



# Diocese of Armidale

Ph: (02) 6772 4971  
Fax: (02) 5701 5140  
Email: [chancery@armidale.catholic.org.au](mailto:chancery@armidale.catholic.org.au)

Catholic Chancery Office  
3/131 Barney Street  
PO Box 93  
Armidale NSW 2350

## STATEMENT ON THE ROYAL COMMISSION “CATHOLIC WRAP UP”

The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse is holding a number of case studies in February and March to look at current practices of institutions. The “Catholic wrap up” is the first of these and will commence on 6<sup>th</sup> February, 2017 and is scheduled for 3 weeks. The scope and purpose of this case study is to inquire into:

1. The current policies and procedures of Catholic Church authorities in Australia in relation to child protection and child-safe standards, including responding to allegations of child sexual abuse.
2. Factors that may have contributed to the occurrence of child sexual abuse at Catholic Church institutions in Australia.
3. Factors that may have affected the institutional response of Catholic Church authorities in Australia to child sexual abuse.
4. The responses of Catholic Church authorities in Australia to relevant case study report(s) and other Royal Commission reports.
5. Data relating to the extent of claims of child sexual abuse in the Catholic Church of Australia.
6. Any related matters

Whilst the witness list is not yet available it will take the form of both individual witnesses being questioned and panel discussions on particular topics. Though it should not take the form of an adversarial cross examination of witnesses, the ‘discussion’ will certainly be robust.

Panel discussions are expected to include the topics of Canon law; Celibacy; Clericalism; Confession; Screening and formation of priests including seminary operations; Catholic education governance; and Safeguarding regimes. It is expected that a number of Bishops will be called and a final session will be devoted to survivors.

The public hearing may again be a painful experience for many – survivors, their families and members of the Catholic Church community. I encourage you to continue to pray for victims of abuse and for the success of the Royal Commission.

I encourage you to reread my Pastoral Letter “Hearing their Cry” and especially the section on 10 Points of Change in our Diocese. This will provide you with information on what is the current practice in the Diocese of Armidale.

Yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Michael Kennedy  
**Bishop of Armidale**  
25<sup>th</sup> January, 2017