear Mrs. Mather,

I refer to your letter of 22nd August, 2006.

My letter to you of 12th April, 2006, provided my response to your request that the plaque be removed. While I understand the interpretation that you place on the plaque, I have a different view.

Your comments regarding Towards Healing are noted.

With prayerful good wishes,

Yours sincerely in Christ,

+ *Dennis J. Hart*

ARCHBISHOP OF MELBOURNE.

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Papal Nuncio Australia

**Archbishop Ambrose de Paoli,
2 Vancouver St,
Red Hill, Canberra ACT 2603;**

P.O. Box 3633, Manuka, ACT

November 1, 2006

Your Grace

My name is Jillianne Mather and I am asking you to persuade the Melbourne Archbishop, Denis Hart, to remove Monsignor Penn H Jones name from a plaque of honour displayed prominently in St Patrick's Cathedral, Melbourne. I also request that Pope Benedict XIV posthumously revoke the honorary title of Monsignor given to Penn Jones by his predecessor at the request of the then Archbishop of Melbourne.

When Penn Jones was the chaplain for the cathedral altar boys he repeatedly molested and finally raped my brother Gavan Boyle who was then a 12 year-old altar boy under his care and responsibility. Archbishop Denis Hart acknowledged this fact formally last year, and the Melbourne Archdiocese paid my brother some financial compensation.

When Gavan finally revealed he had been subjected to clerical sexual abuse after more than 40 years of suffering, he said to me he was interested in only two outcomes. Because the perpetrator was dead (and buried with honour from the Cathedral) there was no way he was going to face criminal charges, so Gavan asked that

- Penn Jones be stripped of the title Monsignor which Gavan perceived to be a papal honour
- Penn Jones name be removed from a plaque in St Patrick's Cathedral.

Gavan found it very offensive that this man continued to be honoured in these two ways. I conveyed his requests to Archbishop Hart in the belief he would take the opportunity to offer healing to Gavan and his family by responding positively to those requests, but he declined to do so.

Soon after I wrote that letter I came to understand the term Monsignor was not considered a papal honour in church circles, and was an old-fashioned name for the priest in charge of a cathedral. Hence I believed the request to strip Penn Jones of a papal honour was not possible, and ignored the matter in subsequent letters. I notice the Archbishop made absolutely no reference to "Monsignor" in any of his replies to me, and did not use the title in any correspondence.

However, it has come to my attention that the title "Monsignor" is one granted by the Pope, and I again ask that the honorific be taken from Penn H. Jones. If Pope Benedict XIV's predecessor can grant the title Monsignor, then the present pope can take it away.

I also ask again that Penn Jones name be removed from the plaque on which he is honoured. I find it appalling that he is still honoured in St Patrick's Cathedral. I

believe his name should not appear anywhere in the cathedral as it implies to me the church still thinks highly of this man, who is an acknowledged sex offender. If he were alive Penn Jones would almost certainly be in jail, publicly disgraced and probably stripped of his ecclesiastical privileges. In this case would his name still be prominently displayed in St Patrick's Cathedral?

Archbishop Hart has denied my requests to remove the name three times.

- In the first letter of reply the archbishop denied there was a plaque. "...As far as I know there is no plaque in the cathedral in his honour".
- I sent a photo showing Monsignor Penn Jones' name appearing on the plaque. Archbishop Hart denied it was a plaque in his honour, merely recording a donation.
- My final request again asked the Archbishop to remove the name as our family still finds it offensive as it is in a place of honour within a cathedral and on public display. The letter also included a series of relevant points taken from the part of the Towards Healing document to which the Pell Process is a signatory, and he replied – "I have a different view. Your comments regarding Towards Healing are noted".

In a recent, and much publicised, statement Pope Benedict XIV spoke to the Irish Bishop about clerical sexual abuse, and said (the bold is my highlight, not his).

"The wounds caused by such acts run deep, and it is an urgent task to rebuild confidence and trust where these have been damaged. In your continuing efforts to deal effectively with this problem, it is important to establish the truth of what happened in the past, to take whatever steps are necessary to prevent it from occurring again, to ensure the principles of justice are fully respected, **and above all, to bring healing to the victims and to all those affected by these egregious crimes.**" Pope Benedict XIV, Oct 30, 2006

My brother Gavan has died since I first contacted Archbishop Hart and I still find Monsignor Penn Jones honoured on that plaque in St Patrick's Cathedral very offensive and want his name removed.

Archbishop Hart's actions have not addressed the issues highlighted in Pope Benedict's statement above. In fact they have made my brother Jim and I feel even more hurt by his inaction. It appears to me Archbishop Hart has treated this matter in a very shallow way, paying lip service to Gavan with a legalistic private letter of apology and a bit of money, and then refusing to acknowledge the things that still cause pain and prevent healing for Gavan's family.

I found it unbelievable that Archbishop Hart told me there was no plaque in Penn Jones honour, and made no apology when I sent him a photograph of Penn Jones name on the plaque.

Archbishop Hart continues to assert I am trying to get the plaque removed, but I am not. I am asking for Penn Jones name be removed from the plaque, and for the honour title "Monsignor" be taken from him posthumously.

I ask you read the attached letters and *seriously consider* the issues that have been raised and respond accordingly.

The only response to issues presented by my brother Jim and myself on how victims of clerical abuse are dealt with in the Melbourne Diocese is "your comments are duly noted."

Please contact me if you request any further information on this matter and I await your reply.

[REDACTED]

Jillianne Mather (nee Jillianne Boyle)

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Email: jjmather@tik.com.au

Enc: Copies of letters between Archbishop Denis Hart and myself.

cc: James Boyle, [REDACTED]

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Papal Nuncio Australia

**Archbishop Ambrose de Paoli,
2 Vancouver St,
Red Hill, Canberra ACT 2603;**

P.O. Box 3633, Manuka, ACT

December 14, 2006

Your Grace

My name is Jillianne Mather and I wrote you on November 1 and have received no acknowledgement that you have received the letter.

I am including a copy of the original letter FYI, but have not included all the attachments. If you have not received the original letter please contact me immediately and I will forward the copies of the relevant correspondence as soon as possible. In fact I can Fax them, or email them if the Papal Nuncio's office has an email address

Please contact me if you request any further information on this matter and I await your reply.



Jillianne Mather (nee Jillianne Boyle)

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Enc: Copy or original letter to Papal Nuncio November 1, 2006

cc: [Redacted]



APOSTOLIC NUNCIATURE
AUSTRALIA

PO Box 3633
Manuka ACT 2603

20 December 2006

Prot. N. 1001/06

Mrs. Jillianne Mather
[REDACTED]

Dear Mrs Mather,

In the absence of the Apostolic Nuncio, I acknowledge receipt of your letter dated 14th December 2006, with which you referred to a previous correspondence on the same matter.

The issues you raised are still being examined; that explains why you had not received any acknowledgement to the previous letter. On his return, the Apostolic Nuncio will receive your mail.

May the Lord bless you at Christmas and in the New Year.

Yours sincerely,

Jude Thaddeus OKOLO (Msgr.)
Chargé d'Affaires a.i.

Papal Nuncio Australia

**Archbishop Ambrose de Paoli,
2 Vancouver St,
Red Hill, Canberra ACT 2603;**

P.O. Box 3633, Manuka, ACT

February 14, 2007

Your Grace

My name is Jillianne Mather and I wrote you on November 1, 2006 and again on December 14, 2006.

After the Dec 14 letter I did receive an acknowledgement from the Charge d' Affairs that you had received the first letter, and you were looking into the matters raised.

It is now **three months** since I first wrote and am wondering what is going on.

Please contact me if you request any further information on this matter and I await your reply.

[REDACTED]

Jillianne Mather (nee Jillianne Boyle)

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Enc: Copy or original letter to Papal Nuncio November 1, 2006
cc: James Boyle, [REDACTED]



APOSTOLIC NUNCIATURE
AUSTRALIA

PO Box 3633
Manuka ACT 2603

27 February 2007

Prot. N. 1001/07

Mrs. Jillianne Mather
[REDACTED]

Dear Mrs Mather,

I received your correspondence of 1 November 2006, 14 December 2006 and 14 February 2007. I notice that you received the letter of acknowledgement by which my Assistant assured you that the issues you raised were being looked into, in order to address them adequately.

I appreciate your patience, and I apologise that this matter has protracted for so long. Since I received your first correspondence, and because the final decision does not depend on my office, I have been consulting all the authorities who have competence in the question, in order to find a fitting solution.

You most likely expected more from me, but the above is all I can say at this moment.

May the Good Lord comfort you and the members of your family.

Devotedly yours in Our Lord,

Ambrose De Paoli
Ambrose De Paoli
Apostolic Nuncio

Papal Nuncio Australia

**Archbishop Ambrose de Paoli,
2 Vancouver St,
Red Hill, Canberra ACT 2603;**

P.O. Box 3633, Manuka, ACT

Ref: Prot. N. 1001/07

March 10, 2007

Your Grace

Thank you for your warm, reassuring and prompt reply to my letter of February 14.

I accept your apology for the matter taking so long, but I now firmly believe you have read and understood the many issues involved. I am well aware there are many authorities concerned and everyone needs to take time to find a fitting solution.

It is exactly what I expected from you.

Perhaps I was a little blunt in my last letter but was feeling very much in the dark and not sure that anything was being done at all.

I found your reply has encouraged me to continue the struggle for justice for my brother, Gavan Boyle.

[REDACTED]

Jillianne Mather (nee Jillianne Boyle)

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] James Boyle, [REDACTED]

Papal Nuncio Australia
Archbishop Ambrose de Paoli,
2 Vancouver St,
Red Hill, Canberra ACT 2603;

P.O. Box 3633, Manuka, ACT

Ref: Prot. N. 1001/07

March 15, 2007

Your Grace

Thank you, thank you, thank you

Through your interest and intervention on my behalf, Archbishop Denis Hart has changed his mind and has removed the name of Penn H Jones from a plaque in St Patrick's Cathedral Melbourne.

I am overwhelmed with gratitude that this has been achieved as the name appearing in a place of honour in a public place was extremely offensive to my brother Gavan Boyle for very obvious reasons. And I too was deeply disturbed that Penn Jones was still being honoured in this way.

It has been a long battle but I always knew that justice would prevail.

Gavan was deeply traumatised by his clerical sexual abuse, resulting in him having serious psychological problems throughout his life. Our family was gravely affected by this but with education and knowledge we have a greater understanding of him now. (I include my brother Jim and our families in this "we"). We are all grateful the Melbourne Archdiocese funded that counselling as it was essential to our wellbeing.

As I said in my letter of March 10 I firmly believed you had read my documents, and understood the many issues involved, and you were taking action. And the fact the answer came from Archbishop Hart within a couple of days of your letter was a great surprise as I was preparing to wait another couple of months. Thank you once again.

Clerical sexual abuse is totally abhorrent and is an extremely difficult issue for everyone concerned from the victims, the perpetrators, the families, and church authorities, to the church of the people itself. But it cannot be ignored if we are living according to the Gospel values Jesus taught us. Thank you for taking action.

[REDACTED]

Jillianne Mather (nee Jillianne Boyle)

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

cc James Boyle, [REDACTED]



James Gould House
P.O. Box 146
East Melbourne Vic 3002
Australia



9th March 2007

Mrs J R Mather
[REDACTED]

Dear Mrs Mather,

I am writing to inform you that I have instructed the removal of the name of Penn H. Jones from the Plaque of Benefactors in St Patrick's Cathedral.

I do this out of respect for Gavan's dying wish and for the great pain that you have suffered because of the actions of a priest from whom so much more in the doing of good and the avoidance of evil should have been expected.

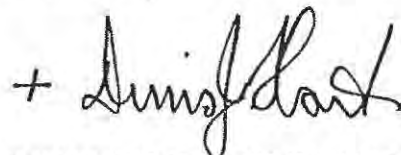
I hope that this gesture, and my renewed apologies as Archbishop, for the wrong doing that has so impacted on Gavan, on yourself and others will assist you in coming to greater peace at present.

If you believe that speaking with a priest in [REDACTED] or in Melbourne, if you ever come here, would be helpful towards this end, I would certainly be happy to arrange it.

The whole tablet has been removed from the Cathedral this week, and within the next week or ten days when it is returned, the name of Penn H. Jones will not be visible.

Be sure of a special place in my Masses and prayers at this difficult time.

Yours sincerely in Christ,

+ 

ARCHBISHOP OF MELBOURNE

Archbishop Denis Hart
James Goold House
PO Box 146
East Melbourne VIC 3002

March 15, 2007

Archbishop Hart

On behalf of my late brother Gavan Boyle I thank you most sincerely for removing the name of Penn H Jones from the plaque in St Patrick's Cathedral.

It is such a wonderful feeling to know that one of Gavan's dearest wishes has been granted, and that the man who raped him will no longer be honoured by having his name on display in a prominent place like St Patrick's Cathedral. Its removal will certainly help with the healing process for me and for my brother Jim, as well as our families.

I am also gratified that you recognise and acknowledge the pain and suffering caused by Penn Jones name being on public display. I appreciate your renewed apology.

Thank you for offering to arrange for me to speak with a priest. Please be assured I have not travelled this journey without spiritual support from a wise and generous priest. Without his encouragement and guidance I am sure my faith would have been dimmed throughout this ordeal, but instead it has grown and strengthened with the help of the Holy Spirit.

Our family has received counselling from a psychiatrist who specialises in treating victims of sexual abuse and their families and it was invaluable to all of us as we came to terms with Gavan's clerical sexual abuse, his subsequent difficult life, and his tragic and early death. Our thanks go once again to the Archdiocese for funding that service.

Clerical sexual abuse is totally abhorrent and is an extremely difficult issue for everyone concerned from the victims, the perpetrators, the families, and church authorities, to the church of the people itself. But it cannot be ignored if we are living according to the Gospel values Jesus taught us. Thank you for taking action.

[Redacted]

Jillianne Mather (nee Jillianne Boyle)

[Redacted]

cc James Boyle, [Redacted]

Objectives

1. To ensure –DH gets a better understanding of the traumatic effect of the abuse on the spiritual and relational lives of Gavan and of his family;
2. To ensure he also understands how far the pastoral support provided under the “Melbourne response” differs from the public announcement – NONE!
3. To ensure –DH also understands the pain and injustice inflicted on Gavan by the “Melbourne Response”
4. ditto re the pain inflicted on you and on me (Jimbo) by his own attitudes and responses
5. To deliver to him your proper demands – plaque, service of reconciliation, change to “Melbourne Response” etc
6. To ask for an initial response

Strategy

“They didn’t care” Gavan’s cry from the heart at the end of his short life.

Your Grace your last letter to me was the first time I felt you cared about me as a person and how I was faring spiritually. “If you ever feel the need to speak to a priest please ask me and I will be happy to arrange it.” I felt you acknowledged my needs and were willing to reach out a helping hand.

At first I chose to continue with my friend and priest Fr [REDACTED] to address my pain, but then I felt called to talk to you in person and relay to you how important that feeling that you cared about me was. I also see it as an opportunity to talk to you about the matters close to my heart and most especially the hurt inflicted by the church on Gavan after he revealed his abuse by Penn Jones, because “they don’t care”.

I was and am scared to be here alone as afraid I will not do justice to the major issues at hand. At times the things I want to say do not come out in the right way and I know that Jim and [REDACTED] will help steer my words.

I want my brother Jim to be here beside me to tell our family story to you, but I knew you had refused to speak with him on pastoral matters on a big number of occasions so was afraid to even ask you if he could be here. The fact I had a chance to tell you how my family felt and the need to tell Gavan’s story was more important and I could not jeopardise this opportunity.

This fact has created a tension between us – why me and not him. It isolates the pair of us and that is not the pastoral way – we all live in relationship. He should also know you care and be sitting here today sharing our family story. He also needs healing.

It is a privilege to be here and thank you.

Gavan – outline of life

Big sister – vulnerability as a child

Talented musician

Brilliant teacher who loved language and literature

Guidance counsellor – special love for young people in trouble

Faithful and strong Teacher's Union man, and worker for the Labour Party. At his funeral there was a strong contingent of people from that part of his life who spoke to us about his passion for justice and righteousness. Former Premier of Victoria Joan Kirner also apologised for her absence as she was sick.

But none of us knew one another as Gavan kept his life compartmentalised. He played the various roles extremely well, but there were no personal relationships. He was very private and did not allow anyone in.

Example – his 50th birthday.

He became increasingly reclusive unable to function as a teacher and a person. He told me he was depressed and Mum and I believed it was a result of the pain medication for bad back which in turn caused stomach ulcers, and that medication caused the depression.

Our only contact was by phone – couple of visits to [REDACTED] – last visit disappeared.

Mum's increasing frailty and her concern for Gavan's welfare – would not leave him

Furore over the house sale.

Our contact was strictly on his terms and he was often angry with me over little things and contemptuous of kids' achievements, my work particularly with the church.

He would only allow meeting in a neutral place when he would meet. Last time I went which was mid 2004 – no warning – found a frail old man barely able to walk tiptoes and fingertips. he was almost skin and bones. His sight was failing his house had gaping holes in the walls – up near the ceiling – couldn't see them.

My heart was broken that he would not allow anyone to help – my choice he would say.

Disclosure – result of article

He realised that happened to him.

Felt for me – relief a reason. Knowing helps. Described behaviour and attitudes as mental health problems but now I knew why.

Jimmy and I now had an understanding of his life.

Helpless refused help. Guilt we did not know at the time.

Encouraged to go authorities. Refused as didn't believe it would help him at all and he didn't want money – name, title removed.

Decision to see O'Callaghan in Jan 2005. Offered to accompany Jim and I – one or both. Appt in late February.

March letter of acceptance and I was so pleased as I believed the church cared about abuse victims would now throw its resources and expertise and help and he would maybe get better and have a quality of life that he needed. Not easy – but possible.

My belief – church cared for its people and that the revelation of the abuse would set in motion a healing process that cared for the survivor.

In that light I wrote first letter – me as a person, not crackpot looking for vengeance and publicity. Someone who loved and respected the church and cared for its reputation. Well aware of human sin and imperfections and reconciliation and forgiveness. Good Catholic woman. Profound sense of who I am and well-developed sense of righteousness. Loyalty to Gav - no description of his pain. That's all he wanted. – now in the system so could ask.

I felt abused by you because you wouldn't listen to me as a person and rejected my suggestions totally out of hand and without any reasoning

- first by denial
- secondly refusal point blank
- And thirdly your refusal to dialogue about the pain and hurts we have suffered
- totally rejected my brother Gavan's pain by refusing to acknowledge plaque offended him
- refused my brother Jim also so you could hear his pain.
- Still no word on title.

It was not easy to write to Papal Nuncio – righteous anger, need to fix, mother, nurturer, big sister – protector.

Back to story

Gavan accepted as a victim in March and sent to Carelink April 7 and 14.

After that he said they didn't care about him at all, just wanted to write a report to compensation panel which would be hearing at end of April. He'd give money away – probably to Carmelites or some other organization that he came in contact with at the time and that was all they offered. They didn't care. He had allowed the authorities to see his pain and no one cared about him as a person.

Gavan's life exhibited classic symptoms of a victim of trauma – whether Vietnam veteran, sexual abuse victim, or major life trauma.

Victims of trauma

Failure to maintain and build normal relationships - family, friendships, sexual, spiritual. No close friends, girlfriends or boyfriends, kept us at arms length – contact on his terms – phone calls, visits, Mum trying to see him.

Ability to perform in a role, but not to relate – angry discussed feelings or meaningful dialogue

Particularly difficult and abusive relationship with me – and discovered also regularly abusive to [REDACTED] reducing her to tears. No relationship with his nieces nephew because they viewed him as someone who made Mum cry. When young it was okay for the three or four visits he made to [REDACTED] and then on the last visit he just disappeared one day – I needed a break he said after several days of worrying about where he was.

Sleep disorder – rarely slept at night just catnapped during day –

Serious abuse of self – unable to eat.

Pain control by alcohol – a common response

Effect of finally disclosing the abuse classic symptoms

His sleeping and eating worsened, nightmares - Reinvigorated the trauma – a normal effect of telling his story.

Crises worsened – midnight phone calls to Jimmy and I at which he he would talk about inane things and if you even attempted to ask how he was, who had visited, had he been out he would fly into the most uncontrollable rage. Started fighting back made things worse. Made him cry and that was even more heart-wrenching. Painful to listen to particularly at 3am.

Wanted to gather him up

He totally withdrew from people – no housekeeping, few phone calls, No will to live – last illness. refusal to see doctor –

Nov 10 – [REDACTED] phone call. Jimmy, Fr [REDACTED], council social worker threats of committal; agreement to see doctor. Admitted hospital diagnosis, heart failure, my visit, telling Jimmy about papers and see if he could do something about the church– all they wanted was to give me money and close the case. They didn't care about me. died Nov 20.

house full of empty wine casks, fridge with mouldy food, a couple of cans of baked beans.

Starved and drank himself to death he saw no point in living.

[REDACTED]

Effect of lack of response from the church

No pastoral support given to Gavan at all – no one cared for him after he disclosed the abuse to O'Callaghan in February

After he relived trauma again with Carelink in April

Next contact was the Compensation Panel in October

Only people who had contact with Gavan between January and his death in November were those representing you/ the archdiocese – and their job was definitely not to care for Gavan, or look out for him or represent him. Jimmy and I offered to go to the Compensation Panel with him but he refused. "You don't need to hear my pain, I know what to do. I don't want the money anyway" Totally incapable of assessing whether he could represent himself fairly and justly.

What image he must have presented to them – frail old man weighing less than 40kg barely able to walk, or sit who had not slept in ages and obviously not well.

Since all this happened reading about the support Gavan should have had – it should have been immediate pastoral support – someone caring for him personally – his welfare as a person – physical, mental and spiritual. Someone to acknowledge it is a difficult time and the church cares for him.

I want to make sure that you as the chief pastor for this Archdiocese know the effect of a lack of pastoral support had on Gavan and on us – Jimmy and I and our families. I felt Melbourne Archdiocese could do better for the survivors and their families of clerical sex abuse by giving them independent personal help from people who care about them and are not representing you. – no one asked us how it is/was

I offer this book which is one of many I found helpful as it especially addresses the pain to the soul of a victim of sexual abuse. It is far more eloquent in its story.

Ripple effect

Gavan was abused as a young teenager at the altar boys camp in Shoreham and it totally affected his whole life. Gavan was part of loving and caring family that found relating to Gavan became more and more difficult as the years went on. Huge impact on all of us. – mum hung on desperately to house in hopes Gav would come and live there so she stay there and not be alone, and so he would have company and maybe feel needed and all would be well. – our house bought for both of them. Mum could not abandon Gav –

He continually accused me of selling Mum's house from under her and putting her in a nursing home and no matter how many times I would deny it, and Mum would try as well he did not believe it. Her death just increased the fury with me and all through that first year I cried and didn't sleep until I was diagnosed with depression. – My kids tried to protect me from the abusive phone calls but I could not abandon him – he is my brother and I knew that he was in pain and it was the pain that made him unable to function normally. You have no idea the relief I felt when Gavan disclosed the abuse and suddenly there was a reason for his pain, behaviour, lack of normal

relationships. I could cope with knowing why and knowing why meant there was a way to get better.

It was not to be.

I have a number of things I would like you to do for me

1. Please read this book as I believe it will offer ways to lessen the pain for others who are survivors of clerical abuse as well as their families. It was very insightful and lessened the pain for me. Will you do that?

2. Provide pastoral care to victims and their families immediately there is disclosure. It is hugely traumatic to give voice to the pain and for Gavan to be left in limbo from February onwards is just not right.

3. Give all survivors an independent advocate for all interactions with authorities. Imagine my frail sick abused brother who was unable to walk, or write or even see facing a panel of learned skilled legal representatives. Is that right?

4. Openly communicate about clerical abuse and what you are doing about it. Gavan came forward after reading an article in the newspaper. We are all grappling with the issues, but if the church is seen as an example of those who cooperate positively and are open to change and listening to the pain, then people are not compelled to become adversarial. In that light review the Melbourne Process – what is set out in the brochure is not done.



5. Establish a memorial for victims of clerical abuse – maybe a tablet in the Cathedral.

6. Hold a Day of Reconciliation/ Healing maybe on the Feast of Our Lady of Sorrows Sept 14 for all victims of clerical abuse and their families. Maybe as a gesture of goodwill the Archdiocese could offer to pay transport costs for those who would find the trip financially difficult.

7. Meet my brother Jim and his wife [REDACTED] to discuss his pastoral needs. He would be a great asset to have on your side working in this area. Jimmy spent 35 years working in a senior management role at international level at [REDACTED]. He is highly respected for his integrity and intelligence. Like me he has a life long commitment to our God and our Catholic faith.

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Sacrificial altar boy

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The crippling toll of clergy abuse can spread well beyond the original victim, as Gavan Boyle's case shows, writes Barney Zwartz.

Advertisement

GAVAN BOYLE, a slight 14-year-old, had no idea what it meant when Monsignor Penn Jones told him to go last in the shower at summer camp and the other boys said "Gavan's next".

What did happen next robbed him of his life, turning him gradually into a virtual derelict recluse who weighed about 38 kilograms when he died of a combination of starvation, alcoholism and untreated cancer in 2005.

It also blighted the life of his family, particularly brother Jim Boyle and sister Jill Mather, who suffered grief, guilt, despair, anger and helplessness. Jim had a massive heart attack that he survived only because he had already taken himself to hospital, while Jill's marriage nearly crumpled under the stress, she put on 20 kilograms and lost all self-confidence.

Jones – cathedral administrator, chaplain and chancellor of the

Archdiocese of Melbourne, who received a glowing obituary from Archbishop Frank Little on his death in 1995 – anally raped Gavan, the culmination of three years of increasingly severe molestation at the summer camps.

The family is naturally angry at Gavan's abuse. "I now regard Gavan's death as effectively a murder by Monsignor Jones, though the process of dying took many years," Jim Boyle told a conference on clergy abuse at the University of NSW the day before his heart attack in June last year.

But what really makes their blood pressure soar is the response of the Catholic Church when Gavan (inset, above right) finally disclosed what had happened. They believe it amounted to a second round of abuse, of Gavan, themselves, their spouses and children. Jim Boyle told the conference: "The most painful issue remains the continuing callous and apparently calculated responses of the Melbourne Archdiocese to Gavan's pain and to mine and that of all my family."

They are bitter about the process in general, the mental health experts at Carelink (the support agency set up for victims by the Melbourne diocese), the compensation panel, and especially Melbourne Archbishop Denis Hart, who, they believe, avoided both them and his pastoral responsibilities. After two years of trying, Jill says she had to enlist the help of the papal nuncio (Pope's ambassador) in Canberra to get him to amend a plaque on the wall of St Patrick's Cathedral honouring Penn Jones (pictured above, second row, in black).

Gavan has been dead for nearly four years, but the ramifications roll on. In all the hideous stories of clerical abuse and shattered lives, the cataclysm wreaked upon the families and loved ones of the victims remains a largely untold story. They are victims too.

What happened to Gavan

Monsignor Jones was not Gavan's first unhappy encounter. At primary school he was beaten by a nun so badly that he could barely walk. When his mother complained, she was convinced on the grounds of "Christian forgiveness" to let it go because the nun was dying of cancer.

At 12, in 1960, Gavan joined the altar boys at St Patrick's Cathedral, where he served until Archbishop Mannix's funeral in 1963. He attended the altar boys' camp at Shoreham, where he was assaulted with increasing severity each year by Jones, who was in charge of the camp. Gavan became reclusive, and at university became a binge drinker. He had serious car accidents and drink-driving convictions and was often beaten up because he had no sense of boundaries or danger, according to Jim Boyle, though he functioned well for many years.

His worsening alcoholism meant he had to retire as a school teacher at 49. He would ring his siblings when the TV stopped about 3am, and talk for hours, often almost incoherent through drink and rage — he often had Jim's wife, Libby, or Jill in tears — but otherwise excluded them and everyone else. In 2004 he told them of the abuse, and they encouraged him to tell the church, which he did in 2005.

He saw independent commissioner Peter O'Callaghan, QC, in February, and received a letter in March saying his story was accepted. He had two interviews with Carelink counsellors in April, saw the compensation panel in October and was offered \$37,000 in November. Within a fortnight, he was dead.

In his last years, Gavan would not allow Jim or Jill to help, would not even open the door or answer his phone. Finally Jim got into the house: "Gavan let in a priest he trusted, and didn't know I was there. He was lying on a mattress on the floor in his own stink, with no food in the house, just grog," Jim recalls. "We got a social worker to come in and threaten to commit

him, and he finally went to hospital. He weighed 38 kilograms.

"He died from a combination of starvation, alcoholism and cancer. He didn't want to live; he'd given up interest in life. He said on his deathbed: 'I want it all to go public. They just didn't care.' Those were almost the last words he said."

What happened to Jim

The biggest source of grief is the relationship he never had with his younger brother. "The abuse Gavan suffered insidiously destroyed our relationship. I felt utterly unable to reach him on an emotional level, and somehow I felt, and still feel, some responsibility for his demise." His family all knew something was wrong, that Gavan was suffering, but could not pry it from him. Jim's wife and daughters were also unable to get close to Gavan.

"I often felt helpless and perplexed," Jim (pictured, below right) told the University of NSW. "I didn't know what was at the core of Gavan's problems or even the extent of his alcoholism, and that caused me to feel guilty as well as very concerned. My own brother desperately needed help, but I was helpless to provide that, or to understand or change his circumstances. That still frequently reduces me to tears.

After Gavan's death, Jim looked for answers, trying to follow up the Carelink psychiatrists and Archbishop Denis Hart. What ensued, he claims, is itself a significant case of abuse. It left him tormented and enraged about Gavan's plight and by the anger he felt towards Archbishop Hart, who was "supposed to represent the compassionate heart of the church" but whose response he considered cold, calculated, evasive, and devoid of compassion. Both he and Jill say they were not happy with the level of psychological and pastoral support offered to them.

Jim became obsessed by his quest for justice for Gavan and the family, culminating in his heart attack the day after he presented his Sydney paper.

What happened to Jill

Today Jill says she is coping well, but she has only recently come through the other side of a very dark time. Her marriage nearly crumbled and her children suffered greatly. Gavan would phone her three or four times a week, full of anger and abuse.

"I found it hard to handle because I was helpless to do anything to make him feel better. He constantly belittled my work with the church, my abilities as a journalist with the local paper and as a mother . . . This made me feel confused and inadequate. My self-esteem plummeted. I rarely slept more than four hours a night, my weight rose 20 kilograms and my relationship with [my husband] Jim hit an all-time low. I felt most unworthy of being loved. I could not verbalise how I was feeling and ended up on medication for depression."

Jim Mather says Jill was difficult to live with at this time. "She was very distracted and irrational, taking offence at almost anything I said or did. Even helping round the house caused friction, as she took it as a criticism of her abilities." It was only after counselling that they recognised this as a reaction to Gavan's abuse of her.

It alienated her children from the church — none goes to Mass now. Jill still loves Mass — "the eucharist is very precious to me and that will never change, but I find it difficult to go" — but her deep commitment to the institutional church is over. She had been a salt-of-the-earth Catholic, working on diocesan committees, in the parish, and more. "I was a very, very active member of our church community. I do none of that now."

After Gavan died, she tried to raise the idea of a national reconciliation day for abuse victims, along the lines of the "sorry day" for indigenous people, but met a brick wall. She also fought a two-year battle to fulfil Gavan's request to have the abuser's name removed from a plaque on the wall of St Patrick's Cathedral.

The church's failures

The three interviews with the independent commissioners and Carelink left Gavan deeply traumatised, Jim Boyle says, but he was never offered counselling — the one thing he wanted, as he wrote on the Carelink questionnaire. Nor was he given any other help to cope with the pain.

Jim Boyle believes the Carelink intervention amounted to further abuse, so much so that he made 30-page formal complaints to the medical boards of both practitioners, which were rejected.

After Gavan's death, Jim asked to meet the psychiatrist, who told him: "Some victims just get over it, others succumb to alcohol." Jim says he was appalled at the callousness: "No empathy, no sympathy, just blame the victim." When he sought a second interview, which the psychiatrist had offered, he was stunned to receive a letter from the archdiocese's solicitor saying it wasn't necessary. He felt intimidated. "For the first time in my life I was unable to sleep. I was in a hell of a state." The family also had questions about the role of the independent commissioner.

The church's response

The Melbourne archdiocese freely conceded to The Age that Gavan's case was shocking and tragic. But the church believed that the Boyles were as satisfied as possible with the response to them, until Jim's complaints arrived. It also feels that few cases have been reviewed as much as Gavan's because Jim's complaints were considered by the Medical Practitioners' Board, the Psychologists' Registration Board of Victoria, the Health Services Commissioner and the Legal Commissioner, all of which effectively dismissed the complaints.

Archbishop Hart said in a statement to The Age: "I sincerely believe that we did all we could to help [Gavan]. He was very well supported by each element of the Melbourne Response scheme. He was given all of the best personal care he was entitled to. He was given financial compensation and offered all of the counselling and support services which he deserved. Regrettably, and for his own reasons, he did not make use of the services which were made available to him."

"I have deep concern and compassion for all victims of sexual abuse," he said. "I think the real great tragedy has been that there are any victims at all. The huge suffering of people who have been abused by priests and others whom they should have been able to trust — it just tears at my soul.

"I find it a tremendous burden, and it's a burden felt by the majority of our priests and our people. And the church wants to

do everything that we can to put things right."

The family are not convinced. Both Boyles are adamant that the Melbourne Response needs to be overhauled. Gavan got money but little else, and money was the least of his concerns, they say.

Jill Mather may never get over the guilt that she encouraged Gavan to turn to the church for help, having read "all the hype" about helping victims of clergy abuse.

"I said to Gavan, 'They will look after you.' I knew it would take a miracle to fix him totally, but I thought someone could try.

But they didn't. Nobody cared enough."

Barney Zwartz. Barney Zwartz is religion editor.

This story was found at: <http://www.theage.com.au/national/sacrificial-altar-boy-20090915-fpf4.html>

Archdiocese's 'best' is poor

RE BARNEY Zwartz's article (Focus, 15/9), the Boyles were definitely not satisfied with the response from the archdiocese to their concerns about Gavan's treatment and the Melbourne Response. An apology was offered, but none of the issues they raised were addressed.

The response from Archbishop Hart highlights yet again that the church has no understanding of the needs of victims of clerical sexual abuse, nor how to address them. A man crying, sleepless and in severe emotional distress, as Gavan was in his second interview with Carelink, deserves immediate treatment, not more questioning and a comment like "we did cover a lot of ground last week".

Eight months after disclosure to the church, he was sent by Carelink for assessment of his alcoholism. He was never offered counselling for the abuse. Finally, he was offered a meagre cash settlement, which he didn't need and was incapable of managing.

If this is the best the Melbourne Archdiocese has to offer, we pity any future victims who seek redress from it. Victims' needs and welfare should be the top priority. How can they be if the first point of contact is a QC? Jill and Jim Mather, Mandurah, WA

Choosing the church

JOHN Dunlop (Letters, 16/9) argues that sexual abuse cases should be dealt with in the courts, without any exemption, particularly for the Catholic Church. It may come as a surprise to Mr Dunlop and those who think like him that the vast

majority of Catholics agrees with him. However, nearly all those who claim abuse occurred a considerable time ago at the hands of, mostly, long dead clergy, prefer their claims to be considered in private by the church's independent tribunals. These determine cases on the basis of the balance of possibilities and giving the benefit of the doubt. The state courts conduct open hearings and apply the much harder to establish criterion of guilt beyond reasonable doubt.

The church cannot stop anyone going to the courts, even if it wants to. Perhaps one should ask the abuse claimants and their legal advisers why they prefer the apparently more compassionate and favourable church tribunals.

Paul H. Borg, East Burwood

Healthy competition

IT IS sad that there will be only two candidates for Liberal Party preselection in Higgins. In such a safe seat, you would expect that there would be a greater range of candidates nominating. The Liberal Party is supposedly a strong supporter of competition, but this apparently does not apply to its own preselections. Or is it simply that the party does not have any talent pool?

I note that other potential candidates were told not to run so that a particular candidate had a clear run. The Liberal Party edict is clearly anti-competitive. This can only add to the continuing deterioration of the party as a political force because it will not attract people who have something to contribute to political and economic debate.

Businesses, the next time they are exhorted by the Liberals to be competitive, have a right to

A lack of choice

PAUL H. Borg (Letters, 17/9) is deluding himself if he thinks that abuse claimants and their legal advisers prefer church tribunals to state courts because they are "apparently more compassionate".

The reality is that many claimants have no real choice. For most, the cost of taking their cases to court would be prohibitive. Those who could afford it rapidly discover the extent of the church "compassion".

Criminal cases, for the reasons that Borg outlines, would be almost impossible and could only be launched against individuals in any case.

Civil claims for compensation are also particularly fraught for as far as the bricks and mortar of church property is real and valued in the billions, the "church" as a suable entity is a chimera.

Richard Moore, East Hawthorn

ACE 18/9/09



The courts m rule on abuse

BARNEY Zwartz's "Sa altar boy" (Focus, 15/9) is litigated once again the double standard in our society concerning sexual abuse of clergy. Why do we permit society, in permitting the church as investigator, judge and accomplice in protecting predatory sexual criminals? What a forgiving court.

How is it possible for law enforcement agencies to ignore this usurpation of responsibilities? How do we keep reading debate on the inadequacy of the response? In all other nations, sexual abuse is a serious crime, dealt with by a legal system. By v does the church enjoy from that system?

All sexual abuse cases should be dealt with in the courts. Individuals interfering with the process should be dealt with by the courts. No exception. Statute of limitations. John Dunlop, Patterson Lake

At the fire fr

READERS of "The new line" (Insight, 12/9) are excused for thinking the community of the Dandenong is cowering under the fearfully waiting for the bushfire. They're not. It comes to bushfire safety the community has long the risk we face each and prepares itself accordingly and pragmatically.

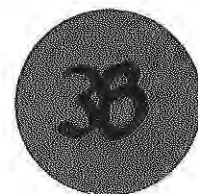
The community's foremost for CFA and brigades, Parks Victoria Department of Sustainability

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16/9/09

Justice for Survivors of Clergy Abuse



Our Charter

Preamble

What I want – Never again will a primary, secondary, or tertiary victim of clergy abuse have to suffer as Gavan and we have.

Justice for our family – recognition of the fact that no one in the church hierarchy cared about Gavan, and the pain it caused him and our family.

I felt he was treated like a leper – an outcast to be sent out into the wilderness, the edges of society to be away from sight so the church didn't have to think about it. Our family struggled in a vacuum for 40 plus years to understand why he was like he was, and I was so relieved when we could assign a name to his misery. At last I had hope the church would act justly and with integrity throwing its best resources at my brother to do its best to fix him and his relationship with us. I truly believed that this is what would happen once Gavan informed the church of the abuse. And it didn't. No one cared.

He told his story and he was left alone with the pain and suffering and trauma to die a tragic and lonely death totally unable to accept loving help from his family because he could not trust anyone to get close to him. He had reached out once and was left dangling.

I have this powerful image of the ten lepers some 2000 years ago. Their presence was not tolerated at all and How scandalised the Pharisees were that Jesus approached these “the unclean”. Jesus spoke to them, he touched them, he treated them with love and compassion, he healed them.

The church cannot keep clergy abuse victims at arms length – they must be welcomed and embraced and helped in every possible way. – pastoral care, physical care, medical care, emotional care and financial care should all be part of the package.

A total about-turn is required from the authorities – As Jesus told the Pharisees in Matthew 15, 1-9 – legal parameters cannot be the driving force behind attitudes to victims – They are man made and God's laws are paramount – Love one another as I have loved you.

Transforming evil from within – I see this collective as a group of people motivated to change the church from within – just as Jesus transformed our lives from within.

Jim, my brother is articulating what we want from the Melbourne archdiocese, but I have a couple of specific items –

- All victims need to be cared for immediately.
- All victims need an advocate beside them through the process
- Open acknowledgement of clergy abuse on a National Day of Healing/Reconciliation.
- Establishment of a Memorial to all clergy abuse victims in every Australian diocese.