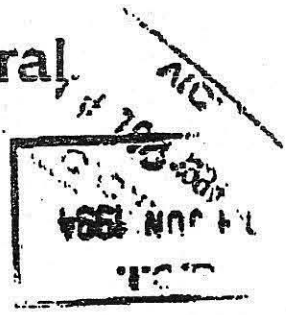


St. Francis Xavier's Cathedral

Geraldton, .W.A.



Mr Laurie Rolls
Catholic Church Insurances Ltd
PO Box 180B
MELBOURNE VIC 3004

Dear Laurie

Further to the form I sent you when I was at the Bishop's Conference in April regarding special issues in our Diocese (where I stated that I know of no instances in the Diocese), I now wish to make a statement. I discussed the matter with Bob Fragomeni when he was up recently and he suggested I send you the following:

Father Denis McAlinden is a priest of the Diocese of Maitland who was born on 24 January 1923. He was ordained on 5 June 1949 in St Kieran's, Kilkenny, Ireland. He spent time in the Maitland Diocese from 1949 to 1968. From 1968 to 1981 he was in Papua New Guinea. He came to the Geraldton Diocese in November 1981 and was appointed Parish Priest of Wickham and Pannawonica a few days later. To my knowledge he spent two years in the parish. A good number of years later while he was helping in the Bunbury Diocese he was charged by a young lady with sexual abuse of her as a child while he was in Wickham. When the matter eventually got to court he was acquitted of the charge. I have no knowledge of any other charge or mention of an instance of sexual abuse by Denis. However in recent times it has come to my knowledge that while he was in the Diocese of Maitland there were various complaints brought against him with regard to sexual abuse, but they were carried no further by the people involved on the condition that Denis be taken out of the priestly ministry. His Bishop, Leo Clarke prohibited Denis from exercising any public priestly ministry. Nothing may come of this but in discussion with Bob Fragomeni he thought it best that I mention it to you and do so in the form of a private letter.

Yours sincerely

JUSTIN JOSEPH BLANCHINI
BISHOP OF GERALDTON

9 June 1994