

Later Workers

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Letter by Dale Shultz re Ruben Mata
Overseer of Saskatchewan, Canada

Revised August 25, 2017

Dale Shultz letter to California workers about Ruben Mata

8557 Diamond Oak Way
Elk Grove CA 95624-1749
July 6, 2006

Dear Staff,

Included in this envelope, you will find the letter intended for the use of our staff concerning Ruben Mata and also the guidelines document which we hope can be of some assistance when future reports involving the molestation of minors are brought to us. A number of you have contributed to the content and wording of both the letter and the guidelines document and I want to thank each of you who have helped in the developing of both of these papers to their present form.

You will find enclosed one letter concerning Ruben for each field. The workers in the field will use the letter according to their own discretion. The letter can be shown to any of our friends who are questioning or are troubled concerning events which have involved Ruben or anything pertaining to the handling of his case in the past or present. The friends should read the letter in the presence of the workers in the field. We would rather that the letter not be left with friends over any period of time. It is hard to say who all might read the letter if that was done. If it is read in the presence of the workers, there can be further discussion and further questions can be asked. There may be rare cases in which it may be useful to show the letter to someone who is not professing – possibly to a victim. It may be well to check with us before using it in this way. Of course, the guidelines just mentioned which apply to showing the letter to our friends would also apply if it was shown to someone who is not professing. We will ask you not to make any copies of this letter. To have one letter available in each field is certainly adequate. **If we are not particularly careful with letters such as this, they can end up on an internet site for all the world to read.** Also, to show this letter to people who do not need to see it may arouse concerns that they had not previously entertained. The purpose of the letter is to help those who have concerns, not to advertise a kingdom problem to those who either do not know about it or are not having a problem with it

There is a copy of the “guidelines” for each worker. It will be useful for all of you to have a copy for reference now and in the future. Over time, there may be changes to the suggestions that are made in this document. That is because legislation does change from time to time and also the available agencies to which reports can be made and the resources available to help victims and violators may also alter over time. It is good to remember that the legal framework in these guidelines is in the context of California law and that there may be variations to what is outlined here in other states and countries.

We have made a significant effort to ensure that the information provided both in the letter and the guidelines document is accurate and current. We hope that you will find both useful.

Yours in Him

Dale Shultz

June 29, 2006

To Whom It May Concern:

Based on the information that we now have, we know that Ruben Mata sexually molested young boys during a period of at least 20 years prior to 2000. Ruben was in the work during this time. We have been informed of a half dozen cases for which Ruben is responsible and we wouldn't know how many other cases there might be of which we have no knowledge. He inflicted this damage without his companions being aware of what was happening. One case came to the attention of a brother worker through a third party as early as 1996. This worker was inexperienced in handling this kind of problem and didn't fully realize its seriousness and magnitude. No follow up action took place. Word of another case was conveyed to sister workers but, again, they didn't follow through with any definite action that would have brought the problem out into the open. A third case came to the attention of another sister

worker, apparently in November or December of 1999. During preps, in April of 2000, this sister told a brother worker about the report that had come to her. This brother passed the information on to Dick Middleton and Ruben was faced up with his problem at convention time. Ruben voluntarily relinquished his place in the ministry at Buttonwillow convention in May of 2000.

In June of 2000, Steve Peirson and Ray Bullick accompanied Ruben to the District Attorney's Office in Tulare County where Ruben admitted to the offences that had come to light up until that time. The Assistant District Attorney interviewed Ruben. Dick Middleton asked Ray Bullick to help Ruben find professional help for his problem. A little start was made with counseling in June of 2000, but Ruben withdrew from any treatment program after a few months. Ruben was restricted initially to attending only designated meetings and was asked not to attend any meetings of our people sometime in 2002. Ruben was given to understand that he would need to further pursue a treatment program in order to facilitate any consideration of him attending meetings of our people in the future.

Another case surfaced within the past few months (this abuse occurred in 1999) which resulted in Ruben's behavior again being reported to the authorities. This time, the authorities chose to investigate further and Ruben was arrested on Thursday, May 18. He is being held without bail. At a hearing in mid-June, an attorney was appointed to handle Ruben's defense. We understand that his "guilty" or "not guilty" plea will be submitted at the next hearing which may take place sometime in July. Following this, the date of the actual trial will be set.

We feel very sorry that one of our fellow servants has caused so much harm to so many with its ensuing suffering, confusion and pain. This type of inappropriate behavior represents a very serious betrayal of trust and we feel keenly for the victims and their families who have experienced this betrayal first hand. We are also sorry that the ministry's response to the problem was not as quick, definite and adequate as it should have been – especially with respect to what happened and didn't happen prior to May of 2000. This was not due to deliberate irresponsibility on anyone's part but can be attributed largely to the fact that those involved did not comprehend the seriousness and magnitude of what was taking place at the time and were inexperienced and uninformed regarding procedure. Nevertheless, we do wish to express our regret and offer our apology that such incidents ever happened and that the ministry's response was not as quick, definite and adequate as we know it should have been as we look back over the situation now.

We have discussed this issue in our staff meeting at Mountain Ranch on Monday, May 22. We also discussed the appropriate course of action if any case involving the sexual molestation of a minor (17 years of age or younger) comes to the attention of a worker in the future.

A copy of this letter will be in the hands of each pair of active workers on the California workers list. It is to be used by the workers in their fields at their own discretion but primarily to help any who may have questions or are disturbed regarding this matter. We don't want any further copies of this letter made and we want the initial copies to remain in the hands of the workers in their fields.

Yours Respectfully,

Dale Shultz

Dale Shultz CSA Guidelines for California Workers – July 2006

GUIDELINES REGARDING INCIDENTS OF CHILD SEXUAL MOLESTATION

(1) According to California law, workers fall into the legal category of "mandated reporters" and have a legal obligation to report any sexual abuse inflicted on a minor (person 17 years of age or younger) if she or he is still a minor at the time the information comes to us.

(2) There is no legal obligation to report a case where the victim is no longer a minor at the time the information comes to the worker (even though the abuse happened when the victim was still a minor), but there may be a moral obligation in some cases if there is reason to believe that other minors remain at risk.

(3) If you receive such information as a younger companion, take it to your older companion.

(4) The companions in a field are advised to take the matter to your regional overseer(s) or to your general overseer.

(5) The regional overseer(s) and general overseer will discuss the matter with the local workers who received the information with the option of bringing in any other consultants whom they agree may be helpful at arriving at decisions.

(6) We will discuss here four different directions to go with this information that comes from a victim, an offender or from a third party concerning the abuse. The selection of one of these or possibly a combination of two of these will depend on the particulars of the case you are handling and the level of cooperation you are receiving from the victim or offender. We need to remember that we have a legal responsibility as "mandated reporters" to report such cases and that the victim and offender would benefit from therapy. It is possible that other family members would benefit from therapy as well. While California law stipulates that a "mandated reporter" is required to report a case of child abuse within 36 hours of learning about it, we believe that the law would be flexible regarding the time factor. However, this stipulation does indicate the importance of dealing with the matter as soon as possible. Following are the four options regarding handling such information when it comes to us:

(a) There is a definite advantage in getting the victim and the offender to a certified counselor for help. This provides help for the victim in learning to deal with the experience. Therapy provides help for the offender in managing and overcoming his or her abusive tendencies. It also can transfer the responsibility of reporting the criminal conduct from the workers to the certified counselor. We are not freed from the responsibility of reporting a case simply because we have referred the victim or the offender to another "mandated reporter," which in this case is the counselor. We should visit with the counselor and come to an understanding that he or she will

assume the responsibility of reporting (if the case warrants it) rather than ourselves. The counselor has training and resources to better determine if the case should be reported. Also, it puts us in a better position to help people on both sides of the issue if we have not done the reporting.

(b) It would be possible to go to a counselor alone without the victim or offender and convey the information that has come to us. This would work best in cases in which the counselor already has had some experience with our group and has reason to trust us. In this way, the counselor (a mandated reporter) is receiving information from a third party (in this case, the worker also being a mandated reporter) and then there would need to be an understanding and agreement that the counselor accepts the responsibility to “report” or “not report” rather than the worker continuing to have that responsibility. This is one of the optional routes in cases where the victim or offender is unwilling to see a therapist.

(c) Another option is to report the incident to Child Protective Services which is part of the county Social Services Department. They will keep the name of the reporter confidential. There is a difference in reporting the case to Child Protective Services rather than directly to a law enforcement agency. The difference is that Child Protective Services will send a social worker to evaluate the case and determine its severity. This is one step removed from the law and does not put the responsibility of determining the validity or severity of the case on the workers. Child Protective Services has “mandated reporter status” and will report the case to the law if the decision is made that way. Child Protective Services will also refer the victim and/or offender to therapy (counselors). However, the victim or offender would also have the option of seeking out therapy on their own.

(d) The fourth option is to report the incident to the Police Department, the Sheriff’s Department or the County Probation Department. The initial report can be by telephone or in person followed up by filling out a required form issued by the California Office of the Attorney General.

Options (a), (b) & (c) would usually be the preferred ones – and sometimes a combination of two of them. In more severe cases, there may be instances when option (d) seems preferable.

(7) An offer to help the victim, victim’s parents or the offender in selecting a certified counselor would be in order unless they choose to let Child Protective Services look after that. We have friends who can help us in making these choices because of their associations in the work place. There may be instances where it would be helpful to offer to accompany the victim or the offender on their initial visit to a certified counselor.

(8) If a police report is filed, the family can apply for help with expenses through the California Victim Witness program. If their request is approved, the state of California will pay for counseling sessions for the victim and each member of the victim’s family plus other services and reimbursement for certain costs related to the incident, to the extent to which they are not otherwise covered by insurance.

More information is available online at www.boc.ca.gov or by contacting
California Victim Compensation and Government Claims Board
Victim Compensation Program
P.O. Box 3036
Sacramento CA 95812-3036

(9) People who fall into the broad category of “clergy” can receive information of criminal conduct from a person of their congregation which could be legally classified as “penitential communication” and the failure of the clergy member to report this can be legally excused. There is quite a bit of grey area here and room for private interpretation. If an offender brings information about himself/herself to us in a spirit that we deem to be truly repentant, this would be the most clear cut category of “penitential communication.” On the other hand, if a victim brings information to us but doesn’t want it to go any further for reasons that seem valid to us, this could also be classified as this type of communication. If either a victim or an offender asks you to be completely confidential, it would be well to press the point that you would really prefer to discuss it with a very confidential fellow-worker or fellow workers. You may be in a position where you would say, “I cannot keep this completely confidential and still have a clear conscience before God.” That is something you would need to weigh up prayerfully, seeking the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Your decision may be influenced by the age of the victim as well. You may be more inclined to respect the plea for confidentiality from a 16-17 year old and less inclined to respect the plea for confidentiality from a 5-10 year old.

(10) Proverbs II: 14 “In the multitude of counselors there is safety.” There is an element of safety involved in a small group of people evaluating any such case. At the same time, it is very important that these matters (along with many others) be handled in a wise and confidential manner so that sensitive matters are not spread indiscriminately among people who do not need to know. We would soon lose the trust of the Lord’s people if we are not wise in this area.

(11) If information comes to us from a third party (neither the victim nor the offender), there is still an obligation (legally and morally) to follow through if there is “reasonable suspicion” that the abuse has occurred.

(12) As workers, we are trusted with our friend’s homes, children, spouses, cars, financial gifts, etc. It is a serious and damaging betrayal of trust if our conduct inflicts the kind of damage described in this paper on any person and family. We also need to recognize that parents may have apprehensions regarding their children being with workers – particularly, in a one on one situation. We should be sensitive to “appearances” and sensitive to the particular apprehensions that some parents may have. Of course, there are other areas of betrayal of trust that can be equally damaging. We need to live within safe parameters. We want to preserve our consecration as workers and the testimony of this ministry.