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MERCY ADMIN CENT

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MESSAGE

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Fr Brian

More expansive Media Release by Sr-Anne
provided on request to the Morning Bulletin. The "bully" will
cover the story in the morning. Sr-Anne will also be on
Channel 10 News, WIN News and probably Channel 9 News tonight.
She was also interviewed by ABC Radio and has given ^{the} Media
release to Australian Associated Press. Geoff Hancock has also
been interviewed by ABC for Brisbane radio.

Regards
Phillip

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Media Release issued 16 July 1998 by Sr Di-Anne Rowan, Congregational Leader of the Rockhampton Sisters of Mercy pertaining to progress being made towards an out of court settlement of the litigation taken against the Sisters by the former residents of St Joseph's Home, Neerkol.

Sr Di-Anne said that the Rockhampton Sisters of Mercy were committed to reaching a just and equitable settlement of the litigation commenced against them by former residents of Neerkol.

"I have met many former Neerkol residents during the past 18 months and the last thing I would wish to do would be to add to their distress by way of a protracted and traumatic court case. I know the Sisters would also find the court process extremely stressful and very daunting so it in the best interests of all parties to have the matter resolved amicably away from the court room" Sr Di-Anne said.

Sr Di-Anne said she had great faith that the legal representatives for both the Neerkol Action Support Group and the Sisters could work through the complex and sensitive legal issues to produce a fair and just outcome to the litigation.

"I understand that the lawyers for both parties are currently working on a process that will facilitate the mutually satisfactory resolution that we all seek. The number of people involved in the litigation and their different life experiences at Neerkol make it difficult to forecast a timeline for the settlement of the claims but it is my hope that the negotiations can be concluded as expeditiously as possible" Sr Di-Anne said.

Sr Di-Anne said that the lawyers were still gathering information and until all the information was available and able to be perused by the legal representatives for both parties, it was impossible to even speculate as to the quantum of monies that may form the basis of any out of court settlement.

"What I do know is that the goodwill and trust that has grown out of the discussions between ourselves and many of the former Neerkol residents over the past 12 months will assist considerably in reaching a fair and just resolution to the legal action. Any settlement of claims that is reached will help us all to continue the journey of reconciliation that we have travelled thus far" Sr Di-Anne added.

Celebrating 125 years in 1998