

Angela Kyriazopoulos

From: John F. Davoren  
 Sent: Wednesday, 19 March 2003 8:35 AM  
 To: michael.mcdonald@ccer.catholic.org.au  
 Subject: FW: Re the AM matter

Dear Michael,

You asked me what information I had about the matter of AM, v James Fletcher. All that I know is set out below.

1. 11 November 2002 BJ rang me to talk about her son AM who is apparently in his mid to late twenties. She said AM was complaining about a priest James Fletcher and was planning to go to the police about him. She did not have any details. AM had simply told her that the priest had done something wrong - what and when was not clear. From that telephone conversation I concluded that AM has had a number of problems and I gained the impression that his mother did not rate his credibility highly.

Redacted pursuant to  
 Commissioner's direction

Later that day I spoke to CPEA and told them of the earlier conversation, identifying Fletcher. CPEA had no record on him but pursued the matter and advised me that the investigating officer was Sgt Peter Fox in Maitland, whom I then rang.

3. Sgt Fox said that AM was not coming to the party and there is not much the police could do until he does. He thought that AM would probably come in eventually to make a statement but so far he had not done so.

4. 24 Feb 2003 BJ rang again. She referred to our previous conversation, and said that AM was now talking to the police. She said that she had read AM's statement. She gave me no details of what was in it, but indicated her concern at its contents. She did not this time mention her doubts about AM's credibility. I assumed at the time that she had read the statement that AM had given to the police, but as it later became clear that he had not yet completed this statement I am not clear about what she had seen - a preliminary version or preparatory notes perhaps. She was concerned about the time AM was taking on this and wondered if she should make a complaint to the Church about Fletcher and how her discovering his [alleged] behaviour had impacted on her. I sent her one of our complaint forms. I note that she has not returned it yet.

5. Later that day I rang Sgt Fox who was very concerned about the situation. He thought there was a case against her, but he still lacked enough details to lay a charge and he was continuing his investigations.

6. Later again on 24 February I spoke to a senior priest and official of the diocese of Maitland Newcastle with the idea of recommending that Fletcher be stood down at least until the investigation was completed. The man I contacted has a long experience in working with people with problems, and was for many years director of Centacare Newcastle. He knows the AM's family, and AM in particular, quite well.

7. In reply to my suggestion about standing Fletcher down he said that AM has been demonstrating bizarre behaviour for some years, and he thought it likely that the current matter was just another sign of his psychological disturbance. He stated that no other complaint of this or any other kind had ever been received against Fletcher, and the diocese still did not have sufficient information about AM's complaint to justify standing Fletcher down.

John Davoren

Director Professional Standards

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