

Subject: Email from Peter O'Callaghan
From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]
Date: Wednesday, 21 December 2011 12:14 PM

Dictated but not read over

Dear Ray

I refer to our conversation last week and apologise for the relative delay in getting back to you.

I confirm that I am the Independent Commissioner appointed by the Archdiocese of Melbourne to enquire into and report upon allegations of sexual abuse by priests, religious and laypersons within the Archdiocese of Melbourne. If I am satisfied that a person is a victim of sexual abuse I can refer that person to Carelink which is an agency set up to provide free counselling and psychological support for victims of sexual abuse. Carelink is administered by Ms Sue Sharkey, psychologist, to whom I will make reference hereunder.

Being satisfied as aforesaid I could also refer you to the Compensation Panel which has jurisdiction to make binding recommendations of compensation up to a limit of \$75,000. The Compensation Panel will accept my findings that sexual abuse has occurred and will be concerned only to assess the impact which that abuse has had upon the life of the victim. The Panel meets with a victim in an informal and non legalistic manner.

You have told me that you have a complaint against Fr Ronald Pickering (deceased), and you were going to compile a statement setting out the facts and circumstances of the abuse. You explained to me that you are having some difficulty in doing this and that I can well understand.

You also said to me that you are in considerable distress and in that context I told you which I confirm that in the circumstances I can refer you to Carelink before making a decision in respect of your complaint that you had been sexually abused.

Accordingly, I suggest that you contact Ms Sue Sharkey and explain to her your present position, with a view to having her nominate a practitioner in Adelaide who could provide therapy to you. Alternatively if you are already going to a practitioner she could liaise with that practitioner and subject to that practitioner being duly accredited Carelink would pay the fees. Carelink is situated at 25 Lansdowne Street East Melbourne and Ms Sue Sharkey can be contacted on 03 9663 5744. I have taken the liberty of forwarding a copy of this email to Ms Sharkey so she will be familiar with the position if you contact her.

I await hearing from you with respect to the statement and will endeavour to process this matter expeditiously.

Kind regards.

Yours sincerely

P.J. O'Callaghan QC
Independent Commissioner

Telephone: 9225 7979

Subject: RE: Ronald Pickering
From: Ray D'Brass [REDACTED]
To: pjocallaghan@vicbar.com.au;
Cc: carelink@cam.org.au;
Date: Friday, 10 February 2012 8:36 AM

To: Peter O'Callahan QC

For Information: Mrs Susan Sharkey - Carelink

Dear Peter,

I am writing with regards to our phone conversation on 01 December 2011.

Firstly, I was baptised in 1970 at St Colman's church in Balaclava by the Roman Catholic priest and practicing paedophile Father Wilfred Baker. Considering that I have been battling demons all of my life, I really don't believe that Baker was up to the task of an exorcism.

Between 1979 and 1983 whilst a member of both the choir and altar boys at St James church Gardenvale, I was groomed by the Roman Catholic priest Father Ronald Pickering. I was regularly fondled and petted by Pickering, as were other boys. This behaviour occurred within the change rooms of the church and within the presbytery. I began smoking cigarettes and drinking alcohol with Pickering from the age of nine. I have been ill and passed out from consuming alcohol on several occasions at the Gardenvale presbytery.

Pickering regularly gave us pocket money along with tips for special church services and odd jobs around the presbytery. A few of us would pool our money together so that we could have a share in cigarettes, fireworks and lollies. We were regularly asked to buy cigarettes for Pickering and therefore the local shop owners weren't aware when we purchased them for our own use.

On several occasions some other boys and I were asked to "model" our ceremonial uniforms for Pickering and another priest. Alcohol and pocket money was offered on all of these occasions. On one particular occasion I had woken up on a bed in the presbytery wearing just a white ceremonial frock with a small patch of blood on the front while the rest of my clothes were neatly folded on a chair. My foreskin had been torn but I never told anyone or attended to it. About 18 months later, my foreskin had almost healed over the head of my penis and I was required to undergo a circumcision.

Pickering, who had previously been welcomed into our home for meals, attended my house to see why I had been absent from the church and was informed by my parents about the recent surgery. Over the following months, Pickering requested to inspect how the healing was going. The inspections required both of Pickering's hands as well as my testicles. During one inspection he commented that it was good that it didn't smell down there anymore. Being shocked and sensitive, I was adverse to his advances.

In 1983 whilst at choir practice at the Gardenvale presbytery, I approached Pickering to excuse myself from the following Sunday's services as I was going to attend a cricket match with my father. Pickering, who was fully aware that I rarely spent time with my father as he worked the evening shift and weekends, was immediately angered and gave me the ultimatum of my church or the cricket, I chose the cricket. As I was walking away from the presbytery Pickering flew into a rage, spitting on

the ground and calling me a little bastard. I was told that I would never be welcomed back, I made the wrong choice and that I would burn in hell. Many of the other boys were present during this explosive incident.

[REDACTED]

As writing does not come easy to me, my apologies for the delay of this statement along with my assurance that I am willing to clarify further any information regarding this statement and/or the effects upon my life.

Regards

Raymond Bernard D'Brass

DOB: [REDACTED] 1970 8:15am

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]