Submission to the Inquiry
into handling of child abuse
by religious and other non-
government organisations

Prepared by Maree Jefferies

[Redacted text]

[Redacted text]
10 Response to Disclosure.

10.7. What was the initial response from the organisation.

- After the report of abuse and removal of Parish Priest (Paul Fyfe) (PP) asked me to attend meeting organized by Response team – I attended the first few. (2006)
- The initial advice given as a goal to protect and also for parishioners not to have the disruption of knowing real reason for PP leaving. So it was agreed at meeting to use the health angle that I had already mentioned to his parishioners. That way not have the pressure of knowing “everyone knows” and parishioners who loved him need not know the truth and feel betrayed.

10-12 Effects of response to disclosure on victim etc.

- Within a short amount of time the initial response turned out to be a negative one. In retrospect.
- For - the implication could be made for he may believe that somehow he is part of this dirty secret - maybe with feelings of guilt that somehow he is responsible in part for what happened.

- For parishioners - Do they not deserve truth? Are they not mature enough? In knowing they can move forward.

- For family - already isolated through the grooming by PP - are given the “independent” Melbourne Respect Team as their support and voice. (see later)

Maree Jefcott
Effects of response to disclosure on victims etc.

- The word was out that PP had left for his health. However there was much gossip... what was the real reason?... pointing of finger =
- An invitation only meeting - to a list made up of names who "knew something" was organized to stop the gossip. Chaired by [redacted], there was opportunity to talk about what known - then clarification of facts. Then the attendees requested not to "gossip" about the incident - ie to keep the "secret" contained

- The family is further isolated by this process.

Was you satisfied with process

[redacted]

- Looking back I saw that the process was more about protecting Church and little to do with rights of victims - NO NOT SATISIFIED!!
- The victim is kept quiet, feel a part of the sick behaviour, the dirty secret is held deep within where it will fester.
- No discussions for parishioners
- No dialogue with family was welcomed.
- Closed Meetings for a select few.
- Pleas by family for a voice - denied.
- This system further abuses "victim/family" by shutting them out.

Marie Jehuett
Were you satisfied with process - result.
• Their voice is silenced in the very place they lived their faith, sought their refuge, and were betrayed.
• This I have witnessed: They have wanted to be included in steps taken within parish to further protect our vulnerable children and stop any further Abuse.
• These families would have been invaluable in participating in the steps to protect children - policy making - education, awareness. But the door was continually slammed in their face.
• They have courageously battled on - lost many friends - and tirelessly been a voice for the much needed reform of Church policy - and the unheard victims and their families.

What were the effects of the result on you and other individuals?
• As a friend of the families I have felt angry & frustrated at the unfair treatment of the families.

(From what I have witnessed and from other stories - this response and isolation of families is mirrored around the state and worldwide.)

Maree Jefcott
What were the effects of result on you + others

1) It is tragic that victims have been abused and their innocence stripped, their trust abused, their faith trampled upon -

2) But in the cover up, the silencing, the protecting (of perpetrators + Church) that the existing policy enforces (under the cover of offering support to victim/families) - the abuse is eternalized and justice denied.

3) I am so angry at those who make + enforce policies. To those who have used their voice to silence those who should have been heard - to those who locked the door to the pleas for justice - I say .. "Shame on you" - "Wolf in sheeps clothing"

4) I feel distressed for the betrayal of trust for victims + families - for their "infinite" pain

5) For all the many parishioners who have been part of the community where offending PP's have been baptizing; marrying; hearing confessions; visiting the sick being shepherds - whilst molesting our "children" - they who have left the Churches in disgust, in pain - "I do care about you + understand your distress."

6) I do apologize for my part - for the times I should have spoken out, but chose to
What were the effects of result on you to be quiet, chose the easy option —

Don't Rock the Boat, and suffer the consequences. But now I have an opportunity to speak out. When good people say (do nothing, bad things happen) now.

This inquiry is a chance for all the voices to be heard — voices who have come forward as victims — bravely spoken of their pain — families who watched in horror a become part of their sadness — who begged for justice, a hearing — shouts a demands for reform —

The man on the street has this opportunity to be heard — please God this will lead to a throwing out of existing policy — and lead to a Church hierarchy that is accountable — a reform from within — (But it will not be given up willingly) —

I urge the changes noted on my Submission sheet attached.
Are these education or prevention programs...

- There still to date have been no education/prevention programmes in our parish...
- Yet we have had 2 offenders.
- No awareness by the community of these offenders.
- Grooming of family.
- Family in difficulty.
- Priest is asked for counsel and support.
- Hum [[ goes for help from PP to link into other services but PP says that there is no need for his priory to coordinate anything. ]] he can counsel... [[ ]] [[ ]]
- Family dependent on PP.
- A growing interest changes to obsession.
- Several interventions used to request PP seeking up [[ ]] from bus stop until on the way to meet another - all PP said "Oh I see" but continued in his growing obsession.
- Leading to being sent away, complaint made leading to PP's dismissal.

PP comes to me (Marcie) and says, "Marcie I'm in trouble - tell [[ ]] that [[ ]] has been imagining all this."

- I replied - "No I've seen your obsession - it is not imagination." (A short summary of how it happened - by Marcie, who was a constant in family home and journey over this time...}

Marcie Jellett
Education - Programmes

- I know that as well as myself, others have requested Education, Awareness programmes but they have never been introduced.

They are needed, I believe.

Ps. I just wanted to say...

I have known these families for many years would always have grace at table, rosaries and Novenas - loved her Catholic faith. lived her Catholic faith - a man of integrity with such enriching family values. How vile that their families have been forced to endure this "evil". How courageous they have been!

Maryl Jeffcott