

# Professional Standards Office

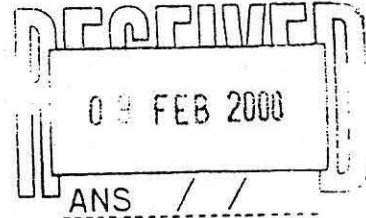
Established by the Bishops and Leaders of Religious Institutes  
of the Catholic Church  
in NSW and the ACT

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7 February 2000

Most Rev M Malone DD  
Bishop of Maitland Newcastle  
PO Box 780  
NEWCASTLE NSW 2300



Dear Bishop Malone,

Private and confidential re: AE v McAlinden

I refer to my letter of 8 October 1999 regarding the complaint by AE against Fr Denis McAlinden. AE had made a complaint to the police at the same time, and it was then not appropriate to recommend the appointment of an assessor.

AE rang me on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of February fairly upset. She said that she had just been to Maitland Police, spoken to an officer Mark Walters and withdrawn her police complaint. She is still clearly concerned about the whole matter and sounded very depressed.

I told her that I would let you know that she is no longer dealing with the police.

AE was under the mistaken impression that the Church had taken no action despite information allegedly provided to the authorities about McAlinden. Someone told her - some parish rumour I presume - that McAlinden was still a Parish Priest somewhere. While I advised AE that this was not so, she still seems a little suspicious that he is being protected somehow.

I believe it would be of assistance to her if there were some direct action by the Church in her regard. May I suggest either that you consider appointing an assessor to meet AE or, if you see no benefit from an assessment, that a meeting (possibly facilitated) be set up between AE and a representative of the diocese.

Regarding an assessment, Elizabeth Seysener may be an appropriate person to take on that role in this case. Elizabeth could assist in obtaining both the facts of the matter and some picture of AE's needs following the abuse that she has probably suffered. An assessment interview would give AE an opportunity to state her case in some detail, and I think she would appreciate that. I presume that you are not very interested in obtaining any more specific information about the other party. However, his recent behaviour may suggest that he not fully accepting of his retirement from the clerical state.

I will, of course, be happy to talk to you about any or all of this as you wish.

Yours sincerely,

  
John Davoren