

EVE026P

New South Wales Police Force
COPSDate : 11/02/
Time : 14:08:
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Event Ref No : E 14348559

General Event Details

Date/Time Reported : 03/06/2002 14:00
 Event Classification : ACCEPTED
 Clear Up Status/Date : CLEARED - 22/03/2004
 Created By : INSP FOX, PETER RAYMOND - CENTRAL HUNTER
 Updated By : DET MONGAN, JOHN PHILLI - CENTRAL HUNTER

Event Status : VERIFIED

Narrative Details

Date/Time Created : 03/06/2002 15:35
 Created By : CENTRAL HUNTER - FOX, PETER RAYMOND

The victim has made an allegation against a catholic priest (POI) that between 1991 & 1995 he was sexually assaulted on numerous occasions. These assaults varied from fondling to both anal & oral intercourse. The victim alleged that threats were made by the priest that he would commit similar offences against the victim's younger brothers should he disclose the offences. The victim later left to live in Tasmania & over the years has come to terms with these offences, gradually disclosing them to his family and a counsellor. After watching the 60 minutes programme on 2/6/02 the victim was concerned that others could become victims of the same POI & has decided to report the matter to Police. It is alleged the offences occurred in the Clarencetown & Dungog areas whilst the victim was an alter-boy.

Date/Time Created : 09/05/2003 08:43
 Created By : CENTRAL HUNTER - FOX, PETER RAYMOND

In 1985 the defendant, James Patrick FLETCHER arrived in the Dungog Parish as the new Catholic Priest. He worked at both the Dungog & Clarence Town churches & there met the victim's family. *AM's* family had been heavily involved in numerous church activities & functions. Through this working relationship the defendant developed a close friendship with the family becoming a regular visitor to their home for meals & invited to family parties & celebrations. Over time he became a mentor for this family's children, including their eldest son & victim, *AM* 1. *AM*. *AM* & his other siblings later became altar boys within the parish creating an even stronger bond.

The victim aged 12, started at St Peter's High Maitland in 1990 & was occasionally driven home by Father FLETCHER. Over this period conversations occurred between the two in relation to sexual education & masturbation with *AM* being instructed that these conversations were secret & 'This is our special time.' During the school holiday period in December -

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January 1990-1 whilst travelling between churches with AH, Father FLETCHER removed his penis & commenced to masturbate. He encouraged AH (Then aged 13) to do likewise. Again it was emphasised that this was to remain a secret & not be discussed with any other person, especially AH's parents.

Further conversation occurred in 1991 when the victim was further spoken to about sexual matters by Father FLETCHER. In March 1991 Father FLETCHER drove AH after school to the Walka Water Works reserve. He removed his penis & encouraged the victim to perform oral sex on him. The victim was told that this was normal behaviour & given on the pretext of sexual education. The victim's head was held in place by Father FLETCHER until he ejaculated in the victim's mouth, at which point the victim began to dry-wretch. Father FLETCHER reinforced that this remain a secret. He said to the victim, "It's normal & its a natural part of life. A lot of people do it but it is to just stay between you & me. No one else should know about this, it is our secret. You won't mention this to your parents or anyone else will you?" & "You know your father probably did exactly the same thing & he still keeps it a secret."

These assaults then began to occur on a regular basis with the victim being forced to perform oral sex on Father FLETCHER a further 4 times in early 1991.

In June 1991 Father FLETCHER again picked the victim up from school but instead of driving to the Walka Water Works he drove to a park on the outskirts of Paterson. He parked in a secluded area near the river where he performed oral sex on the victim. After the victim failed to have an erection he was asked to get out of the car & removed his school pants. Father FLETCHER then forced his penis into AH's anus whilst the child braced himself in pain against the side of the vehicle. After ejaculating Father FLETCHER comforted AH who was sobbing telling him, "That's okay. Its only natural. It will stop." He again emphasised that these incidents should remain a secret. His demeanour changed on the drive back into Maitland when he saw the distress the child was in. He said, "If anyone finds out about this I am a priest. Everyone knows that priests don't lie. They won't believe you. Remember you have three brothers & if you tell anyone I could hurt them too." Assaults of both anal & oral intercourse continued in various forms & locations over the

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Narrative Details

next 3 years until March 1994 when the victim was old enough to prevent any further occurrence following a major confrontation between Father FLETCHER & himself. Over the four year period a total of 56 offences occurred. The victim experienced a lot of difficulties in dealing with these offences & in September 1995 after a heavy bout of drinking he attempted to hang himself in a shed on his parents rural property. His mother & young brother located him whilst this was occurring & lifted him down after he had been hanging for a short period. In desperation to find answers the victim's parents (Unaware of their son's reasons for depression) took him to see the family priest who was now located at Branxton. He stayed in the presbytery that night & believes he was raped whilst in a vulnerable state. This was the last occasion he had any contact with Father FLETCHER. The victim has led a troubled life since that time until disclosing to his family in late 2000. In June 2002 he was encouraged to approach Police with his allegations & investigations commenced. Police learned that Father FLETCHER had been notified of the investigation by a member of the Catholic Church & was permitted to continue his duties in the Branxton Parish. Investigations continued over the next year & in March 2003 Father FLETCHER was stood down from the Branxton Presbytery. Police contacted members of the church & Father FLETCHER presented at the Maitland Police Station on Wednesday the 14th of May 2003 with solicitor Eric LACEY & a support person Father Jim SAUNDERS. FLETCHER emphatically denied the allegations of sexual misconduct & disputed other matters pertaining to the investigation. He was very upset at the allegations & is generally not of the best of health.

Date/Time Created
Created By

: 18/03/2004 19:19
: CENTRAL HUNTER - FOX, PETER RAYMOND
Matter appeared before the Newcastle Local Court in February 2004 for a 48E application. The matter has now been committed ofr trial on a date to be fixed.

Police Involved
Police in Charge
Created By
Date/Time Created

: INSP FOX, PETER RAYMOND - CENTRAL HUNTER
: INSP FOX, PETER RAYMOND - CENTRAL HUNTER
: 03/06/2002 15:36

Event Ref No : E 14348559

Disseminations For the Attention Of : ROBUFFO, LINDA KATHERINE - SCC POLICE CORRECTION INT
Dissemination Reason : MONITORING OF SEXUAL OFFENCES BY MEMBERS OF SEXUAL ASSAULT TEAM.
Created By : INSP FOX, PETER RAYMOND - SCC POLICE CORRECTION INTE
Date/Time Created : 03/06/2002 15:46
Completed By : INSP FOX, PETER RAYMOND - 03/06/2002 15:46

Person Reporting Name Used : AH
Record Name : AH
CNI Number/Summary :
Date of Birth/Age Rge :
Contact Address :
Home Phone :
Work Phone :
sex : M

Case File - Table of Contents

No	Title	Type	Brief/Sensitive	Date Logged	Status
1	ERISP INTERVIEW	AUDIO	IN BRIEF	08/04/2004	CURRENT
2	AH	STATEMENT	IN BRIEF	08/04/2004	CURRENT
3	BJ	STATEMENT	IN BRIEF	08/04/2004	CURRENT
4	BB	STATEMENT	IN BRIEF	08/04/2004	CURRENT
5	BI	STATEMENT	IN BRIEF	08/04/2004	CURRENT
6	BL	STATEMENT	IN BRIEF	08/04/2004	CURRENT

Event Link Details
Ref No. Linked Event : E 20846269
Assoc Type/Status : INVESTIGATION - CONFIRMED
Reason for Assoc. :
Ref No. Linked Event : E 22762312
Assoc Type/Status : CAUSE & EFFECT - CONFIRMED
Reason for Assoc. :

Event Ref No : E 14348559

Incident Details : 01/01/1991 00:01 to 31/12/1995 23:59
Incident Date/Time : ACTUAL SEXUAL OFFENCE - INDECENT ASSAULT
Incident Type : CHILD VICTIM REPORTED WHEN ADULT
Further Class. : VERIFIED - ACCEPTED
Incident Status/Class. : CLEARED - 14/05/2003
Clear Up Status/Date : SEXUAL ABUSE RELATED
Associated Factor : CHILD ABUSE RELATED SEXUAL

Incident Location : 83 CLARENCETOWN RD MAITLAND NSW 2320
Address : RESIDENTIAL RESIDENTIAL - DWELLING HOUSE - DETACHE
Premise Type : CENTRAL HUNTER - MAITLAND - NA - NA
L.A.C./Sector/Beat/NHW:

Modus Operandi Details : SEXUAL INTERCOURSE - ANAL/ORAL
SEXUAL ACT METHOD

Victim : AH
Name Used/Status : AH
Record Name :
CNI Number/Summary :
Date of Birth/Age Rge : Sex : M
Tourist/Visitor State : NSW
Tourist/Visitor Cntry : AUSTRALIA
Aboriginal : NO
Torres Strait Islander : NO
Contact Address :
Home Phone :
Work Phone :
Occupation/Skill : MANAGER - LARGE BUSINESS
Background :
Place of Birth/Naty : NEWCASTLE - AUSTRALIAN

Org Of Interest : DUNGOG CATHOLIC PARISH
Organisation Name : DUNGOG
Branch/Outlet Name : RELIGIOUS SECT
Organisation Type : 695177194 -VX-----
CNI Number/Summary : DUNGOG CATHOLIC PRESBYTERY
Contact Address : 57 BROWN ST DUNGOG NSW 2420

Person Of Interest : FLETCHER, JAMES PATRICK PERSON CHARGED
Name Used/Status : FLETCHER, JAMES
Record Name : 657816910 - OV--RX----H--IDE---
CNI Number/Summary : 20/11/1941 Sex : M
Date of Birth/Age Rge : 2136PK NSW
Drivers Licence/State : NSW
Tourist/Visitor State : AUSTRALIA
Tourist/Visitor Cntry : NO
Aboriginal : NO
Torres Strait Islander : NO
Contact Address : RECTORY
44 STATION ST BRANXTON NSW 2335
Home Phone : 02 49381211

CAS803S

New South Wales Police Force
COPS

Date NSW/P264
Time : 14:08:
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Occupation/Skill

: CLERGY

* * * END OF LIST * * *