



NSW POLICE SERVICE

STATEMENT OF A POLICE/WITNESS

In the matter of:	James Patrick FLETCHER
Place:	Maitland Police Station
Date:	30 June, 2003

Name:	LARKEY Janice Ann	Tel. No:
Address:	3785 Buckets Way, Krumbach	
Occupation:	Religious Sister	

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 53 years of age.

3. I am a Sister of St Joseph with the Catholic Church. I have been so involved with the Catholic Church since 1969. I first came to know Father James FLETCHER when he arrived within the Dungog Parish in the late 1980's. Initially we got along well & had a good working relationship. I formed the opinion that he was a little immature in his relationships with others. He was able to form relationships much more easily with younger persons within the parish. He also seemed able to strike up friendships much more easily with some women within the parish. Most of the time he had difficulty in joining in adult conversations & would often use jokes & the like to enter into such conversations.

Witness:

Signature:

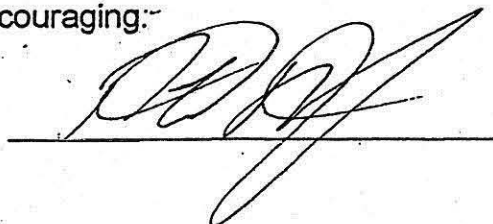
LARKEY Janice Ann

4. As time went by Father FLETCHER gradually started to have boys take over the altar roles at both Dungog & Clarence Town Churches. Prior to this persons serving on the altar had been men, but he had them gradually step down for the boys to take over their place. He gradually brought in altar boys picnics & I remember that it was around this time that girls were discouraged from the altar & asked to step down from the role if they were already performing it. I remember being a little annoyed at these changes, but it was Father FLETCHER's parish & there wasn't much I could say or do about this situation. I also recall that there was a lot of excitement & hype associated with the altar boy picnics from Father FLETCHER. This did concern me a little, but again it wasn't my place to become involved.

5. Over the years I saw that Father FLETCHER tended to encourage factions to develop within the parish. This also concerned me, as I believed it should have been a unified community. Father FLETCHER favoured certain persons & groups & this caused resentment by others. I remember that UR70's family at Dungog & AH's family at Clarence Town were particular favourites of Father FLETCHER. Both families had four sons all of whom performed duty on the altar. Both UR70 & BJ were heavily involved in church activities & because of this Father FLETCHER would be a regular visitor to their home. I cannot say how often he would visit their homes, but it started to become a little embarrassing & members of the parish were talking behind Father FLETCHER's back. It was at this point in the mid 1990's that I felt I should have a talk to Father FLETCHER about this. I remember that Father FLETCHER became quite upset when I told him of this. UR70 took it rather well & accepted what I told her. I believe she intended to make an effort to change her approach. Unfortunately over the next day or two Father FLETCHER resented my comments to both of them & it caused a rift between both of them & myself.

6. I don't believe that as close a relationship existed with BJ, but it was certainly a close friendship. I believe that there were many occasions that Father FLETCHER had meals at their home & would call in there on church business. Like UR70's children he also favoured BI & BJ's boys. I remember thinking to myself that I wasn't comfortable with his close relationships with children, but I wasn't able to say there was anything wrong, it was just a gut feeling that he was befriending kids for his own ego or to have close friends. I didn't think there was anything sexual at the time, but looking back with the benefit of hindsight I feel I should have picked up on something. His relationship with children, particularly young boys was different to anything I had observed other priests from encouraging:-

Witness:



Signature:



LARKEY Janice Ann


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Before I came in today I didn't know if there was anything I could say that would help in this matter. I questioned myself as to my motive; I know I had a falling out with Father FLETCHER & I really thought about this & put that aside. My ultimate motive is that thinking back I felt uneasy about Father FLETCHER's behaviour around young children & just needed to say that to the police.

Witness:

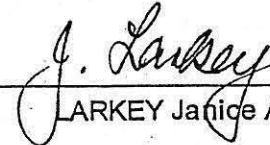
Signature

LARKEY Janice Ann

Witness:


P. R. Fox
D/Sgt
30/6/03

Signature:


LARKEY Janice Ann