

REDACTED

Keith Julian TURTON

Marist Brother

REDACTED

Telephone:

1. I am a member of the Institute of Marist Brothers [hereinafter called the Order]. I was born on 15 January, 1939 and I have been a Marist Brother since 1957. At the time of my profession I adopted the religious name of "Alexis".
2. Since entering the Order my appointments have included postings at Marist Brothers establishments at Randwick, Brisbane, Newcastle and Drummoyne. At the present time I am International Co-ordinator for Spirituality in the Marist Brothers.
3. For the purposes of administration the Order in Australia is divided into two Provinces, the Sydney Province which includes most of New South Wales and all of Queensland, and the Melbourne Province which has responsibility for Victoria, part of New South Wales and the western portion of Australia.
4. The management of the Sydney Province is in the hands of the Brother Provincial, assisted by a Provincial Council which is made up of six members of the Order who meet with the Provincial on a regular basis. The Brother Provincial is nominated by the members of the Order in the Province and is appointed to the position by Rome. The Brother Provincial is responsible for managing the affairs of the Order, within his Province, for the term of his appointment. The Provincial Council members

*Keith Julian Turton*

provide him with advice on any question him might refer to them as a body or as individuals.

5. The Marist Brothers in the Sydney Province is essentially a teaching Order and in that capacity it is involved in providing Brothers who teach at primary and secondary schools and colleges at various towns and centres. Some of these establishments are directly managed by the Order while others are either jointly managed by the Order or are administered by the local Catholic Education Office.
  
6. I can say from Provincial records that Brother Gregory Joseph Sutton was professed as a Marist Brother in 1970. He trained as a teacher at Champagnat College from 1971 to 1972. He subsequently served as a teaching Brother at the following establishments:
 

1/73 - 12/75	REDACTED
1/76 - 12/77	Sacred Heart Primary School, Mosman
1/78 - 12/79	Marist Brothers Primary, Eastwood
1/80 - 12/82	Marist Brothers Primary, Canberra
1/83 - 12/84	St Thomas More School, Ruse
1/85 - 10/86	St Carthages Primary School, Lismore
11/86- 12/86	Marcellin Hall, New Zealand [Personal Renewal Course]
1/87 - 4/87	St Carthage's Primary School, Lismore
  
7. In 1983 I was appointed as Vice Provincial of the Sydney Province. Part of my responsibility involved visiting the various communities of the Brothers throughout the Province in a pastoral and community development role. This work usually included a visit to most of the schools and a personal interview with each of the Brothers in the community. I met Brother Gregory in the course of this work. I formed the impression that he was a sound teacher, usually popular, although occasionally developed



a reputation of having favourites among the children. I saw nothing to suggest that he had any particular special problems and no reason to suspect any form of impropriety.

8. About the middle of 1985, I have checked diaries but I am unable to place the date any more precisely than that, I visited the community at Lismore. I spoke with the various Brothers in my pastoral and community development role and then, as a matter of courtesy, I visited Sister Julia O'Sullivan of the Presentation Sisters, who was the Principal of St Carthage's Primary School at Lismore and at which the members of our Order, including Brother Gregory, were teaching. I should mention that there was a second full time Councillor who was responsible for school and ministry and he visited the schools on a regular basis. As I have mentioned, my visit to Sister Julia was on a courtesy basis and something which I usually did when I was in the area.

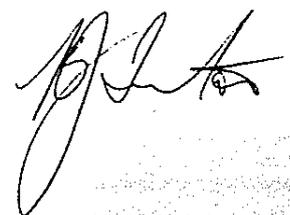
9. We had a conversation during which she said to me words to the effect "Some of the teachers are concerned about Gregory's favouritism with some students and with his being alone with some students and I may have to speak to him"

I said to her something like "Is there any specific cause for concern. Do you feel that there is anything suspicious or improper involved.

She said "I have no specific incident or conduct that is worrying me:

I said "Is there anything you would like me to do about it"

She said "I do not think that anything more is necessary. I will talk to him if I feel it is required".



10. Following this conversation I went and spoke to Brother Gregory. I said to him words to the effect "Sister Julia is concerned that some of the teachers feel you are spending too much time with certain students and are alone with them"
- He replied "Some of these kids have worries that they wanted to talk about and I feel it is my duty to listen to them and advise them".
- I said to him "Is there anything in your behaviour with the students that is improper or that we should be concerned about".
- He said "No". He was quite strong about this and he went on to complain about certain of the other teachers and their criticisms of him.
11. When I returned to Sydney I reported to Brother Alman, the then Provincial. During this report I mentioned to him Sister Julia's concerns. I explained that there was no specific incident or behaviour, no suggestion of impropriety or misconduct and that she had not asked for any action by the Order.
12. In February, 1986, Brother Alman asked me to go to Lismore to deal with a report by Sister Julia of inappropriate behaviour by Brother Gregory. I saw Sister Julia at St Carthages and she showed me a document which she had drawn up and which she wanted Gregory to sign. I have provided a copy of that document. It is not dated but it deals with incidents which occurred in December, 1985 and February, 1986. The incidents related to favouritism shown to certain students, being alone with students, physical contact with students and driving students outside the school.



13. I said to Sister Julia words to the effect "Is there any specific incident of impropriety, is there anything which you feel suggests misconduct with students"

She said "My main concern is that a number of teachers are very worried that his relationship with some students, his being alone with them and his putting his arms around them is too personal"

I said to her "Are any of these teachers or anyone else suggesting that there is sexual misconduct or sexual abuse of these children"

Julia "No nothing specific but some have suspicions. They feel that he is being too personal, too close to these children".

I said "Do you want us to withdraw him from the school"

She said "No, I believe if we see him and have him sign this document he will realise how seriously we regard this and make sure that he understands that this is a final warning".

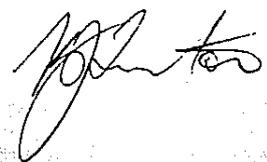
14. We called Gregory in and discussed the situation. We showed him the document and explained that we expected he would adhere to the standards that were normally expected of a religious teacher. In essence he signed the documents and assured us that he would abide by the guidelines that were contained in it.

15. During this discussion I said to Gregory "Has there been anything in your conduct that would harm the children, embarrass the Principal or the Order"

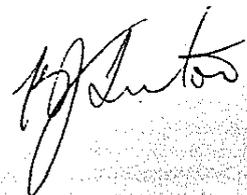
He said "No"

I said "Specifically has there been any contact of a sexual nature between you and the children"

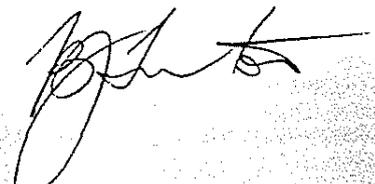
He said "No. This is all because some of the other teachers are jealous of me and a conducting a vendetta against me"



16. Later that same day I again spoke with Gregory as the Pastoral representative of the Provincial. I urged him to confide in me, to be honest with me, as to whether there had been any sexual contact with these children. He denied it strenuously. I also suggested to him that he consider a personal counsellor to discuss his relationships with staff and children. He said he did not feel there was a need for this. I reported details of my visit to Brother Alman.
17. As far as I can remember I had no further contact with Brother Gregory and as far as I was aware there was no further cause for concern regarding his conduct at St Carthages. Then about May, 1987 Brother Gregory arrived at the Provincial House at Drummoyne. I understood that he had asked to be relieved as a teacher at Lismore. I was not told, nor did I inquire, as to why he had asked for this change. Brother Gregory had some time on light duties at the Provincial House and then took up a position as a Librarian with the Catholic Theological Union. It did become evident after he had been there for some time that he was having relational difficulties with other staff there.
18. Not long after Brother Gregory returned to Drummoyne, Brother Alman asked me to talk with him about the possibility of therapy and to arrange for him to visit a therapist. As I understood it Brother Alman was concerned about Brother Gregory's problems with other teachers at Lismore, about his inappropriate behaviour with students and his inability to relate to adults. Brother Alman saw this therapy as necessary to facilitate Brother Gregory's future ministry. If Brother Alman had concerns that Brother Gregory had been involved in sexual misconduct with children at Lismore he did not confide this in me.



19. I had several conversations with Brother Gregory in which we discussed the possibility of therapy and made an appointment for him to see a therapist. I understand that Brother Gregory actually went to keep the appointment but changed his mind and walked away without keeping it.
20. We had more talk about therapy and eventually Brother Gregory agreed to see Vincent Ryan [now deceased] who was a Clinical Psychologist in Melbourne. I am aware that Brother Gregory did see him two or three times. I did have a telephone conversation with Vincent Ryan. He told me that he did not feel that there was any purpose in him continuing to see Gregory as he was emotionally quite immature and unable to get in touch with his own feelings and to talk about them.
21. I do remember that Brother Alman asked me to keep in contact with the Principal at St Carthages against the possibility that some problem might develop there involving Brother Gregory.
22. My recollection is that, as part of this process, in early 1989 I contacted the Parish Counsellor, Ms Kay Rolfe and inquired as to whether she had received any information from any student or students of specifically inappropriate conduct by Brother Gregory during the period of his incumbency at St Carthages. I spoke by telephone with Ms Rolfe and she said words to the effect "I am concerned at some of the behaviour that students are reporting to me with regard to themselves and Brother Gregory"
- I asked "Are the matters serious"
- She said "They could be but I am not in a position to go into any detail". She was guarded and I got the impression that she was having problems with



confidentiality and privacy considerations. I remember that she did say something to the effect that one of her concerns was that a student had told her that Brother Gregory had promised to come back to Lismore to marry her.

Although she did not say so in specific words I was quite convinced that what Ms Rolfe was talking about was serious sexual contact between Brother Gregory and one or more of these children.

I said to her "Look, in situations like this the Order is always prepared to arrange counselling if you feel that is what is needed. In any case I feel a representative of the Order should go up there and find out just what is involved"

She said "I believe that the parents are happy with the counselling that is taking place but I believe that they have reported the matter to the police"

23. I took over as Provincial in June, 1989. I had several conversations with Gregory during which I pointed out that he had made little progress and that I felt he should become involved in intensive therapy as soon as possible. In August, 1989 I received a telephone call from Brother John Holsworth who told me he had been contacted by a parent of a former **REDACTED** student. The student had committed suicide and his father believed that the son had been involved in some form of sexual impropriety with Brother Gregory. The father wanted to confront Brother Gregory, accompanied by Brother John. I understand that this confrontation took place in the Order's residence at Hunters Hill. I was not present but I was later informed that Brother Gregory had admitted that he and the boy had been involved in a sexual relationship. I am aware that the family name was **REDACTED** and I do know that Brother John asked **REDACTED** whether



he wanted the Order to take the matter to the police and whether he or his family needed counselling or any other help from us. He told Brother John that he did not want anything further done.

24. When I learned the result of the confrontation I went to see Brother Gregory and asked him if it was true that he had admitted sexual misconduct with this student. He said "Yes". I said words to the effect "Have there been any similar problems at **REDACTED**, Lismore or any other place where you have taught"

He said "No"

I said "In view our continuing efforts at therapy, in view of your continuing problems and now this sexual matter, you must go into intensive therapy immediately.

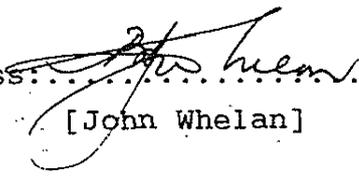
25. I then put steps in train to have Brother Gregory travel to Canada to enter a therapy centre called "Southdown" in Ontario. He left Australia for this purpose in August, 1989.

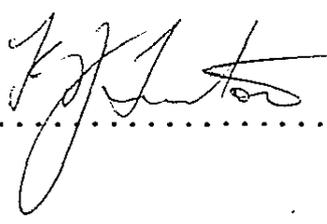
26. Some time subsequent to his departure I was contacted by a police officer from Lismore who informed me that they were investigating allegations of sexual assault against Brother Gregory.

27. On 14 October, 1991 Brother Gregory received a dispensation from his vows. [resigned from the Order]  
I believe that it was after Gregory had left the Marist Brothers that I received telephone calls from police at Lismore to the effect that warrants had been issued for his arrest. I did advise them that I understood he was in the United States. I recall that I provided them with the address of his parents at Regents Park.



28. I am aware that Sister Julia O'Sullivan did not make any report to the Catholic Education Office or to her own Presentation Order that she believed that Brother Gregory had been sexually involved with students at St Carthage's School during the period he was teaching there.

Witness: .....  
[John Whelan]

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