

Mercy Administration Centre

ROCKHAMPTON CONGREGATION
OF THE SISTERS OF MERCY
OF AUSTRALIA



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12 April 1998

Ms Mary Eather
Secretary
NASG Committee
PO Box 350
Paradise Point
Gold Coast 4216

Dear Mary

Thank you for your recent letter and for your kind comments. Believe me when the burden seems at its heaviest, it is words of encouragement that enable a person to find the strength to carry on.

I also appreciated you sharing with me your personal motivation for the work you are doing with respect to Neerkol. I can understand how difficult it must be for you to have your motives questioned and to deal with life experiences that you can never forget and that at the moment you find impossible to forgive.

I regret that you were challenged by a member of a Religious Congregation regarding the role you have played in highlighting the pain and suffering that many residents of Neerkol experienced. I would hope that the Sister involved was not a member of the Rockhampton Sisters of Mercy Congregation but even so, I know it is little consolation to you for the regrettable words that were spoken.

Mary, whatever others may say to you in person or what they may choose to write or say in the media, please know that my feelings and emotions and that of my Congregation are as I have expressed in our Apology and as I have said publicly and privately to you and to other former residents of Neerkol. It is important we keep open the channels of communication between ourselves so that we can avoid misunderstandings that could set back the reconciliation process.

In recent days, I have been approached with requests for comment by two news organisations and accordingly I have made two Media Statements that I have enclosed with this correspondence so that you can see exactly what I have said.

Once again, thank you for the supportive words in your letter - they certainly were warmly appreciated. I pray that one day you will find the peace you seek and a way to forgive those who caused you such terrible hurt. Your sadness sorrows me but at the same time inspires me to continue down the path of healing and reconciliation in the hope that, while the past cannot be changed, the future for you and for other past residents of Neerkol can be made so much better.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Di-Anne".

Sr Di-Anne Rowan
Congregational Leader