

UPDATE 39

Royal Commission Marist Brothers

Canberra



Friday 13 June 2014 – Day 4

Day four of the Marist Brothers Canberra hearing commenced with the former Principal of Marist College Canberra, Brother Terence Heinrich, being cross examined.

He was asked about his interaction with the then Provincial when he reported the complaint to him, and about his recollection of conversation in the mid-1980s with former house master, John Doyle. The questions covered his discussion with Kostka following the complaint, and the steps he took following his meeting with the complainant's parents.

Br Heinrich said that as time went on, Br Kostka had less authority in the school. "I'm not sure he was happy about that. I think he perhaps resented being overshadowed by other people, lay people particularly.

"He was not given too much accountability, so we had some difficulties knowing what was happening, with money particularly. They were some of the issues that bothered us. He could be difficult to deal with," Br Heinrich said.

Br Heinrich reiterated to the Commission that apart from the one allegation against Kostka he had never received any other complaint from a teacher, member of staff or student about Kostka's behaviour.

Br Heinrich concluded his evidence by saying that the failure in dealing with the 1986 abuse allegation against Kostka began with him. He also said he now views the failure of his superiors at the time with "disappointment, some anger, some sadness".

Br Chris Wade then gave evidence. He was the headmaster at Marist College Canberra in 1993, the last year that Br Kostka was at the school.

Br Wade told the Commission he was not given any information about Br Kostka when he took over the role of headmaster in Canberra.

He said if he had been aware of Kostka's history he would have been extremely cautious about having him in any position of trust with students.

Br Wade said he had no recollection of meeting Damian De Marco in 1993 when he came back to the school to make a complaint about Br Kostka, but accepted that such a meeting had taken place.

He could not recall Mr De Marco's approach with allegations about what Br Kostka had done while he had been at the school.

Br Wade was asked if he had heard anything earlier about Br Kostka, and said that he had heard some vague talk among the Brothers in the early 1960s.

Br Wade also said he was not aware of why Kostka was removed from the school at the end of 1993.

Mr Denis Doherty, an ex-Marist brother and former teacher in a Marist Brothers primary school in North Queensland, started giving evidence late on Friday about former Brother Greg Sutton. The school can't be named for legal reasons.

Mr Doherty will continue giving evidence on Monday.

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