

3 March 2004

P.O. Box

ON

Most Rev. Nicola De Angelo, c.f.i.c.
Bishop of Peterborough
350 Hunter Street West,
Box 175
Peterborough, ON
K9J 6Y8

Your Excellency:

I am writing to beg you, as Bishop of Peterborough, to see that justice is finally done for a 79-year-old widow, Mrs. Barbara MacKerrow, whose entire life savings were loaned, in good faith, to her parish priest, Father Mark Buckley, a priest incardinated then and now in the Peterborough Diocese. Among other things, Father Buckley utilised Mrs. MacKerrow's money to open and operate two pet shops in the diocese of Peterborough. Despite the fact that Father Buckley was serving as a parish priest within the diocese, the then Bishop of Peterborough, James Leonard Doyle, permitted Father Buckley to pursue this pet shop business venture which eventually ended in scandal and bankruptcy.

Your Excellency may be aware that I investigated this scandal and subsequently wrote an article entitled Friends in High Places in the January - September 2000 edition of the *Orator*. I believe you received a copy of that edition, however, in the event that you did not, or have perhaps forgotten the details, I have enclosed a copy. As you will note, during my research I learned what seemed to be common knowledge to many in the Peterborough area, namely that Father Buckley, a Roman Catholic priest, was living a homosexual lifestyle and was well known within the "gay" community.

Since researching and publishing Friends in High Places, I have remained in contact with Mrs. MacKerrow. She is a gracious lady who, despite her ordeal with "the Church," does not complain. However, during a recent conversation she broke down completely. She can not understand why there has been no justice. What can I tell her? But, more to the point, in the course of that conversation I learned by sheer chance that her car is old and beyond repair, and she has no money to replace it. I also learned that her health is poor, and that she is planning to move because, as I understand it, without transportation she can no longer remain in Barry. What a terrible reflection this is on the Diocese of Peterborough, and on the abject failure of Bishop Doyle to ensure financial restitution to this unfortunate widow, either by Father Buckley himself, or, failing that, by the diocese. Sadly, despite the fact that Father Buckley succeeded in his

swindles precisely because of the support and protection afforded him by Bishop Doyle, Bishop Doyle washed his hands of the widow's plight.

In truth, Your Excellency, as a result of my research I can not say that I am totally surprised that Bishop Doyle so publicly protected a priest who squandered parish funds, lived the "gay" life, and bilked a trusting widow out of her life's savings of \$208,000. I am, however, appalled. A 79-year-old woman is now financially bereft because her former bishop refused to demand justice on her behalf. Surely this widow is entitled to a small modicum of the care, protection and consideration afforded Fr. Mark Buckley? Due to Mrs. MacKerrow's increasing age, declining health and pitiable financial circumstances, this terrible travesty of justice begs to be addressed immediately.

I realize that this injustice did not transpire under your watch. However, as successor to Bishop Doyle you are in a position to rectify his wrongs. This wrong demands your attention.

Your Excellency, I implore you to ensure that Mrs. MacKerrow is reimbursed so that she can live the remainder of her years in peace, with access to the funds which rightly belong to her, with the comfort that justice has, in part been done, and with the knowledge that at least one Roman Catholic bishop holds the plight of a widow dear to his heart.

I trust that you will give this plea on behalf of Mrs. MacKerrow the compassionate consideration which it deserves.

I have the honour to be, Your Excellency,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sylvia C. MacEachern".

(Mrs.) Sylvia C. MacEachern
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