

Marist Brothers
8 Keen Street
LISMORE NSW 2480
30 January 1997

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STATES:

1. I am a member of the Institute of Marist Brothers. I was born on 18 November, 1931 and I have been a Marist Brother since 1950. At the time of my profession I adopted the religious name of "Brother Jerome" and I have been known by that name and title since then.
2. Since entering the Order my appointments have included postings at Marist Brothers establishments in Auburn and Hunters Hill, Eagle Heights, Ashgrove, Westmead Boys Home, Dundas and Eastwood. I was the Primary School Principal at Canberra from 1977 to 1984, the Primary School Principal at Ayr from 1985 to 1991 and the Primary School Principal at St Carthage;s, Lismore from 1992 to 1996. From the beginning of 1997 I have started semi-retirement. I will spend the first term of the year in Canberra and expect to return to Lismore about July of this year.
3. At Canberra in the period from 1977 to 1984 I taught in the Primary School as the Primary School Principal for three years and then I became the Principal of the College. From 1980 to 1982 the then Brother Gregory Sutton was a teacher in the Primary School and a member of the Marist Brothers Community in Canberra.
4. Other Brothers I can recall teaching in the Primary School with Brother Gregory in that 1980-82 period were

Brother Martin Peters, who has since left the Order, Brother Timothy Beencke who I believe is now at Bourke and Brother Bernard Murphy who I believe is now at Dundas. Between 1980 and 1982 Brother Bernard Murphy was the Brother Superior of the Marist Brothers Community in Canberra.

5. Brother Gregory taught Year 5 students at the Primary School and I believe that he had been a Year 5 teacher throughout his teaching career. In 1981 I was involved in an accident and was convalescing. In June, July and August, 1981 Brother Gregory was acting Primary School Principal.
6. During those three years I lived and worked with Brother Gregory and indeed, mixed with him socially I felt I was very close to him and knew him well. We were friends as well as colleagues. I would describe him as a good teacher and a caring person. He got on well with the children and he did his job in an excellent manner. He had no problems with his fellow Brothers and related well to the lay teachers and other staff.
7. Brother Gregory had his model trains set up in his class room but that did not present a problem to me as the Principal. The boys enjoyed playing with the trains, usually during the school hours, sometimes at the weekends when some boys might be at the school with their fathers who were on a working bee.
8. I noticed nothing unusual about Brother Gregory's behaviour and attitudes and nothing that marked him as different in any way from the other Brothers at Canberra.

9. As far as I could see Brother Gregory had no special attachment to any particular one of his students. He never brought children from his class or from the primary school to the residence. I never saw him in the company of children outside school hours, other than at weekend sporting activities, in which most Brothers had some involvement. I have no recollection of ever noticing him driving children away from the school in his car.
10. I never received any complaint from a parent, a Brother or a student that Brother Gregory had acted improperly in any way. No one ever told me that they had any suspicions about the manner in which Brother Gregory conducted himself with respect to his students. No one ever told me that they had seen him kissing or hugging children or associating with them outside school hours. I never noticed or heard that Brother Gregory had spent time in a class room with one or two students with the door locked. If that had occurred I would have warned him that it was inappropriate behaviour.
11. I believe that if any of the other Brothers heard anything to make them suspect that Brother Gregory was involved in some improper association with a student they would have reported those suspicions to me or to the Brother Superior, Brother Bernard Murphy. I am sure if Brother Bernard received such a report he would have discussed it with me as the Principal. Nothing like that ever occurred.
12. I first learned of Gregory's problem in 1991 when I arrived at Lismore as Principal. I was absolutely shocked. I could not believe it. I know many people in Canberra, parents of some of the boys that he taught, other friends he had made there, would not accept that he

was guilty until he actually pleaded guilty to the charges in court last year.

Witness:.....
 [John Whelan]