

**ABUSE IN CARE ROYAL COMMISSION OF INQUIRY
FAITH-BASED INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSE HEARING**

Under	The Inquiries Act 2013
In the matter of	The Royal Commission of Inquiry into Historical Abuse in State Care and in the Care of Faith-based Institutions
Royal Commission:	Judge Coral Shaw (Chair) Dr Anaru Erueti Ali'imuumua Sandra Alofivae Paul Gibson
Counsel:	Mr Simon Mount KC, Ms Kerryn Beaton KC, Ms Katherine Anderson, Ms Tania Sharkey, Mr Michael Thomas, Ms Kathy Basire and Ms Alisha Castle for the Royal Commission Ms Rachael Schmidt-McCleave and Ms Julia White for the Crown Ms Sally McKechnie and Ms Brooke Clifford for Te Rōpū Tautoko, the Catholic Bishops and Congregational Leaders Mrs Fiona Guy-Kidd, Mr Jeremy Johnston and Ms India Shores for the Anglican Church Ms Maria Dew KC, Ms Kiri Harkess and Mr Lourenzo Fernandez for the Methodist Church and Wesley Faith Mr Brian Henry, Mr Chris Shannon and Ms Sykes for Gloriavale Ms Sarah Kuper and Mr Matthew Hague for the Presbyterian Church Ms Helen Smith and Ms Sarah Kuper for Presbyterian Support Central Mr Sam Hider for Presbyterian Support Otago Mr Andrew Barker and Ms Honor Lanham for Dilworth School and Dilworth Trust Board Mr Karl van der Plas, Mr Jaiden Gosha, Ms Rachael Reed and Ms Ali van Ammers for the Dilworth Class Action Group
Venue:	Level 2 Abuse in Care Royal Commission of Inquiry 414 Khyber Pass Road AUCKLAND
Date:	20 October 2022

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4 **Adjournment from 12.56 pm to 1.03 pm**

5 **CHAIR:** Mr Harding, I understand you would like to address us first; is that correct?

6 **MR HARDING:** That's correct.

7 **CHAIR:** Thank you.

8 **DILWORTH SURVIVORS' PETITION**

9 **MR HARDING:** Tēnā koutou katoa, thank you for this opportunity for us to address the
10 Commission. My name is Neil Harding, I am a Dilworth survivor, I'm middle-aged,
11 grey-brown hair, blue suit, blue tie, light blue shirt. And with me is Greg Evans.

12 **MR EVANS:** Yes, I'm a senior male of large build, wearing a charcoal suit, glasses, pink shirt and
13 tie.

14 **CHAIR:** Thank you.

15 **MR HARDING:** Once upon a time we assumed institutions such as schools and churches obeyed
16 our society's laws and were therefore beyond reproach, that it was impossible for the
17 figures of authority that ran them to do wrong and conspire to do wrong. But we have since
18 discovered that Dilworth School chose to participate in an enormous wrong against
19 children. They chose to cover up the vilest of sexual abuse, over 30 paedophiles abused
20 hundreds of boys over a 40-year period.

21 It seems the reputation of their organisation was more important than the welfare of
22 the boys in their care in contradiction to the moral values that the school was supposed to
23 reflect and live by.

24 As survivors, our mission as part of our healing journey is to prevent the children of
25 tomorrow being harmed by institutions that allow travesties such as this to occur.

26 We experienced, as well as the loss of our innocence, the unravelling of many of the
27 lives of either ourselves or our classmates and friends. We experienced the devastating
28 news of the suicide of many of our brothers.

29 Trauma and the loss of innocence endured by children contributes to many of the
30 issues facing our society, especially as they enter adulthood. Their neurodevelopment is
31 adversely impacted and causes many of them to remain in a sympathetic fight or flight
32 response where survival is as good as it gets, let alone thoughts of a career or being capable
33 of functional relationships. Many end up with drug and alcohol addictions. The effects of
34 PTSD are becoming more researched and more understood. We need to do a lot better.

1 Today, Greg Evans and I, on behalf of 170 Dilworth survivors, family and friends
2 present a petition calling for a Dilworth Law that would require the mandatory reporting of
3 child abuse to Police.

4 Specifically the petition is asking the Abuse in Care - Royal Commission of Inquiry
5 to recommend to the New Zealand Government the implementation of the Dilworth Law.
6 This law would require a person or entity to report to Police if a child or young person is at
7 risk of significant harm, the child or young person has been or is at risk of being physically
8 or sexually abused or ill-treated.

9 This law already exists in New South Wales under the Children and Young Persons
10 (Care and Protection) Act 1998 No. 157, Part 2.

11 We were astounded to learn that in New Zealand there is currently no such law. If
12 this law had existed and been followed when we were at Dilworth most of us would never
13 have been sexually abused.

14 We appreciate the Royal Commission's understanding of survivor voice and it
15 would greatly help to us know that institutions like Dilworth School can never be allowed
16 to cover up abuse again. Thank you.

17 **CHAIR:** I will come down and take the petition from you.

18 **MR HARDING:** Thank you.

19 **CHAIR:** On behalf of the Commissioners, I accept the petition and I assure the survivors that we
20 will certainly take it into deep consideration. Thank you very much.

21 Ms Anderson.

22 **MS ANDERSON:** Thank you, Madam Chair, I think we'll take the lunch adjournment, I suggest
23 2.15.

24 **CHAIR:** Yes, 2.15, we'll resume for the Anglican part of the evidence, thank you.

25 **Adjournment from 1.08 pm to 2.15 pm**