

November 27th, 1988.

Rev. Fr. G. Ridsdale.
Dugout RED
White Cliffs,
N.S.W. 2836.

Dear Gerry,

It was good to receive your letter of November 22nd. I had heard that you had a spell in hospital in Ballarat during my absence and am glad to know that things have settled down again for you. I look forward to catching up with you when you come back to Ballarat at Christmas time - which is getting to be quite close.

I note that you have been doing some little apostolic work helping families who are isolated in your area. However, I do not think that it would be a good idea for you to celebrate Reconciliation or Baptism at this stage. With regard to the problems which have arisen, it could possibly be asked at a later date whether you had continued to administer Sacraments and it would be best to be able to state that you had not been involved at this level with people. I realise that this might create difficulties at the personal and local level, but I hope that it will be possible for you to pass over the actual sacramental initiation of those you have been helping to the local clergy.

In any case, it is not possible for "Broken Hill to give the O.K." when you do not have the faculties of your own Diocese for Confessions etc.

I hope I don't sound too harsh in the above, but I feel that it is most important that we honour the undertakings which have been given and that we do nothing at this time which might rebound on us later. I have every hope that nothing more will eventuate, but we have to do our part to ensure that it does not. The counselling and helping jobs are those which could be done by anyone with expertise. The sacramental ministrations are another matter. At this time, I am sure that it is desirable to avoid involvement in these, though I realise that this can lead to some complications. I am in a rush for Sydney for a Bishops' Conference today. See you at Christmas. All the best in the meantime.