

FILE NOTE

Re: Mrs. Carmel Giddings (nee Rafferty)

On 26th July Gerry Palmer (V.C.P.S.A.) rang me to ask if I could grant an interview to a member (a Mrs. Carmel Giddings) who felt she had been hard done by and was being difficult to handle from his perspective. She was making a number of allegations about the behaviour of Fr. Searson, Parish Priest of Doveton who had been her employer and that it might be useful if I listened to her.

On 29th July I interviewed Mrs. Giddings who indicated she had resigned in late April because she had been put under pressure to do so. This is not completely consistent with the version of events in file note of Fr. Reynolds (dated 6th July, 1993). She did indicate to me that she had not expected it to be so difficult to find another position and could we help. I pointed out the employment arrangements in Catholic education in Victoria, the very difficult employment situation for teachers and that she would have to take her chances by applying for vacancies as they arose.

She produced a file (my guess is that it had 40/50 pages) of material which she indicated were statements alleging unusual and deviant behaviour by Fr. Searson. She spoke of conspiracies and a secret Church enquiry. I told her that I didn't know anything of that but that she should take the allegations to the police if they were bona fide.

I asked her how she was coping and suggested she seek counselling as she appeared highly strung and stressed.

She then left indicating that she would consider the advice I had given her.

P. Annett
P. Annett
28/7/93

P. Annett
Fr. Laurie Maste (Salesian, Tasmania) rang. He is a cousin of Mrs. Giddings. He wanted to put in a good word for her.

P. Annett
29/7/93

*Noted P. Annett 29/7/93.
- based on info re local Salesian in this file note (revised)*