



2 March 2017

Dear Brothers and Marist Friends

I know that you have been alarmed, disappointed and hurt by the recent publication of data from the Royal Commission.

Some have been so shocked that they have asked me “*Is it accurate?*” My response is that given the data requested and the statistical processes used, it is.

I wanted to write to you to give greater detail than is provided by a headline number so that you understand the situation clearly. The Church has been called upon to be transparent, so I’m giving you the data we have.

Our Professional Standards staff have reviewed the information and the Royal Commission’s data, and what I report here comes from their analysis. I am grateful to them for their efforts to illuminate the data which we provided to the Royal Commission.

Our records indicate that from 1950 to 2010 we had 1074 men as Brothers for varying periods of time. The Royal Commission’s data has reduced this to 1055 – subtracting men who were Brothers for only a very short period.

We were asked to provide a list of Brothers about whom complaints of sexual abuse were received in the period 1980 to 2015. After eliminating unidentified individuals, there remained a list of 151 Brothers and former Brothers about whom complaints had been received. This, in raw figures, equates to 14.3% of the total (151/1055 as a percentage).

However, the Royal Commission statistics are not based on the number of Brothers, rather they are based on a statistical representation of years in ministry. The Commission has concluded that for each of the men who were Brothers in this period they spent an average of 23.9 years in ministry. They have then calculated that each of the *alleged perpetrators* (their term, meaning anyone about whom a complaint was made) spent an average of 34 years in ministry. The Commission’s percentage is a ‘weighted’ measure of years in ministry for all Brothers and years in ministry of ‘alleged perpetrators’. Their figure is 20.4%. However, the Royal Commission website shows that the unweighted percentage is, as I indicated above, 14.3%.

The list of 151 individuals is comprised of Brothers and former Brothers, many deceased and some still living. Some have been charged by Police and moved through a Court process. Some were the subject of an independent investigation where the claim was either substantiated or not substantiated. There is a considerable number where no investigation was undertaken; often because the person was already deceased, or because the allegation lacked clarity or the claimant did not wish to be involved in any investigative process.

From our information, those who went to trial and either pleaded guilty or were found guilty number 24. There are 11 Brothers who are or have been the subject of Police charges which are/were unresolved due to death, illness or other reasons. There are 65 individuals who were never subject to any investigation or legal process. Additionally, there are actions that have been investigated or

assessed that have been substantiated or unsubstantiated. These figures are difficult to analyse due to multiple claims and appeals.

The Royal Commission rightly points out that not all victims have come forward; so in fact, there may be other offenders not yet identified. We certainly have been told that there are other victims of our very well-known offenders who have not yet come forward, and maybe never will.

We have no control over how the Royal Commission's statistics are interpreted or reported upon, however from the additional detail provided and indeed the detailed information contained in the Royal Commission's report, there is much more to these figures than a headline number is capable of conveying.

I hope this additional detail clarifies the situation a little.

Of course we are not about quibbling over percentages or numbers. We all accept that even one case of sexual abuse of a student in one of our schools or ministries is one case too many. Unfortunately, we must accept that far too many of our students were harmed by abuse – irrespective of the percentages.

We cannot re-write history, or undo the failures of the past.

We can, and we will, ensure that the lessons of the past are not forgotten, and that our schools and ministries are as safe as possible and places in which young people grow and develop, unaffected by such outrageous actions.

Please continue to pray for each other, for victims, offenders and all who have been damaged by this insidious crime and enormous failure; a failure I hope and pray is of the past.

Sincerely



Br Peter Carroll FMS
Provincial

NOTE

The Royal Commissions' statistical analysis indicates:

The average duration in ministry for all 1055 Brothers over the 60 year period was 23.9 years - 23.9×1055 (25,214.5 years in ministry).

The 151 alleged perpetrators were in ministry for an average of 34 years each - 34×151 (5,134 years in ministry).

The 20.4% is derived from these figures (ie 5134/25,214.5 as a percentage). This is using the 'Weighted Average methodology'.

The Statistics presentations can be found in documents on the Royal Commission website relating to Case Study 50.