



**DIOCESE OF
CHICHESTER**



**The Archdeacon of Lewes and Hastings
The Venerable Nicholas S Reade**

The Rt Revd WP Benn
Bishop's Lodge
16a Prideaux Road
EASTBOURNE
BN21 2NB

23 April 1999

Dear Wallace,

ROBERT COLES

I have seen Robert on a few occasions since he was being investigated and the subsequent dropping of the charges in relation to the incident some eighteen years ago.

I have told Robert I still regret greatly that he did not take up your offer of clinical assessment. He says he just could not go through with it and in any case he believes his life that area is ordered and disciplined and claims there has never been any recurrence of the sinful behaviour eighteen years ago.

Since retiring, Robert has behaved responsibly. He is faithful to the life of prayer and says the Daily Office with care and studies and meditates upon the Scriptures. He is also working as a part-time gardener. He has visited and encouraged a number of clergy in the Eastbourne area, particularly two or three we would regard as rather difficult. His informal ministry in this area has been appreciated.

In view of all this, I wonder if you would feel it possible to raise with the Diocesan Bishop whether there could be any possibility of Robert having Bishop's Permission to officiate, on condition that he does this under the supervision of a senior priest who will be informed of the incident in the past, and that it is clearly understood Robert will have no ministry among any young people. Robert has always been loyal to the church and to the Bishop and I have no reason to believe he would not abide by these restrictions.

While I know this is not putting it very well, I believe the exercise of his priestly ministry is fundamental to Robert and I would hate him to grow into a bitter person because he was not able to do what he believed he was called to do.

With every good wish,

N S Reade

DPA

Nicholas Reade
~Archdeacon

27 The Avenue, Lewes BN7 1QT

Telephone: **DPA** Fax: **DPA**

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