



VICTORIA POLICE

Name: [REDACTED]

Occupation: [REDACTED]

My name is [REDACTED], I currently reside at an address known to the police. I am the mother of [REDACTED]. I have been asked by police to make this statement, in relation to my son and my concerns about our local priest [REDACTED] was the priest at our local parish in [REDACTED].

My family and I have been committed parishioners at [REDACTED] for some years. All of us attended Mass regularly and my son [REDACTED] was an altar boy on many occasions.

I am a committed Catholic and regularly attended church with my children over the last few years. In or about approximately [REDACTED] the Parish Priest of [REDACTED] offered my son [REDACTED] a job.

Fr [REDACTED] said he would pay [REDACTED] between, \$5.00-\$8.00 per hour. [REDACTED] was 14 years [REDACTED] old when he started working for Fr [REDACTED]. The work was to take place on Friday afternoons after school and involved typing and filing at the presbytery. At the time I agreed for [REDACTED] to assist Fr [REDACTED] in this way and initially had no concerns about it.

After some weeks, however, the hours that Fr [REDACTED] required [REDACTED] to attend the presbytery appeared to get later and later. After a few Friday nights where Fr [REDACTED] had started dropping [REDACTED] home at approximately 10-10.30pm, I complained to Fr [REDACTED] that this was simply too late for [REDACTED] and that I wanted him to be home by 7.30pm. This still allowed him approximately 4 hours from after school time.

For the following two weeks Fr [REDACTED] did return [REDACTED] home at approximately 7.30pm. However, after that on Friday nights, I would receive phone calls from [REDACTED] saying that Fr [REDACTED] needed him to do more work and asking if he could stay later. My husband, [REDACTED] and I became concerned about [REDACTED] home work and that he was becoming very tired with these late Friday nights every week. [REDACTED] was also very busy on Saturday afternoons as he had to leave home early to assist Fr [REDACTED] to set up the altar for mass at 5.00pm on Saturdays. Again on Saturday nights, Fr [REDACTED] would drop [REDACTED] home after mass, but not until 9.00pm. [REDACTED] was required to altar serve at mass on Sunday mornings also.

My husband and I explained to [REDACTED] that we felt that this was too time consuming for him and that he needed to make sure that he got his home work done. When [REDACTED] explained our

[REDACTED]

concerns to Fr [redacted], Fr [redacted] told [redacted] that he could use Fr [redacted] computer at the Presbytery for his home work.

Aside from the regular late nights that [redacted] was spending with Fr [redacted] I became concerned about various other pieces of information [redacted] told me. For example, [redacted] told me that Fr [redacted] shared with him information about parishioners and would disclose information to him about these people which I felt was inappropriate for a [redacted] to be told.

After [redacted] told me some of these things, I again confronted Fr [redacted] He told me that he was speaking to [redacted] about the parishioners, so that [redacted] would understand when he grew up not to take things too personally. He gave the example of people thinking "they" [redacted] and Fr [redacted] should not spend too much time together.

[redacted] has told me about a number of concerning incidents between himself and Fr [redacted] and Fr [redacted] behaviour toward [redacted]

[redacted] told me that Fr [redacted] allowed him to use [redacted] MSN regularly and that [redacted] had been exposed to a male seeking child pornography via Fr [redacted]

After some time of [redacted] working for Fr [redacted] he asked me whether he could employ [redacted] for longer hours if he sacked the Presbytery secretary, [redacted] I told him 'no', as I was already uncomfortable with what he was discussing with [redacted] and with the long hours [redacted] was spending with Fr [redacted]

[redacted]

On many occasions I asked Fr [redacted] for a Catholic counsellor, however he kept on delaying organising this for me, saying that he wanted to be involved, that he could drive us to counselling and that he would sit in on our counselling. This eventually turned into him actually being the counsellor for us. However, he never organised any counselling but would always be discouraging whenever I raised the issue of wanting to see a Catholic counsellor.

[redacted] when things were getting very difficult for us at home, I went to see Fr [redacted] with a list of Counsellors and asked for guidance of which Counsellor would be best for [redacted] He discouraged me from going to any of them stating it would be best for him to help and to leave it with him, [redacted]. Because Fr [redacted] was spending a great deal of time with [redacted] he was too busy to see [redacted] except he came once and initiated Counselling with [redacted] was clearly in crisis and in desperate need, but Fr [redacted] was too busy to continue counselling with him. [redacted]

[redacted] my husband [redacted] left home following a domestic dispute. It was after [redacted] left, that Fr [redacted] moved in very quickly on my family.

[redacted]

At about this time, Fr [redacted] completely changed his advice to me about my relationship with [redacted] He became supportive of us reconciling and he told me that he would offer [redacted] a bed if necessary, he also offered to pay my mortgage however, I said no.

I soon became aware that Fr [redacted] was texting [redacted] everyday and would often lure him to come to the Presbytery after school before he went home.

[redacted]

Fr [REDACTED] would turn up at my home at all hours of the night and this became significantly more frequent after [REDACTED] had left. He would say that he was coming to help me with my finances but while he was at my home, he would not do anything on my finances but would bring DVD's [REDACTED] and would spend all the time focusing on [REDACTED]

If I confronted him about this and tried to get him to leave, he would argue with me in front of the children. I often made the decision to back down as I did not want to expose the children to any further arguments between adults, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] later told me that Fr [REDACTED] had asked him to lie to us many times about staying longer at the Presbytery to work with Fr [REDACTED]

After I became aware that Fr [REDACTED] was constantly contacting [REDACTED] and not respecting the boundaries I was trying to set, I insisted that [REDACTED] took calls from him while in the same room as me. [REDACTED] received phone calls and texts all hours of the day, mornings, school time as well as evenings on his way home from school. I have a written note made by Fr [REDACTED] [REDACTED] bus and school schedule so he knew when he could get in contact with him.

I confronted Fr [REDACTED] many times about my concerns. Always he would respond by saying that [REDACTED] needed him, and needed to spend time with him and needed to be counselled by him. He told me to back off and let him do his job. Because he was my parish priest, even though I felt very uncomfortable with his behaviour, I did not want to cause further conflict and I let the matter drop. I felt completely disempowered by him.

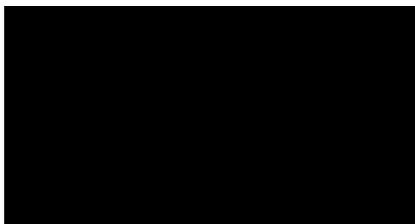
On one occasion, Fr [REDACTED] took [REDACTED] out of school without my permission. [REDACTED] told me that [REDACTED] contacted him telling him not to catch the bus home as he would pick him up and take him home, but instead he took [REDACTED] back to his place keeping him there. This was done without consulting or informing me so I started to panic when [REDACTED] was not home by 5pm. I rang [REDACTED] mobile a few times with no answer and [REDACTED] phone too. Eventually I rang [REDACTED] mobile again and he answered and told me he was at [REDACTED] but was now on his way home.

On several occasions, [REDACTED] told me directly that he loved [REDACTED] that [REDACTED] was very special as he could talk to [REDACTED] and could not talk to other people. There were many times he told me that he needed [REDACTED] help to type up the Homily.

After some weeks of my growing concerns about Fr [REDACTED] behaviour toward [REDACTED], I spoke to my friend [REDACTED]. She immediately warned me that this situation was an unhealthy one and to get [REDACTED] away from Fr [REDACTED] as soon as possible. At the time I spoke with her, I also read her a number of text messages from Fr [REDACTED] to [REDACTED] which I had saved. [REDACTED] agreed to help me to disengage Fr [REDACTED] from my family.

This was a very difficult thing for me to do as [REDACTED] would often run up to Fr [REDACTED] as he always had lollies and treats for them. Also, whenever we went to Mass he would not want me to take [REDACTED] home straight afterwards, but would try to manipulate the situation. For example, offering the children takeaways and DVD's in their presence to prolong contact with my family.

By [REDACTED] I was experiencing enormous stress due to trying to deal with Fr [REDACTED] behaviour toward [REDACTED]. I was also under pressure due to my husband's absence from the family home. Fr [REDACTED] suggested he take myself, and [REDACTED] away for a week's retreat, where we would have a week of counselling and daily Mass. I was unsure about his



suggestion, but in the end I agreed to go because he said he would say Mass daily and I was hopeful that the counselling would assist us all. [REDACTED]

As it transpired, Mass was only said once during that week and I had only a five minute counselling session with Fr [REDACTED] on the first day. On day three I confronted him about the lack of counselling and Mass, and Fr [REDACTED] told me: "I'm having fun I don't want to work; the kids are enjoying it, leave it."

It was during the week away that I became even more concerned about Fr [REDACTED] behaviour toward [REDACTED]

I observed Fr [REDACTED] playing "footsy" with [REDACTED] that is, using his feet to poke [REDACTED] body. Secondly, during a game of tennis Fr [REDACTED] behaved as if he had pulled a hamstring and went down on the ground. I strongly suspect he did not pull a hamstring, however, he asked [REDACTED] to massage his leg for him and when [REDACTED] did, he asked him to go higher up his leg, telling him he was not in the right spot. The massaging happened at the retreat in the lounge room. I saw what took place even though I was in the kitchen at the time [REDACTED] did not massage his leg higher up.

On another occasion, Fr [REDACTED] asked [REDACTED] to get his keys out of his front pocket. He was wearing tracksuit pants at the time and his hands were full and he insisted that [REDACTED] put his hand inside his pocket to get the keys. I felt that all of these instances were most inappropriate and it made me very concerned about what Fr [REDACTED] may be asking [REDACTED] to do when I was not present. By the end of the retreat week I was beside myself and spoke with my family. I told them of Fr [REDACTED] behaviour over the recent months by toward [REDACTED]

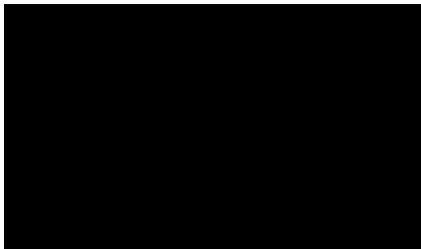
My family and I made the decision to take [REDACTED] and have the rest of the year off, finish off [REDACTED] assignments and post them in from my parents' [REDACTED] with the possibility that the teachers could send [REDACTED] work that needed to be completed by correspondence. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] I wanted to take on [REDACTED] once and for all adult to adult, rather than have a child confront an adult, and to stop him from abusing my son and make [REDACTED] answerable for his behaviour. [REDACTED]

After [REDACTED] told Fr [REDACTED] that he was going to stay [REDACTED] Fr [REDACTED] confronted me and told me that he could no longer protect me from Child Protection Services. He put enormous pressure on both me and [REDACTED] to change our minds. He said things to me and [REDACTED] like " [REDACTED] is running away from his problems, he should stay and face them", "If he leaves he will be a quitter for life", "He will have difficulty passing his VCE if he goes now", "I need him, I will miss him, I will go on sick leave until [REDACTED] gets back", "If I was his teacher I would fail him to teach him a lesson."

After permission was given, [REDACTED] I felt I had no other option but to send my son away as I could not protect him from Fr [REDACTED] constant intrusions.

The following Sunday at Mass Fr [REDACTED] told the congregation that he was suffering from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, was not sleeping and was having a rough time. He broke down crying, said he was not coping and asked for everybody to pray for him and support him. After he walked out of Mass, he was surrounded by concerned parishioners who assured him of their support.



I felt extremely angry with this behaviour and had to calm my children down as they did not understand why Fr [REDACTED] was crying. I felt it highly unfair that he was seeking support from all the parishioners, when in fact it was us who were suffering because of his behaviour.

Following this behaviour at Sunday Mass, [REDACTED] rang me to enquire where [REDACTED] was as he did not see him at Mass. I told [REDACTED] was at a friend's place as I did not want him to know [REDACTED]. Seconds later he sent a text to [REDACTED] mobile, which I had, saying "hi [REDACTED] I am still strugglin I will b back tues please keep in contact daily if possible I need ur support [REDACTED]". I was furious when I saw this text and again went to my friend [REDACTED] and told her about it.

After that, I went to the Principal [REDACTED] [REDACTED] on the following Tuesday and asked him to keep [REDACTED] away from my children. I explained my grave concerns about Fr [REDACTED] and that I desperately needed help to get Fr [REDACTED] to back off from my family. [REDACTED] was very supportive and told me to leave the matter with him and that he would advise his contacts of my situation. He then gave me Mr Peter O'Callaghan's phone number.

I immediately rang Mr O'Callaghan's phone number and was told by him that he was in hospital waiting for a bypass. I begged him for some support and he apologised that he was the only person available to assist, but given that he was in hospital, he could not do anything at that time.

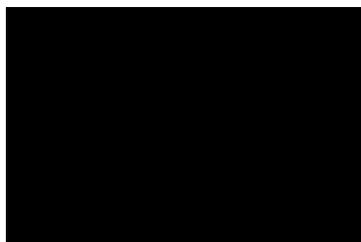
Since I made the report to Mr O'Callaghan, [REDACTED] has made disclosures to me about Fr [REDACTED] stroking his head, massaging him and the occasion when he tried to pull his pants down. [REDACTED] has also since told me of a phone call from Fr [REDACTED] in which Fr [REDACTED] told [REDACTED] he was being tempted by the devil to masturbate. He has also told me that [REDACTED] said to him: "I am a better role model than your Dad". [REDACTED] said to me: "You should sell up and move to [REDACTED] with me, either that or I give up the priesthood and move in with you guys. I love [REDACTED] to bits." After this I said to him: "You really have an obsession for [REDACTED] and he answered: "Yes, I can really have deep and meaningfuls with [REDACTED] as I can't talk to anyone else."

On our "retreat" we were watching a DVD called Coach Carter and [REDACTED] made reference to the movie telling [REDACTED] "see you should take opportunities when they arise." Later I asked [REDACTED] what did [REDACTED] mean by his comment to him and [REDACTED] replied that [REDACTED] offered to take [REDACTED] on a holiday with him for the remainder of the holidays after the retreat around the coast and stay in motels which he offered to pay for. [REDACTED] told me he did not want to go with him.

[REDACTED] was weighing [REDACTED] to keep a check on his weight. He kept a record of this written note made by [REDACTED] which I have. I understand that Fr [REDACTED] asked [REDACTED] to go to his bedroom, as this is where he kept the scales in order to weigh him.

One day after mass on a Sunday I was looking for [REDACTED] so we could go home after looking through [REDACTED] house I found [REDACTED] in one of the bedrooms lounging on the bed playing the x-box. I asked him whose bedroom it was he said that it was Fr [REDACTED] I told him he shouldn't be in [REDACTED] bedroom and that it was time to go home. [REDACTED] told me that [REDACTED] gave him permission to use the x-box any time he liked.

[REDACTED] had given [REDACTED] a key to the house so he could come and go as he pleases. I found this strange that he would give [REDACTED] a key. When I asked [REDACTED] why he had given [REDACTED] a key to the house he told me that he was trying to build up the trust between the two of them as it was important for counselling and that's why they need to spend a lot of time together.



When I went to see [redacted] in his office and to enquire as to the type of work that [redacted] was doing for him I noticed that all the windows were covered by bookcases which completely blocked out any natural light and the lights were turned on. I enquired why he had covered all the windows and [redacted] replied that he liked his privacy when he worked. He didn't want people to be able to look in through the windows.

[redacted]

I am extremely disappointed in the Catholic Church and in priests. [redacted]

I have also felt frustrated and disappointed by the response of the Melbourne Catholic Archdiocese. Although I begged for help from Mr Peter O'Callaghan, there was some delay in a response to me and I had to deal with Fr [redacted] contacting me directly and asking me for help.

Although I was told that Fr [redacted] was given 24 hours to get out of [redacted] and not to have any contact with me or my children pending an investigation, I am aware that Fr [redacted] has had many discussions with other parishioners and has spread rumours about me, for example, saying that I was having an affair with him and that my family had become too dependant on him.

[redacted]

I am anxious for other parents and their children to be made aware of the risks that can be posed by priests such as Fr [redacted]. I do not want Fr [redacted] to hurt any other families or children.

I am highly concerned for my son's welfare and for the disruption to his life as I had no option but to send him out of [redacted] to ensure his safety from Fr [redacted]

I am anxious to have this matter dealt with as quickly as possible so that [redacted] can settle down and so that I can have some confidence that families will be safe from Fr [redacted]

I am more than happy for a police investigation to take place, and have given Senior Constable [redacted] permission to contact my son for future enquires.

[redacted]

Statement taken and signature witnessed by me at [redacted]

[redacted]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

I hereby acknowledge that this statement is true and correct and I make it in the belief that a person making a false statement in the circumstances is liable to the penalties of perjury.

[REDACTED]

Acknowledgement made and signature witnessed by me at [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]