

Marist Brothers
58 Fernberg Road
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STATES:

1. I am a member of the Institute of Marist Brothers. I became a Novice on 2 July, 1958 and took my First Vows on 2 July, 1959 and my Final Vows in January, 1965. At the time of my entry into the Novitiate I was given the religious name of "Brother Irenaeus" but when the rules of the Order changed I then reverted to my baptismal name and have been known as "Brother Anthony" since 1974. I am presently teaching at the Marist Brothers College at Rosalie.
2. From 1964 to 1967 I was at the Marist Brothers, Ashgrove in Queensland, from 1968 to 1973 at the Marist Brothers Juniorate at Mittagong, from 1974 to 1975 at Marist Brothers at Auburn, from 1976 to 1983 at St Augustines at Cairns and from 1984 to 1988 at Trinity College at Lismore. From 1989 to the end of 1992 I spent most of my time out of Australia in Kenya, at Rome and in Berkeley, California. I took up my present position at Rosalie in January, 1993.
3. In 1984 I transferred from Cairns to Lismore where I took up a position as the Brother Superior of the Marist Brothers Community there. Brother Gregory Sutton arrived at Lismore at the beginning of the 1985 school year and he left in April, 1987.

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4. During those years there were six or seven Brothers living in the Marist Brothers Community at Lismore and teaching at either St Carthage's, which was the Primary School or Trinity Catholic College, the Secondary School. There were Brothers Kenneth Eaton, Francis Fahey, David Lawrence, Lawrence McCane, Dominic O'Sullivan, Michael Procajlo [who has since left the Order] and Paul Turner. Some of them would not have been there for the full January, 1985 to April, 1987 period.
 5. Teachers at both St Carthage's and Trinity College included Marist Brothers, Presentation Sisters and lay teachers employed by the Catholic Education Office or Trinity Catholic College, Lismore. Both schools were co-educational. Brother Gregory taught Year 5 at St Carthage's. The Principal there during 1985-87 was Sister Julia O'Sullivan [who died in 1994] and the Deputy Principal was Mrs Jan O'Grady. Brother Paul Turner taught at St Carthage's in 1985 and 1986, Brother David Lawrence in 1987. The other Brothers all taught at Trinity College.
 6. I found Brother Gregory to have a very immature personality, I would describe him as being at the emotional and psychological level of an end of Primary School boy. He enjoyed the company of young children, indeed seemed to prefer to associate with them rather than with adults. He had a model train set which he had installed in the laundry of the Monastery and it was common for boys to gather there with him to play with the trains. He was associated with a young boy's football team. I often found him evasive about where he had been, what he had been doing. He seemed to have a "catch me if you can" attitude which is found in a lot of boys in the 11-12 year range.

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7. I should explain that by the mid-1980's the discipline in Catholic religious Orders, like the Marist Brothers, was not what it once was. Appropriate behaviour was now very much a matter left to the personal responsibility of the individual. Rules about leaving the monastery and associating with outsiders had been considerably relaxed.
 8. Brother Gregory's immaturity in his dealings with the children was also reflected in his relationships with some of the lay teaching staff, particularly the Deputy Principal, Mrs Jan O'Grady. He had great difficulty in accepting her authority. His attitude was very much "I am a Marist Brother. Who is this woman trying to tell me what I should do". There was on-going conflict and a very bad relationship.
 9. I have been told that Brother Alexis Turton has stated that about the middle of 1985 he visited the community at Lismore, where he spoke with the various Brothers in his pastoral and community development role. During this time he saw Sister Julia O'Sullivan, the Principal of St Carthage's. She told him that some of the teachers were concerned about Gregory's favouritism with some students and with his spending time alone with some of the children, although there was no specific incident or conduct that was worrying her. Brother Alexis spoke with Brother Gregory who claimed that some of these children had worries and he had been comforting them. He was emphatic there was nothing improper in these associations. This fits with my own recollection although I was not given any detail at the time.
 10. I have been told that in about March, 1986, Brother Alexis returned to Lismore to deal with a report by Sister Julia of inappropriate behaviour by Brother

Gregory. He saw Sister Julia at St Carthage's and she showed him a document which she had drawn up and which she wanted Gregory to sign. It deals with incidents which occurred in December, 1985 and February, 1986. The incidents related to favouritism by Brother Gregory had shown to certain students, to his being alone with students, to physical contact with students and to driving students outside the school. The document which was later signed by Brother Gregory, was an undertaking to desist from such conduct. I must say that I have no recollection of being told, at the time, about this document.

12. Brother Alexis has stated that he asked Sister Julia if there was any specific incident of impropriety, anything which she felt suggested sexual misconduct with students. She said there had not been and that her main concern was that a number of teachers were very worried that Gregory's relationship with some students, his being alone with them and his putting his arms around them was too personal. No one was suggesting sexual misconduct or sexual abuse of these children but some were suspicious. I should mention that prior to changes in the guidelines in 1988, it was not mandatory to report suspicions to the authorities and only became so after 1988. Prior to that it was necessary to have something of substance, some sort of proof.
13. I became aware of these strong prohibitions on Brother Gregory by the School authorities, not through the school or in any formal way. I heard about it at some later stage. I have no clear recollection of how I came to hear about it.



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14. My impression is that around the middle of 1986, perhaps more towards the latter half of that year, I had a couple or three meetings with Mrs Rolfe. Mrs O'Grady was also present and, I think, Sister Julia. Mrs Rolfe was counselling a girl and things were emerging which were creating a vague feeling that there was something wrong with respect to Brother Gregory. I was told nothing specific and I was aware that Mrs Rolfe would have to respect confidentiality about what she had learned from the girl.
15. There was also a conversation I had with a Mrs **RED**, who was the mother of six children. Her youngest was in Brother Gregory's class. She mentioned to me that Gregory had driven to Murgon and had taken young **RED** with him for company. I asked her if she had any concerns. She said something like "Not really. I just thought it was unusual that Brother would take a boy of his age for company". I said something like "In lots of ways Greg is really only that age himself". I do remember advising her that if she was unhappy about this association, the next time Gregory asked to take her son anywhere she should say "No" and not be persuaded to give permission because Gregory was a Marist Brother.
16. At some stage I know that I passed on my concerns about Brother Gregory to Brother Alman Dwyer, the then Provincial of our Order. I must emphasise that I had learned nothing from anyone that could be regarded as concrete evidence of impropriety on Brother Gregory's part but there had been enough concerns which made me feel uneasy about Brother Gregory's association with children and his on-going conflict with Mrs O'Grady.

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17. I cannot remember now the circumstances under which I spoke with Brother Alman. I am almost certain that it was a personal meeting and not a telephone call. I feel that it took place at Lismore, on the occasion of a visit by the Provincial to our community. He always made an official visit once each year. As well, Trinity College was managed by the Lismore Catholic Secondary School Pty Limited. The Board of that body include representatives of the two Orders and the Catholic Education Office. Brother Alman was the Marist Brothers representative on the Board and attended meetings in Lismore twice a year. It could have been on the occasion of one of those visits.
18. I told Brother Alman of the concerns of some of the other teachers about Brother Gregory and the children, about his relationship difficulties with Mrs O'Grady. Once I had passed my concerns on to the Provincial I really had little more to do directly with the matter. My most significant memory is that sometime about March or April, 1987, Mrs Rolfe contacted me and said something like "How can I get in touch with your Provincial". I would have given her his telephone number. I concluded that it was about Brother Gregory but I feel that she said no more to me than that.
19. At about the same time I have a recollection of Mrs Rolfe saying that she had had a conversation with Father Frank Mulcahy, the Administrator of St Carthage's Cathedral [now Parish Priest of Alstonville] who said about Brother Gregory "We have got to get that guy out of here".
20. I knew that in April, 1987, Brother Gregory was moved from Lismore back to the Provincial Office at Drummoyne and that he had been to see a psychologist in Melbourne.

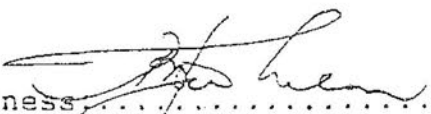
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I had no real idea of what had happened to Brother Gregory.

21. During Brother Gregory's time in Lismore I have no recollection of the words sexual abuse being mentioned when suspicions were raised. I never spoke directly to Brother Gregory about the suspicions raised in my meetings with Mrs Rolfe and Mrs O'Grady. I assumed their information had been learned in the confidential situation of a counselling session with the little girl involved. The words they were using were such phrases as "inappropriate behaviour" which I understood to be kissing and cuddling.

22. Because I was out of Australia between 1989 and 1992 I did not really learn what had happened with Gregory until last year when his matter was before the courts. Even then, because Queensland papers do not report much New South Wales news, I did not even know what charges had been brought.

22. I have been informed since his sentencing that Brother Gregory has admitted that during his time at St Carthage's he committed sexual offences with students named ACV, ACU, ACZ, ACZ, ACT, ADB, ADM, ADM and ADQ. The only name I was even aware of was ACU. I had never heard of any of the other students.

Witness, 
[John Whelan]

