



We proclaim a crucified Christ

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07 May 2020

STATEMENT

Most Rev Peter A Comensoli

Archbishop of Melbourne

It is good that all the material from Case 35 of the Royal Commission into the Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse has now been made fully available. There was never any question that the redacted information should remain closed to the public.

I again offer my unreserved apology for the failure of the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne to responsibly care for and protect our young people and vulnerable adults.

I wish also to commend the work of all involved in the Royal Commission, particularly the survivors who took part, and for those many voices they represented. The Royal Commission was extremely difficult and painful and has been a critical catalyst for important and necessary change.

While the passage of time can never obscure the systemic failings of leadership, process and culture of that period, the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne has acted upon the recommendations of the Royal Commission. Much has changed as a result.

Rigorous policies, procedures and practices to ensure safety for children and young people are now in place, and principally regulated through the Commission for Children and Young People. New governance structures for Catholic education in relation to Parish Priests as employers has also been announced, and is intended to be implemented by 1 Jan 2021.

Child safety and care is not a project with an end date. It requires life-long vigilance. My commitment, and that of our leadership in the Archdiocese, is to listen attentively and honestly to those who have experienced abuse, and to find pathways of justice and healing for them.

As the current Archbishop of Melbourne, I now have the responsibility to consider the details of the material released today, and to determine what further steps may need to be addressed as a result.

**For media enquiries please contact: Annie Carrett, Director, Office of the Archbishop
T: 9926 5614 M: 0439 600 233 E: annie.carrett@cam.org.au**