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Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ

You may have read newspaper coverage this week about Magnus Murray who ministered as a priest in our Diocese in the 1980s.

In 2003, when he was convicted of sexual abuse charges, Bishop Browne issued a statement inviting people with any concerns about Magnus Murray to talk to him and/or to approach the Sexual Abuse Protocol Committee.

Now, as the current Bishop of Hamilton, I once again encourage anyone who has been abused by a priest or religious to contact either my office or the National Office for Professional Standards (03 365 1993 [prof.standards@nzcbc.org.nz](mailto:prof.standards@nzcbc.org.nz)) so their story may be heard and their complaint from this tragic chapter in the history of the Diocese investigated. Alternately people may choose to go directly to the Police.

These past offences are distressing for us all and they are the most difficult aspect of my ministry as your Bishop. In looking back at these offences it is not my place to judge how things were handled in the past by the Church or Civil Authorities. I cannot change the past. All I can do is continue to work towards ensuring the safety of children and vulnerable adults in the Church today, to act justly and with compassion towards those who have been abused and to deal appropriately and justly, according to Church and civil law, with those who have abused. I want to assure you of my commitment to these actions and in particular in working for justice and healing for those who have been abused.

In journeying with people who have been abused I have to respect their wishes and privacy where this does not compromise people's safety. For this reason I will not enter into debate in the media by discussing complaints or the opinions others have expressed. I am happy for any parishioner who wishes to raise any concerns with me about these matters to contact me.

Can I ask you to join with me in praying for those who have been abused as we work together to ensure a safe Church. In the same way let us pray for the wider community as we become increasingly aware of the presence, nature and impact of sexual abuse throughout the whole strata of our communities and the world and that the cycle of sexual abuse may be broken.

Yours sincerely in Christ the Good Shepherd

✠ Steve Lowe  
BISHOP OF HAMILTON