

MERCY ADMINISTRATION CENTRE

SISTERS OF MERCY
ROCKHAMPTON CONGREGATION



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Dear Sisters,

I am writing again to let you know something of what is happening with respect to claims against us arising out of the conduct of St. Joseph's Home, Neerkol.

The claim to which I referred when I wrote in September has been formally lodged. Because the allegations it contains relate to years now long past, the matter has been referred to a Judge in order to have his decision about whether or not the "statute of limitations (of time)" applies. One possible outcome is to say that the time interval is such that it is no longer possible for a claim to be pursued. The other is that the difficulties which the time interval causes should be put aside and the claimant allowed to bring the case forward. We are awaiting the Judge's decision which might only then bring on an appeal from either side. I am constantly aware that the legal issue is one thing, establishing justice may well be another. In the weeks since I wrote, another claim has become likely. Since it refers to roughly the same period, the claimant will no doubt await the outcome of the first.

I am well aware that those Sisters who worked at Neerkol over the years have a particular anxiety in it all. However we have now established that there is no member of our Congregation still alive who was on the staff at Neerkol during the years concerned in the first case. I have given that information under oath and hope it is a source of relief to some.

Once again I ask you not to discuss this matter with anyone other than other members of the Congregation, avoid discussion of it by telephone and also take particular care not to leave this letter around. We can only continue to pray for a just and compassionate outcome. The knowledge that so many of you are keeping this constantly in your prayers is a source of great comfort. God bless.

Yours sincerely,

Sr. Berneice Loch, R.S.M.
 CONGREGATIONAL LEADER.