



New Submission to Inquiry into the Handling of Child Abuse by Religious and Other Organisations

POV eSubmission Form

to:

fcdc

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[REDACTED]

To: fcdc@parliament.vic.gov.au

Inquiry Name: Inquiry into the Handling of Child Abuse by Religious and Other Organisations

Mr Stephen Gough

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

SUBMISSION CONTENT:

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I was sexually abused twice by Catholic Church persons. In 1975 I was assaulted by a teacher, Greg Coffey. Coffey had changed his name from Coffin after he returned from South Australia where he had been before the Courts on Sexual Assault charges. In South Australia he was training as a religious brother with the Salesion Order. He left the Salesions and came to Victoria and taught at my school which was a Marist Brothers all boys Secondary College. I am unaware that the Salesions warned the Marist Brothers of Coffey's criminal past. Certainly Parents and boys were not warned. The fact he changed his name suggests he was trying to keep his past secret. I was sexually assaulted on camps, at the school and at Coffeys residence a minimum of 4 times. I reported the assaults to Police in 1990 after experiencing severe depression for many years. Later on more boys came forward about the abuse they suffered at the hands of Coffey. Coffey received Good Behaviour Bonds and Suspended jail terms. Coffey has since died. Twice, in 1978 and 1979, I confessed the Assaults by Coffey as "sins" I had committed. On neither occassion did the Priests suggest that I should talk to the Police or get counselling. The Priest I

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

confessed to in 1979, who was my local priest, [REDACTED] sexually assaulted me in the local Presbytery on a minimum of 4 occasions in 1980 and 1981. In the late 1990's I approached Peter O'Callaghan QC who was the head of the Towards Healing process setup by Archbishop Pell. [REDACTED] denied Assaulting me and claimed the 'sex' was consensual. However under the Terms of Reference Peter O'Callaghan pointed out it was abuse. In the submission O'Callaghan made to the Compensation Panel I was upset to read that O'Callaghan accepted [REDACTED] word that he had not assaulted any other people when I had given evidence of an occasion when I had seen [REDACTED] assaulting a woman. I gave the name of the woman and details of what I saw. [REDACTED] is still Parish Priest of 2 parishes [REDACTED] despite what he did to me and the evidence I presented against him.

~~The impact the assaults by Coffey and [REDACTED] had on me has been very severe indeed. I have suffered with severe depression and anxiety for 30 years. I was diagnosed with bi-polar four years ago. I take medication morning and night. I am on a disability pension and am unable to work more than 14 hours a week. My marriage has suffered from the effects of the abuse. For many years I was angry and moody and blamed myself for what had happened to me. I have had suicidal thoughts and episodes.~~

Carelink in the Melbourne Archdiocese, has since 2009 paid for my medication and the gap in my Pyschiatric bills. I do acknowledge that this has been of real assistance and I am grateful for it. Carelink has made a small yet significant difference in my life with this contribution.

I believe that the Parishioners of [REDACTED] past and present Parishes should be made aware of what he has done. More people might come forward. Also he should be stood aside from his Parishes as vulnerable people should not be exposed to him.

I remain angry that the Church has allowed him to continue in his roles. In December 2011 I gave Carelink written permission to re-open my files in order to look into the case and see why [REDACTED] is still allowed to remain a Parish Priest. To date I have not had a reply.

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[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]