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June 11, 2004

Mr. Reese Dunklin
Staff Writer - 'The Dallas Morning News'
Communications Center
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U S A

Dear Mr. Dunklin

Further to your queries about the matter involving the two priests concerned, His Grace Archbishop Alapati L. Mata'eliga had the chance to meet with Father Frank Klep about a month ago and had him shared his story. It is suffice to share with you now that accordingly, the incident happened prior to his coming to Samoa. He has dealt with the court case outside of Samoa. He pleaded guilty. The Salesian Fathers Congregation in paid his fine and he also served the community services that was part of his fine and compensation.

According to him, the incident that happened was a "one off" incident and indeed an accident and has much regret that it happened. The incident was not intentional, but nonetheless, has taught him a hard lesson. Since then he has undertaken renewals such as therapy and prayers to assist him through. From then till this day, nothing of this nature has ever happened again.

The same was said of Father Jack. The Archbishop was able to hear and discuss with the Superior of the Salesian Community here in Samoa, Father John Murphy, the concern regarding Father Jack Ayers.

Of course, the Archbishop was not aware of these incidents and happenings until you came. On the bright side, it helped us to be attentive to these matters as they are hazardous and detrimental to the lives of the faithful. It has also opened our eyes to these sad realities and prepared ourselves to counter and respond to such incidents if such incidents happen in the future in our archdiocese, involving our priests.

It also allowed an opportunity for us to openly discuss these matters with the Salesian Fathers and am sure made them aware that we are now in the "watch closely" mode.



Although these incidents happened with these two priests, they have dealt with it themselves and with their Congregation. However, we are happy to see some signs of repentance and renewal from them. Above all, those who have been concerned and the lives that had affected by them have also been dealt with in a mature and civilized way.

I have personally checked the files of these priests and reassure you that nothing of this kind of matter are found, or any related concern that may prompt us to prohibit or prevent them to minister in our archdiocese. I suspect that the reason for this is simply the fact that they have cleared themselves before entering Samoa. Entailing this therefore they are valid and allowed to work in our archdiocese, and we are grateful for their services and hard work up to this point.

In addition, I shall also clarify that the question of their removal from the priesthood is something that is reserved only for the Holy See to make a decision, and only them is the authority. They deal with matters of such degree alone.

I hope this helps with your article, as I am not sure what the context of your story is. If anything, I sincerely hope it is for the sake of all concerned and a reaffirmation of those who have fallen victimized and for the priests as well, and for the betterment of the world.

And should you have further concerns or questions, please feel free to let me know.

Hope all is well with your ministry.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Puletini M. Tuala', written in a cursive style.

(Mr) Puletini M. Tuala
Secretary to the Archbishop