

P.O. Box 305,

Bishop St.

Jolimont, W.A. 6913.

26th Oct. '95.

Most Rev. L.M. Clarke, D.D.,
Bishop of Maitland-Newcastle.

Dear Bishop,

Your extraordinary letter of 19th October just to hand, as I have just now come back from hospital after major surgery (5½ hours); and due to return for further similar operation as soon as I am strong enough. To facilitate this I've been advised to accept a generous invitation to recuperate in a country district, over two hundred kms from here, for at least a few weeks. Hence, there is no way that I am in a fit state at present, physically or mentally, to contemplate making any such drastic decision as your letter has suggested.

Indeed, I labelled your letter "extraordinary", recalling that your late correspondence, received in the Philippines, advised that I should live as "retired priest" in a climate that would be acceptable. Hence, it makes me wonder whether or not this latest recommendation is indeed your own idea or merely the continuation of Allan Hart's vendetta who attempted to anticipate me a few years ago, when he wrote me at my sister's home in England, addressing the letter to "Mr. D.M. Alinden", and advising AL to do likewise.

Incidentally, the word "confidential" has a very hollow ring as far as Maitland is concerned: Brian Lucas convinced me, against my best judgement, to accept that the information I gave him would be held in strict confidence by the Bishop; yet, within a few weeks, the same man mentioned above, was able to repeat it on the testimony of Allan & etc. I have no Code of Canon Law with me, I should appreciate the quotations from the Canons as mentioned in your letter.

I hasten to forward this letter so that you may delay whatever phase of the process you have decided upon in order that I shall be in a fit state to give it due thought and adequate response, and

to be in a proper ~~for~~ frame of mind to give it the full
co-operation you have requested.

With every best wish,

Sincerely yours in Jesus & Mary,

David M. O'Flaherty