

Media Release

Marist Brothers' Province of Australia



Statement from the Marist Brothers Australia

11 December 2015

The Marist Brothers Province of Australia has welcomed the publication of the final report of Case Study 13 by the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

The Marist Brothers will now carefully consider the report.

“We acknowledge the important work of the Royal Commission in giving voice to those who have suffered past abuse in our institutions”, said Provincial Br. Peter Carroll.

“To them we reiterate our enduring apology for what has taken place.

“The Royal Commission process has enabled us to honestly confront our past and the undeniable truth that members of our Order committed crimes against children with devastating consequences.

“As an institution we have reframed our child protection measures across all our institutions and works, and over 25 years we have built effective structures and now have robust policies and procedures in place.

“The Marist Brothers remain committed to working with victims of abuse in our institutions fairly and compassionately, and will continue to try and bring some healing to lives damaged by this evil.

“We know we have made mistakes, and we are committed to learning from them. We are confident that our current approaches, though not perfect, are much more appropriate, transparent and fair”, said Br. Carroll.

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The Marist Brothers' Province of Australia has adopted the recently released guidelines on how Catholic Church authorities should respond to civil claims of child sexual abuse.

The guidelines, which have been endorsed by the Catholic Church leadership, come into effect in January 2016 and provide a framework within which claims and litigation should be conducted.

"The Marist Brothers are committed to repairing the damage caused by past abuse in a way that reduces the potential for further trauma", said Provincial Peter Carroll.

"These guidelines recognise that lodging a civil claim can be a difficult experience for a complainant and as such, they provide a clear and consistent approach aimed at reducing any trauma.

"Released this week by the Truth Justice and Healing Council, the guidelines:

- *Provide consistency in the way claims are handled*
- *Require religious orders to identify the correct defendant to sue*
- *Recommend a framework for litigation that eases trauma*
- *Cover issues including keeping legal costs and paying legitimate claims without litigation*

"The Marist Brothers welcome this 'complainant focused approach' and believe it will deliver better outcomes for those who have suffered past abuse.

"As such, our Provincial Council has now adopted the guidelines as our formal policy to govern the actions of the Brothers and our legal and other representatives in the management of civil claims", said Brother Carroll.

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