

M. CONDON  
136

I first became aware of Brother Gregory Sutton's professional disloyalty to people outside the school staff in 1985. When asked how he was settling in to St. Carthage's he replied 'that the place needed a new executive and deputy - someone who would do a better job'. He added that he knew what he was talking about because he had been in administrative positions himself. This was said to my relatives, Mr. & Mrs. B. O'Connor, who were trying to be friendly and make conversation with Brother. They were surprised and shocked that a teacher would make such a disparaging remark to strangers, as they were to him, at the time.

Later in 1985, one of my Infants' Staff, Roslyn Howard, approached me as to what she should do regarding a complaint from a parent. The parent was concerned about Brother Gregory's relationship with her daughter. The child's mother had, at this stage, requested that the information be kept confidential, but Roslyn was feeling very concerned and had a sense of responsibility to the school and the children in our care. I advised her that she should inform Sr. Julia about the general details of the complaint and she did this, despite the fact that she found it extremely difficult to have to report a matter concerning a religious member of staff. Roslyn decided that if she was approached again about this matter, she would do all in her power to get the parent to speak to Sr. Julia personally. This was achieved a short time later when the parent did have an interview with Sr. Julia. Roslyn also inferred at this time that other parents were expressing concerns about Br. Gregory. She later documented these details for school files.

At the end of 1985 I accompanied the Year 6 children on their annual camp to Sydney. In conversation overheard between some of the boys, and in subsequent discussion with them, I learnt that some of them had been caught kissing girls in the basement at school earlier that year. They had been discovered by Br. Gregory whose only comment was 'that it was O.K. as long as they didn't get caught by some of the others'. The boys were surprised that nothing more had come of the matter and felt that it would have received more attention from other staff members. I found this to be another example of Brother's lack of co-operation in enforcing school rules which several teachers had regularly commented on during the year.

During 1986 my mother told me of comments she was hearing about Brother Gregory from a neighbour of hers, [REDACTED]. This mother was concerned about stories her daughter was bringing home about things that were supposedly happening in the classroom. The child was very unhappy and feeling ostracized by the favouritism that Brother was showing to other children in the class. Particular mention was made of the special place [ACU] seemed to occupy in the class. These special friends were the ones who won all the prizes, were chosen for special tasks, spent a lot of time at the teacher's desk and were allowed liberties in the classroom that were denied to others. After hearing these complaints over a period of time, and feeling that [REDACTED] [REDACTED] was herself becoming bitter and critical of the school and the teachers, my mother told her to contact Sr. Julia and discuss the matter with her. She then told me of what she had advised and I informed Sr. Julia of [REDACTED] feelings. The mother

137

did have an interview with Sr. Julia and they seemed to get on well as a result of this.

Later during 1986 my mother again referred to Brother Gregory in relation to his friendship with ACU . Mum had been ACU babysitter for a period of three years and has always maintained a special relationship with her and the family. She mentioned that in conversation with ACU and her mother it appeared that Brother Gregory seemed to spend an unusual amount of time with ACU and that some of this time seemed to be spent alone - going swimming and for drives. Mum thought this was a little unusual and knowing of ACU desire for attention she felt his wouldn't be the best thing for her development. However, as Mrs. REDACTED appeared to think it was good of Brother to take such an interest in the child, mum did not feel she should comment. This has played on her mind and I know she is concerned about the effect all this attention could have on ACU

Also during last year a colleague of mine who no longer works at St. Carthage's was questioned about Br. Gregory . This parent was wary of some of his ways of relating to children. This teacher did not encourage the parent to discuss the matter with her and referred her to the school. I do not know if the parent ever followed this up at school level.

Just recently two of the young Kindergarten teachers commented that they were aware that Brother Grégory was regularly watching them while they were giving Physical Education lessons to their children. They were obviously feeling uncomfortable about this but were ignoring his behaviour. I intend to discreetly monitor this and I have informed Mrs. O'Grady of the teachers' impressions. Several of my staff have been rebuffed by Brother's manner on several occasions and have commented to me that he appears to have a very negative manner to our school. This is the kind of attitude that slowly erodes staff morale and unity - two things we have worked very hard to develop and maintain at St. Carthage's. Earlier this year, I heard from sources outside the school that teachers at another school referred to Sr. Julia by Br. Gregory's name for her - "Gadiaffi". I find this lack of respect very distasteful and contrary to what a Catholic school stands for in the parish and local community.

These matters have concerned me because of the implications they could have for the children in our care and because, through my role on the school executive I know there have been other areas of concern regarding Br. Gregory's professionalism in his relationships with school authority and with the children.

*Margaret Condon.*