

Raymond & Bridget Monagle

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
08. 04. 2013

Family & Community Development Committee
Parliament House
Spring Street
East Melbourne Vic 3002

SUBMISSION

WE WISH OUR SUBMISSION TO BE RECORDED IN "Victorian Parliament Inquiry
Into Sexual Abuse in Religious and Other Organisations"

Our Testimony is:

We are secondary victims of:

David Rapson ex-priest of the Salesian Order, sexual abuser of our son Benedict Monagle
Collusion by the Salesian Order

The lateness of preparing this Submission to your Committee is due to the fact that we had no knowledge of our son's abuse, until December 2012. For 22 years, Ben did not disclose the abuse to anyone.

These events happened in 1990.

At 16 years of age Ben attended Salesian College Rupertswood, Sunbury, a boy's boarding school, as an Agricultural student for one year in 1990. Ben's literacy skills were poor, but he was quite competent working in the farming industry..

About the abuse:

During that year, 1990, Ben was sexually attacked four times by the College Deputy Principal, Father David Rapson. The last attack in August 1990, was the most violent.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

About Collusion, by the members of the Salesian Order, at Rupertswood, in 1990.

We received a phone call at 10.30pm one night during August 1990 from a staff member at Rupertswood to say "Ben had been missing for some time (from 2pm), but had now been found (10pm). He had been distressed but had settled down and he was OK and was now in bed and asleep. He had been located in a paddock and the Fire Brigade had come to the school property", we were told.

We attended a meeting with a senior member of staff at the school, to clarify the events of that day and night. The person we spoke to was detached throughout the interview, and conveyed a need to make the duration of our meeting short. He showed complete disinterest in the reason for this meeting. We left the meeting still puzzled about "what happened" the day he went missing. Ben did not wish to speak about the event.

We now know that this event, of running away, was triggered by David Rapson approaching Ben.

There was no sense of duty of care to our child, by those in charge of the students. On reflection, it was more about protecting themselves as they continued to violate our children.

Prior to attending Rupertswood, Ben's physical health was excellent.

Following the last and most violent sexual attack by David Rapson in August 1990, Ben was in extreme pain, and resting in the school infirmary when a discussion took place, with David Rapson present, about where to seek medical attention. [REDACTED]

Subsequently, Ben was seen by our General Practitioner and her referred Surgeon. The operation performed on 31.08.1990, [REDACTED]

Once again, this is extreme collusion behaviour by the Salesian Community at Rupertswood., self protection of their own "religious community" and a total disconnection to the reality of the abhorrent crimes against children, they or their Community members were committing. Furthermore, the Rupertswood Salesian Community has exhibited, absolutely, in having no insight to the outcome of their actions.

A constant question I have about the Rupertswood abuse is: "Where was the dormitory master, Father [REDACTED] when the children were taken by the abusers from the dormitory?" and, "Did he notice the distress of the children when they returned to their beds?"

Post Rupertswood;

March 1991, by this time our son had no respect for us as parents, his siblings, our values or society's laws. He found friendship in bad company and left our home.

For the last 22 years, Ben has been a drifter, his employment erratic, drug addiction, relationship breakdowns, his physical health is of poor quality and his mental health is managed by medication.

As a family, we have experienced many high stress episodes due to the impact of Ben's lifestyle over the last 22 years. A consequence of this is: A breakdown in the relationships amongst our children. The concern our children have for us on our emotional and personal health as we age.

Since finally speaking to [REDACTED] in December 2012, of the terrible things that happened to him, by the abusing priest at Rupertswood in 1990, Ben has set about getting his life into order.

Ben has reported the crimes committed against him at Rupertswood to the Melbourne Sexual Crimes Squad and given a statement to the police.

Since January 2013, Ben has been working with professional carers to restore his physical and mental health.

Because of his "situation in life" Ben has no work qualifications. For his personal recovery, he would like to do a trade course to gain a trade certificate to enable him to be gainfully employed.

8.4.2013

Raymond J Monagle

Bridget Mary Monagle

Date