

The Brotherhood of St Laurence

67 Brunswick Street, Fitzroy, Victoria, 3065. Telephone 419 7055.

MEMO: 22nd October, 1984.
TO: All members of staff.
FROM: Executive Director.

MEMBERSHIP OF THE BROTHERHOOD

The Brotherhood of St Laurence (Incorporation) Act, No. 8188 (1971) recognises a membership of 15 people to elect the Board of ten. From the revised schedule to the Act (1980), the following points are relevant -

There shall be the following two classes of members of the Brotherhood:-

- (i) "A" Class Members - There shall be ten such members all of whom shall be persons who have applied for membership and who have been elected to membership by a majority of the "A" and "B" Class members voting as one body. Of these ten members at least two shall be "clerical members" being persons who are clerks in holy orders and whose applications for membership have received the prior written approval of the Archbishop and four shall be "approved members" being persons whose applications have received the prior written approval of the Archbishop.
- (ii) "B" Class Members these shall be employees of the Brotherhood who apply for membership of the Brotherhood and who are elected to membership by a majority of the "A" and "B" Class members voting as one body. "B" Class members shall not at any time exceed five in number.

"B" Class members are elected for a period of five years, but can offer themselves for re-election and be re-elected by a majority of the "A" and "B" Class members voting as one body. They are invited to attend all meetings of the Board as consultants, but are not entitled to vote or hold the powers and privileges of members of the Board.

The explanation for this is that there are statutory restrictions upon the number of staff who can also be Board members. Thus, under the Act only the Executive Director can be a member of the Board of Directors with full voting rights.

Currently there exists a vacancy in the B Class membership. In the past our practice has been to appoint the five most senior members of the organisation in terms of their responsibility. In this specific instance, the Board has requested that this vacancy be filled by a female member of staff, as a commitment to a policy of affirmative action. This move has no precedent and therefore there are no criteria as to the required qualities of such a person.

Last Thursday a group of women staff met informally at Head Office to consider how a number of recommendations might be presented to me and then to the membership regarding the election of the fifth B Class member.

Accordingly, I have met with two representatives of the group, Anne Hardy and Anne Stafford, and have asked them to assist me in preparing a list of appropriate names from around the whole organisation. They will therefore be the responsible reference point for any further enquiries.

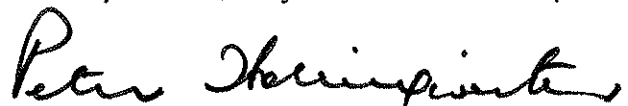
I was asked for some guidelines to assist with a list of names and the following comments are relevant.

The Board will be looking for a person who has demonstrated over a reasonable period that she has a broad commitment and loyalty to the Brotherhood of St Laurence as a whole and all its aims and objectives. To become a member is to accept the important function of a trustee and guardian of the organisation for an initial period of five years.

In this particular instance, questions of position in the hierarchy are not relevant. Consideration should be given to people who have a mature understanding of the Brotherhood, who are able to maintain confidentiality, and in particular can manage the difficult tension between being a member of staff on the one hand and being privy to the decision-making processes of the Board on the other.

I have agreed to bring before the Board at its November meeting a short list of four names of women who can be considered for the position together with their curriculum vitae.

You may wish to submit a name of someone on the staff with whom you have had close association over time, and I suggest that you should either submit that name to me, to Anne Hardy or to Anne Stafford (at Head Office) by November 8th.



Peter Hollingworth,
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR.