

**DPA**

06 September 2004

Dear Father Abbot

I was very saddened, and if I am honest, angry to see the news regarding Dom Dunstan, and felt that I must write to you.

We all know that Dom Dunstan was downloading and looking at child pornography while he was a housemaster. He was relieved of his position, as housemaster, and was confined to Monastic duties. It was during that time that Dom Philip had a long discussion with me and also Dom Dunstan himself came to see me and to apologise to me for the distress it had caused me and it still does.

I was assured by Dom Philip, and subsequently by yourself that Dom Dunstan was receiving counselling and help and that the situation was being dealt with and his activities monitored. I was also given assurances that no harm had been done to any boy in the school. At one stage you even asked what Malcolm's and my thoughts would be if you decided to reintroduce him into the school. I wasn't happy about him being brought back into the school if you remember.

When I heard of subsequent events I cannot begin to say how saddened and angry I am for all those innocent children. I was absolutely appalled to think that he had actually used pictures of two boys that had been in the school. I still find it so difficult to come to terms with the fact that as a priest who had the care of children, who said mass, and preached sermons advising us on how to conduct our lives could commit such a terrible crime against the young and innocent.

I have been a very loyal employee of Downside as in fact my family were for generations, beginning with Joseph Cox when the monks first came to Downside. Since that time there has been a continuous line of our family in the employ of Downside. I felt I was being very loyal to Downside in the initial stages when Dom Dunstan used, one could say stole, Malcolm's credit card and used it to obtain pornographic material. I felt very let down when I was made redundant last Christmas after twenty six years of service, especially as I only had three years to go before retirement age. Where was the loyalty shown to me then?

It seems to me that Dom Dunstan's addiction to child pornography was continuing all the time and I find it so difficult to understand why his internet actions were not being monitored to prevent this happening again. Why oh why wasn't the situation all nipped in the bud at the very beginning?

I know we should try in our hearts to find forgiveness but at the moment I am afraid I am finding that extremely difficult.

Yours sincerely

**DPA**

Frances Daniels

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**DPA**

15th July 199

**PRIVATE and CONFIDENTIAL**

The Very Reverend Father Abbot  
Downside Abbey  
Stratton on the Fosse  
Bath  
BA3 4RH

Dear Father Richard

I realise that the contents of this letter will concern you and that, until now, I have only an outline knowledge concerning paedophilia – enough, I hope, to sense when children may be at risk and to get something done about it. I have intended for some time to increase my knowledge in this matter and recent events have obviously sharpened my focus on paedophilia. I have been reading literature concerning it and I have discussed the matter with people working in the field – without of course including any information which might identify Downside in any way. I have spoken with a Forensic Psychologist and a Forensic Psychiatrist, both of whom work exclusively for the Probation and Prison Service, so the information may be slightly bias towards paedophile offenders.

Obviously I hope that Father Dunstan's interview(s) with the Psychiatrist in South London will give us more precise information related to Father Dunstan based upon the experience of dealing with paedophilia – something which of course I do not have.

However, I hope it is helpful to share a few points from my readings and discussions. Where I have used the term "offend" I am not necessarily implying active sexual activity with a child – the term is here used more generally to include any degree of paedophile behaviour, such as watching videos or the internet.

**Cognitive distortions (CDs)**

This is a feature common to all paedophiles – both those who are known to have offended and those who may not have done so. A CD is the rationalisation of an unacceptable behaviour which allows a paedophile to offend and not feel guilty about it. A typical example of this, common to most paedophiles, is to say that they are attracted to 11 to 16 year olds because they are no longer children but adolescents and therefore, so to speak, it is okay. In fact most paedophiles are attracted to younger children too.

Further on the matter of CDs, the literature emphasises repeatedly that most paedophiles are intelligent people. This intelligence should enable a paedophile to see that the behaviour is wrong; the fact that they appear not to see that it is wrong or to realise the great risk the behaviour implies is indicative of a strong need. So if a paedophile is attracted to an 11 year old boy and he sees nothing wrong or dangerous in that; ie he does not see that there is a problem, then this usually means that the paedophile has a reason for wanting to think it is not a problem.

It is because of CDs that most paedophiles are manipulative and plausible. This is why very often they appear arrogant and like to give the impression that those attempting to deal with them over paedophilia are "stupid" or a "waste of time".

Another example of a CD is to say that it is okay to use the internet because everyone uses the internet and therefore to "slope off" into paedophile internet material is not really wrong because everyone using the internet has an equal access to it. I suppose there is a strong corollary here with the attitude of those who have an alcohol problem towards alcohol.

Age:

There are several papers which show that with paedophilia there is no decreased risk of offending with age.

Telling the truth:

There are two points here:- On being "discovered" – if a paedophile reacts by saying for example "thank goodness you found out; its such a relief; I need your help, etc", then the outlook for controlling his behaviour is good. He is at least facing the truth. If however he reacts with a lot of CDs, ie excuses, denial, minimalisation, then the outlook for control is not so good.

Secondly, if a paedophile is out of "a proper job" – as many are – then they often feel that there is no motivation to tell the truth; telling the truth would only make matters worse for them as they see it. Therefore it is better to "escape" into more CDs rather than face the truth.

Father, I think that is probably enough. I am really only passing on information to you about paedophilia which I have obtained recently. I obviously do not feel competent to give a view about its relevance to Father Dunstan. Frankly I found it so worrying that much of it could apply to Father Dunstan that I felt I had to share it with you. I am sorry to burden you in this way. You may want to discuss this further – if so I would be happy to do so.

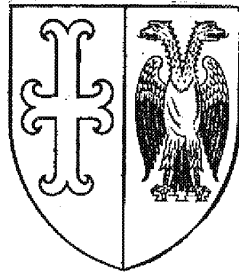
With kind regards.

Yours sincerely

**DPA**

Dr Stephen Rye

Barlow House  
Downside School  
Stratton on the Fosse  
Bath BA3 4RJ



*From the House Master,*  
Dom Dunstan O'Keeffe, M.A., S.T.L.  
Tel: DPA

16th December, 1997

Dear Parents and Friends,

Many of you who know Downside well will appreciate that much of its peculiar charm and a great deal of its dynamism come from the close relationship that exists between school and monastery. We all value this association but recognise too that it puts an unusual degree of strain upon those whose commitment to the pastoral and educative needs of the school is sustained by a yet stronger commitment to the life of prayer. For the most part, and for most monks, this is a creative tension in a life that is both challenging and rewarding, but the dangers are very real.

The role of House Master has changed dramatically in recent years. Nothing could have prepared me for the physical and emotional demands that it places on one whose peculiar situation makes it extremely difficult to set limits to the scale of the task. It has been all too easy to say "yes" to these demands in a spirit of what I now see to be misplaced zeal.

The peculiar demands of this term, and, paradoxically, the high degree of my satisfaction with the progress of Barlow House, have brought sharply into focus how precarious my spiritual balance has become in recent months. In discussions with my superiors, I was moved to make a manifestation of conscience which suggested to those responsible for my welfare that they should take immediate action. With the agreement of the Abbot, Head Master and senior school staff, I must, with deep regret, relinquish my position as House Master and remove myself from teaching for an indefinite period.

We are all very conscious of the distress that this may cause you and the boys, but hope that you will understand that your and their welfare is very much our major concern. While none of the boys will have had any reason to feel that anything was wrong, I could not honestly say that it was certain to remain so, and I cannot risk letting them or you down.

I hope that you will keep me in your thoughts and prayers and that you will give every support to my successor. Father Antony has not mentioned this in the newsletter but wants to write a special letter to inform you of the new arrangements he is putting in place.

Wishing that this news will not prevent you from enjoying a happy and peaceful Christmas, I remain

Yours sincerely,

**DPA**

Dom Dunstan O'Keeffe.

M. F.  
copy to M.D.

file copy.

## DOWNSIDE ABBEY

Stratton on the Fosse  
Bath BA3 4RH

tel  fax

Downside Abbey Trustees Registered Charity Number 232548

15th October 1997

M. Fisher Esq

Dear Martin,

Thank you and your colleagues for the work you are doing in the difficult assignment of a Committee of Enquiry. Our meeting today at which you all met me and discussed the issues as you now see them leaves me on the one hand profoundly depressed but on the other hand reasonably hopeful that something can be salvaged from the wreckage.

I think we are now broadly agreed on the following points.

1. That while our overriding concern is, and must always be, the welfare of the pupils, there is no evidence or suggestion at the present time of any impropriety in that area. The greatest risk to the boys is the potential for trauma, distress and disruption of fruitful education if unnecessarily dramatic action is taken in mid term, particularly if it were to lead to the most feared scenario, suicide.
2. That in view of the two known cases of suicide in recent months, the risk of turning a grave misdemeanour into an absolute tragedy must be taken very seriously and justifies a more considered approach than would be acceptable in a case of actual physical abuse.
3. That your committee needs more time to consider certain points and to examine post-August telephone data which is not yet available.
4. That assuming the general nature of the allegations will in due course be accepted by the accused as correct, it is inevitable that he be relieved of his senior pastoral post and almost certain that he will have to be relieved of all teaching duties.
5. That in all these and other circumstances which we have discussed it would be best to delay the day of confrontation until the end of the current term when an orderly changeover of duties can be effected without excessive scandal and shock.
6. That we accept that Malcolm, as an injured party, has a right, but not an obligation, to pursue these matters, particularly that of the credit card, with the civil authorities if he so wishes (though we hope he will not) and that he should be reassured that he acted absolutely correctly in reporting his suspicions to the school authorities. As Abbot I accept that I must take full responsibility for the final decisions which I make.
7. Meanwhile a scheme of surveillance devised by yourself will be in operation to monitor behaviour and ensure that the judgement that there is no reason to believe that any pupils are at risk remains currently valid.

M.Fisher Esq  
Deouty Head Master

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

28.9.97

Dear Martin,

The Prior has just put me in the picture regarding the very serious suspicions regarding the misuse of a credit card and the Internet.

I would be most grateful if you could immediately set up a Committee of Enquiry consisting of yourself (chair), Fr Philip and Mrs Redmond-Lyon (if she will agree to serve).

Although there is currently no suggestion of physical abuse, the Committee should at its first meeting consider whether immediate suspension is called for. However, the greatest sensitivity is called for bearing in mind the suicide which occurred recently in a similar situation at Leatherhead.

The committee should consider whether the credit card and internet suspicions should be dealt with together or separately and, if so, in what order.

Subject to para 3 above, the most appropriate time for any confrontation would seem to be the coming half term break.

Naturally I would like to talk to you as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely

Abbot