



STATEMENT OF A WITNESS

In the matter of:	Denis McALINDEN
Place:	Raymond Terrace Police Station
Date:	29 June 2010

Name:	AK	Phone No.	
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STATES:

1. This statement made by me accurately sets out the evidence which I would be prepared, if necessary, to give in court as a witness. The statement is true to the best of my knowledge and belief and I make it knowing that, if it is tendered in evidence, I shall be liable to prosecution if I have wilfully stated in it anything, which I know to be false, or do not believe to be true.
2. I am 60 years of age. I was born on the
3. In April 1960 our parents migrated from North Devon in England to Australian. They arrived with my sister AL and our two brothers. Denis had arrived in Australia in 1947 having arrived from Ireland where he had been ordained as a priest in the Catholic Church. He was actually the sponsor for our family and found us accommodation at Collaroy. Denis was referred to as Dinny.
4. Our family was very Catholic and we were raised very close to the church. We never missed any service, attended confession every week regardless if we had sinned or not.
5. Dinny was a regular visitor to our home and was treated like a saint by all the family, especially mum. Being a priest he was put on a pedestal whenever he turned up. For about the first year or so everything was fine between Dinny and me.

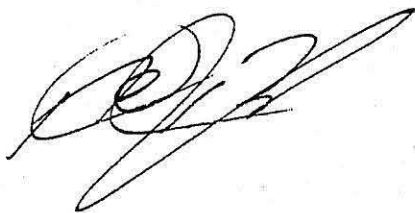
Witness: 

Signature: AK

221(a)

Statement of **AK**
In the matter of Denis McALINDEN

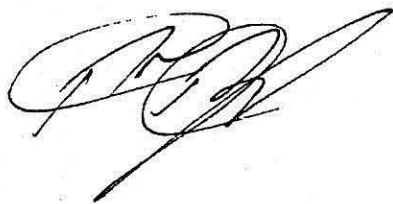
6. When I was about 11 years of age the sexual abuse by Dinny on me started. It went on for about 2 years. What happened to me was terrible and I do not wish to go through explaining it again if I do not have to.
7. When I began high school I was able to make more of my own decisions. As a result I would avoid Dinner whenever possible. I would make up excuses not to go in the car with him, to go out when he visited our home and things like that. I just wanted to stay away from him to protect myself. I would not do it in a rude way, I would have got a hiding if I did, I just made up excuses to avoid him.
8. I didn't stay long at home and went off to do nursing at St Vincent's Hospital in Sydney when I was 17 ½ years old. I had very little to do with Dinny from that time. In 1970 I got married but didn't get married by Dinny. At the time he was in New Guinea. I know he was there a couple of years. My husband was in the Navy at the time and we ended up moving to Melbourne. I had four children by 1976 and Dinny would visit occasionally. I didn't have much of a choice with respect to his visits as mum would always insist I put him up and I couldn't really go against her wishes without upsetting her and copping her wrath. About 1980 **AV + AN** used to travel to visit I on the Central Coast of New South Wales. On a number of occasions Dinny would arrange to pick them up in his car and drive them up.
9. About 1992 or 1993 I was still in Melbourne and I got a call off **AL** in Newcastle. She was alarmed and said to me, "Dinny is in the paper. He's been charged with sexual abuse in Perth." I had never told anyone what had happened to me and I said, "I believe it." And **AL** replied, "I do too." I had never thought about **AL** possibly being abused by Dinny as well as me. There was virtually nothing else said between us, we both automatically knew what the other meant from that moment. It one of those moments in life, and being sisters it probably occurred to us both simultaneously that we had both been subjected to the same thing by this man.



AK

221(b)

10. Over the following weeks and months I spoke regularly with ^{AL} Both of us were worried for our mother who thought the world of ^{AK} Denis. There is no way she would ever contemplate he had done anything wrong. She would never have believed it. We both love our mother dearly and wanted to protect her from any bad news as much as possible.
11. It was during this same process that we both began to disclose more to each other about what had happened to ourselves. It soon became apparent that ^{AK} Dinny had been sexually abusing us both at the same time. ^{AL} is three years younger than me and probably for that reason her abuse went on longer. We've both had the odd cry, but more so we've been angry over what happened to us. Neither of us at the time it was happening knew about the other. When the abuse was happening I thought I must have been the only one.
12. A few months after we started talking about this ^{AL} told a nun about what had happened. Sister Paula REDGROVE was a close friend of ^{AK} Dinny and that's how we got to know her. She lived near Newcastle at Nelson Bay and that's how ^{AL} got to keep in contact with her more than me. She is a lovely woman and the family has always been close to her. She is a wonderful woman.
13. ^{AL} told sister PAULA what was in the newspaper and then began to tell her what ^{AK} Dinny had done to us. I know that she was very shocked at first and then became very supportive of us both. With the media having stories ^{AL} and I felt it best if mum was told about the charges ^{AK} Dinny was facing rather than her find out by herself. Sister PAULA agreed to break the news to mum.
14. ^{AL} and Sister PAULA went together and told mum. She was in shock when told. She was very close to him and held him in the highest regard, refusing to believe he had done anything wrong.



AK

15. Because of the media attention AK was getting I decided to tell AN about it. As soon as I did she became upset. As we spoke she told me that AN Dinny had sexually abused her in a motel they stayed at on one of their trips from Melbourne to Sydney. This upset me just as much. I felt terrible it had happened to me and I felt even worse that it happened to AV, AN and I had not been able to protect her. AN later spoke to AV. I learnt from AN that he had touched AV too. AV has never been able to talk to me about it. I have never pushed her as she is a very deep girl. I have just left it and if she wants to talk to me they can.

16. I later told AL about AV, AN and she told Sister PAULA. AL then called me and on behalf of Sister PAULA. She asked if AL and I would go with her to tell some church authorities about what had happened to us. It had got to a point that we felt something had to be done to stop him. I then began to realise that there must be other victims of AK Dinny and if someone didn't put their hand up to say something he would just go on abusing more little girls.

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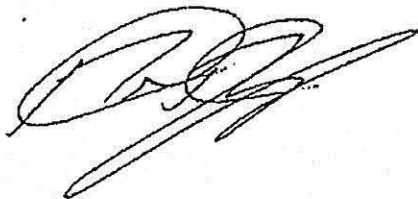
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AK -

221(f)

AD

Statement of ^{AK}
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REDACTED

27. As time went by I heard from A that REDACTED, was still getting about in Western Australia. He was still carrying on like a priest visiting families and aboriginal communities. He sounded like he was having the time of his life and no one intervened. He had beaten the charge from 1992 and that was now all behind him. It appeared that nothing was done over the statements AL and I made; he just went on with his church life like normal. I have heard that he was supposed to have been disrobed, but from what mum told us from him that wasn't the case. It was unbelievable and I formed the belief that the church intended to do absolutely nothing. The more that became apparent to me I reflected on the way my statement was taken. I believe that it was all tucked away and was only a process to shut Sister Paula, AL and I up. We kept expecting something to happen and as time went by it died a natural death.

28.

REDACTED.

29. I will also say that we never had any offer of counselling or similar assistance. The process was anything but friendly. The way they asked questions and had me tell them about terrible things that were done to me was not treated with any compassion whatsoever. We signed our statements and walked out of their lives and that was it.

30. I tried to put everything that had happened to AL, AV + AN and me in the past. I was traumatised by everything that had happened. I wanted to forget everything until one day in 2008. I was at work and had a complete melt down. I virtually collapsed. I had to be driven home by one of my workmates. I was shaking, crying and unable to hold myself up. The whole family was worried. Bottling all this up for years just hit me all at once and it boiled over. I spoke to AL and she eventually put me in touch with Zimmerman House. Through that I was put in touch with a counsellor who worked with me over the next year to get me back on my feet. I have been diagnosed with anxiety and had been suffering from that before my breakdown. I feel that has a lot to do with what happened to me and what I was put through by the church.



AK

31. In the last couple of years I am aware that there have been articles in the Newcastle papers and then I was telephoned by Detective FOX. As a result of that call I decided to make a statement about the way I was treated and how my complaint was handled. I cannot change my past and what happened to me but I want to see things change. I have no doubt there will be other victims of the clergy in the future and I want to see they are believed and treated with compassion and care. I don't want any of them to be treated the way ^{AL} and I were. I also want to see positive action taken against these child molesters with white collars to ensure they are removed from society, and not permitted to go about their predatory behaviour. ^{REDACTED} others in the church knew what he was like. He told me that when he said they had been after him for years. We then gave them the evidence they needed to put him away, to go to the police, whatever it was they needed to stop him. They did nothing from what I saw and heard. We didn't hear anything. He was just moved about from place to place where people would not have been aware of his history and he was free to target other children. I just cannot understand how ^{REDACTED} others in authority in the church could know about the terrible crimes this man committed and not have him brought to justice or pay any penalty. I would have been happy for them to inform the police as long as ^{AL} and I could remain anonymous so far as was concerned.

32. I did not know if anyone spoke to ^{Dinny} about our statements. I have been very recently that he was supposed to have admitted to another priest what he did to us. If that is true why wasn't the church able to have him gaoled on his own admissions. Surely whoever he admitted molesting me to could have taken this to the police and given that evidence in court. It might have saved me giving evidence myself and seen him put away. I hate to think how many others this might have saved from the same crime.



AK

33. If I had been told in 1995 that he had admitted to molesting me I would have insisted the matter be reported to the police. I would not have hesitated. I would not have had to think about it. I know I might have had to give evidence at court but I would have asked for my name to be suppressed. I would have risked that. If he did admit to another priest that he sexually abused me it would be hard for him to get off it even if he pleaded not guilty later. What was he going to say, 'that the other priest made that up and was lying'? In all likelihood he probably would have pleaded guilty and been sent to gaol where he belonged. There would have been too much evidence against him. If that happened a lot more victims would have come out of the wood work back then.
34. Because of the way the church handled this he was able to hide overseas and in other states. I have no doubt he would have continued his sexual offending. He has then died in Western Australia without ever having been brought to justice or made to pay in any way for his sins.

35.

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Commissioner's
direction

Pages 221(j) – 234(q)