

May 23, 1995

His Excellency  
 Most Reverend F Brambilla DD  
 Apostolic Pro-Nuncio  
 PO Box 3633  
 MANUKA ACT 2603

Your Excellency,

I write about a very delicate matter and to request your assistance. Would it be possible for you to use your network of communication to help expedite the following case:

In March 1993 a parishioner of Maitland approached the Vicar General with serious accusations concerning a priest of the Diocese, Fr Denis McAlinden.

Fr McAlinden was at that time not working in the Diocese but in the Diocese of Bunbury.

The Vicar General contacted Fr Brian Lucas who stipulated the following procedure:

- that I was to ring Bishop Quinn and acquaint him with the accusations and to request him to remove Fr McAlinden's faculties
- that he inform Fr Denis to proceed immediately to Sydney to be interviewed by Fr Lucas

This was done.

At the interview Fr Denis admitted to Fr Brian Lucas that the accusations were true.

An agreement was reached by which Fr Denis was to return to England and live with his sister and not to act as a priest.

I agreed to write to Bishop McGuinness, Bishop of the Diocese of Nottingham in which the parish of Skegness is located. This is the parish church of his sister. I informed the Bishop of Fr Denis' situation. Fr Denis agreed to seek counselling in England. To this end, arrangements were made for him to see Monsignor Dan Leonard, Vicar General of Birmingham, who has had wide experience with these type of situations. I received a reply from Bishop McGuinness saying that he would do everything to help and that he had asked the parish priest, Fr J Finneran, to provide any help he could to Fr Denis. Fr Denis however was not to act as a priest.

When I met Fr McAlinden before his departure for England we agreed on this course of action. The person making the allegation was not seeking any financial recompense and was grateful that the Diocese had acted promptly on this matter.

Last year I received a letter from Fr Denis from the Philippines. He asked my permission to be incardinated into the Diocese of San Pablo under Bishop Bantigue.

I wrote to Bishop Bantigue on November 8, 1994 refusing this permission but received no reply.

Fr Denis' **AL** has come forward, concerned because she learned that he is working in the Diocese of San Pablo. She informed us that **AL**, **AK** and **AN+AV** were also victims of Fr Denis. He denies all this.

Fr Brian Lucas interviewed **AL** .. She and her family are angry (although **UR18** , won't believe their accusations) that Fr Denis is again active in ministry.

I might add at this stage that they do not wish Fr Denis to know that they have made these further allegations because of **UR18** 's failing health.

I have been personally trying to ring Bishop Bantigue but have been unable to make contact, so we contacted the Delegate's office in the Philippines to ascertain the nature of the San Pablo Diocese. Apparently it is a very remote Diocese and telephone access is very difficult and sometimes impossible.

So I have written again to Bishop Bantigue (May 10) requesting that because of further allegations that if Fr Denis does enjoy the faculties of his Diocese they must be removed and he must be asked to return to England.

I write to you on the suggestion of Fr Brian Lucas that you might be able to ask your counterpart, the Apostolic Nuncio to help us bring home to Bishop Bantigue the seriousness of this situation.

I am sorry to burden you with this but I am grateful for your continued support.

With cordial best wishes and sentiments of deep esteem,

Yours sincerely in Christ

Most Reverend L M Clarke, DD  
Bishop of Maitland

+LMC/ed