

**Abuse in Care Royal Commission of Inquiry  
Contextual Hearing on Friday,  
8 November 2019 at the Rydges Hotel, Auckland**

**Commission Members:**

Sir Anand Satyanand - Chair

Commissioner S Alofivae

Commissioner A Erueti

Commissioner P Gibson

Commissioner C Shaw

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**TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS**

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**OPENING ADDRESSES**

**CHAIR:** Mr Mount, good morning.

**MR MOUNT:** Good morning, Mr Chair, good morning

Commissioners. Day 9 of this hearing and we have three witnesses scheduled. The first will be Mr Mike Ledingham and after Mr Ledingham we have Professor Des Cahill and Dr Peter Wilson, led by Hanne Janes.

I will say a couple of words if I may about the evidence today. The focus today is obviously on faith-based institutions and abuse in that context. But it would be wrong to think of abuse in the care of State, the State, and abuse in the care of faith-based institutions as two completely separate categories. What we know is that, in fact, many people experienced both forms of abuse and many people transitioned through both State care and the care of faith-based institutions through the course of their lives.

It's also not the case that this final day of the hearings is the only day which we are addressing abuse in the care of faith-based institutions. By my count, at least 8 witnesses have already discussed abuse in the care of faith-based institutions.

As we have explained previously, the way we are approaching this Inquiry is to divide the very broad Terms of Reference into a series of investigations. We will very soon be commencing the process of investigations into faith-based institutions and that process will be a searching and exacting process, which will take some time but it will reflect the seriousness with which this Inquiry views abuse in the care of the

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1 churches and other such institutions.

2 I also want to emphasise that the survivors of abuse  
3 in the care of the churches and faith-based institutions  
4 are very welcome at the Inquiry's private sessions and  
5 large numbers of such stories have already been heard by  
6 the Commissioners. So, there is no prioritising or  
7 ranking of experiences of abuse and, Mr Chair, we will  
8 recall the very clear message you gave to the government  
9 as part of their consultation process, where you  
10.07 10 reflected the message from those you spoke to that abuse  
11 is abuse and we do not differentiate between different  
12 forms of abuse in this Inquiry.

13 We will hear today about overseas Inquiries and what  
14 they have learned about abuse in the care of faith-based  
15 institutions, particularly in Australia, and that is a  
16 topic that the Royal Commission clearly will take very  
17 seriously and will examine very closely.

18 That's all I wanted to say by way of introduction,  
19 as I say, Ms Janes will deal with the witnesses today.

10.07 20 **CHAIR:** Thank you, Mr Mount, for explaining landscape of  
21 the Royal Commission, particularly insofar as those  
22 people who are of a faith-based background.

23 Ms Janes, good morning. Please proceed.

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**MIKE LEDINGHAM - AFFIRMED**  
**EXAMINED BY MS JANES**

**MS JANES:** May it please the Commission, we have our first witness, Mr Ledingham.

**CHAIR:** Mr Ledingham, good morning. In terms of the Inquiries Act 2013 under which the Royal Commission is operating, I am required to seek your answer to an initial question. (Witness affirmed).

A. I do, as I remember it.

**MS JANES:**

Q. Mr Ledingham, is your full name Michael Joseph Ledingham?

A. Yes.

Q. And you have prepared a statement for the Commissioner which you have signed and dated?

A. Yes.

Q. And I understand that as we go through the evidence, there will be some changes because of subsequent events after you completed this?

A. Yes, when we get to that stage I will make a note.

Q. Perfect. And just before we start on your evidence, I understand that you have been notified that our Chair is a Catholic and as a courtesy because you have experience of abuse in the Catholic Church, there has been a discussion about your comfort?

A. Yes. Not only am I representing myself here today, I am representing my two younger brothers who were also abused. Speaking to them last night, they found it odd that a member of the faith, the perpetrating faith, is in charge of this Commission. But I have been assured that you are an honourable man and you will deal with everything impartially and will advocate impartially.

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1 And on that advice, I am happy with that. And I passed  
2 that on to my two brothers.

3 **CHAIR:** Thank you, Mr Ledingham. I acknowledge and  
4 respect and understand what you have said. Myself  
5 and my four colleagues are New Zealanders of varied  
6 backgrounds, Samoan, Maori, European and we come  
7 from a number of faiths, Presbyterian, Catholic and  
8 I am Catholic and that is widely known and that has  
9 been made clear. But we have, as assiduously as we  
10.11 10 can, endeavoured to make our footprint asserting  
11 independence and our willingness to listen to  
12 everyone who comes before us, particularly those  
13 who have been survivors. So, I acknowledge what  
14 you've said and can understand what you've said and  
15 I will now invite you to provide the material that  
16 you wish to bring to our attention. Thank you.

17 A. Thank you.

18 **MS JANES:**

19 Q. Just before we get into the evidence, can you confirm  
10.12 20 that when you speak about your brothers and a particular  
21 third party who is a friend of yours, that you have their  
22 consent?

23 A. Yes, I have their full consent to use their case as part  
24 of my submission.

25 Q. Mr Ledingham, can I ask you to start reading then from  
26 paragraph 2 of your statement?

27 A. All right. I found it extremely difficult to formulate  
28 this address. It is hard to remain detached when you  
29 have experienced what we did. But for all the victims'  
10.12 30 sakes, here I am today, hopefully speaking for a vast  
31 silent majority also.

32 I have written a book about our experience called  
33 The Catholic Boys. It was published in June this year  
34 after taking me more than 20 years to write.

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1 I have had three other books published over the past  
2 five years after finding out later in life I did have a  
3 talent for writing but oh to have learnt this at a much  
4 younger age. My publisher Mike Smith of BMS Books  
5 Rotorua, a Catholic himself, always knew I had this draft  
6 copy of The Catholic Boys squirrelled away and kept  
7 encouraging me to finish.

8 I put it aside many times before, not only because I  
9 kept becoming disgusted with recalling what had happened  
10.13 10 but also our experience of the arrogant and seemingly  
11 non-caring attitude of the Catholic Church.

12 **CHAIR:** Mr Ledingham, I intervene only to ask you to  
13 keep your eye on the stenotyper and the people who  
14 are translating into sign language what you're  
15 saying. It's an obvious thing that having said  
16 that, I'm asking you to please moderate the pace of  
17 what you're saying.

18 A. Moderate?

19 **CHAIR:** Go more slowly.

10.14 20 A. Okay, yep. So, I dithered around with it for 20 years  
21 but this changed suddenly late last year when the Bishop  
22 of Adelaide proclaimed words to this effect, "I would  
23 never report a priest who confessed to sexual abuse. To  
24 me, for the victim this is like having contact with God  
25 through the priest".

26 I was outraged at this and I thought how sick is  
27 that? I was appalled like the people like that Bishop of  
28 Adelaide were in charge of the church. So, it was  
29 exactly the motivation I needed and I finished the book  
10.14 30 ably supported by my sister Mary as the narrator because  
31 I was too close to the story to do it and my two younger  
32 brothers who have each told their side of sordid  
33 childhood.

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1 **MS JANES:**

2 Q. You say in your next paragraph that it took you some  
3 40 years to fully disclose and later in your brief you  
4 talk about why you didn't report. Can we move on to  
5 paragraph 11?

6 A. I make no apology for the language when describing what  
7 happened. It may offend some of you, especially  
8 religious people, but then nobody really apologised to us  
9 when we disclosed that Catholic Church clergy performed  
10.15 10 deviant practices on us bewildered frightened children.

11 Q. Carry on.

12 A. The horrific abuse that happened can't be told and  
13 understood using polite words or watered-down rhetoric.

14 I make the point also, I have not always been a good  
15 person, I was screwed up mentally for quite a few years  
16 and didn't always do the right things.

17 By the same token, I don't preach or tell people to  
18 follow me like churches do. I'm more like "don't follow  
19 me I'm lost".

10.16 20 We, my brothers and I, make up the numbers of  
21 countless other victims of abuse in the Catholic Church  
22 who are out there, and I somewhat feel we also have a  
23 duty to those silent, suffering people to try and bring a  
24 sick and self-centered institution out of the dark ages  
25 to face the realisation of what they have done.

26 Sexually abusing anyone is a crime.

27 Sexually abusing children is abominable.

28 If any one of us did it, we would face years in  
29 jail.

10.16 30 So, how can they be allowed to get away with it?

31 Q. Mike, thank you for having the courage to come forward  
32 and tell your story. Can you now describe what happened  
33 to you, starting at paragraph 27?

34 A. Okay. What happened. On the face of it, we grew up in a

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1 great example of a Catholic family with strong Irish  
2 roots. My family was typical of many of those who lived  
3 in the area. My father worked, my mother stayed at home,  
4 and us 8 kids were raised to respect adults and those in  
5 authority, especially priests of the Catholic Church.

6 We were regarded as what was then called a good  
7 Catholic family, and it was always impressed on us from  
8 an early age that we were privileged to be members of the  
9 one true church and had standards to uphold.

10.17 10 My brothers and I served as altar boys at the local  
11 Catholic Church.

12 We attended the local parish convent school, St  
13 Joseph's Onehunga. There were many religious visitors to  
14 our house. We became accustomed to seeing them, liked  
15 most of them and, unfortunately as it turned out, trusted  
16 them implicitly.

17 In our small wee eyes, the Catholic Church was all  
18 powerful, always correct and in fact infallible.

19 Q. And then when did the abuse begin for you? You have that  
10.18 20 at paragraph 34.

21 A. For me, my memory, the actual abuse proper began in 1958  
22 at Father Frank Green's Aunty's house in Mt Roskill.  
23 Previously when doing gymnastics or especially when  
24 riding in the front seat of his car, he would rub up and  
25 down your legs and body quite inappropriately but we  
26 didn't understand that at the time.

27 We'd gone up to his Aunty's house ostensibly to  
28 redecorate the house while she was away. We worked for a  
29 while, then stopped for a break. He asked me how my  
10.19 30 training for the silver badge in gymnastics was going. I  
31 said okay except for the splits exercise which I found  
32 really hard.

33 Green said he could help me and got me to do the  
34 splits while he got down behind me and began rubbing the



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1 area of my crack and my balls which surprised and  
2 unsettled me.

3 After a while, he said it would be a lot easier if I  
4 took my strides off. I was unsure and unwilling to do  
5 this, but he ordered me to do it. He then started  
6 stroking and massaging my whole genital area while he  
7 went quiet and strange breathing heavily with some sort  
8 of movement of his body going on. I understand now that  
9 he was masturbating himself, although again, as an 8 year  
10.20 10 old child with no idea about sexual matters, I certainly  
11 didn't understand this at the time.

12 Q. And you have described the effect that this abuse had on  
13 you.

14 A. Well, yeah, you need to understand that I was only an 8  
15 year old. We'd had no sexual, you know we knew nothing  
16 about sex. In fact it was a taboo subject. I was totally  
17 uncomprehending, shocked, frightened and sickened. I  
18 felt very dirty. When he was finished I went straight to  
19 the toilet and locked myself in and just sat there in  
10.21 20 abject misery until he ordered me out, dropped me home  
21 and left with not even a word spoken.

22 My life had suddenly turned into a total nightmare.  
23 More especially after all the teaching about love of God,  
24 piety and purity and burning in hell fire forever if you  
25 sinned being hammered into you from an early age.

26 I understand now that for an 8 year old child, me,  
27 this was quite a catastrophic event in my life.

28 I was so traumatised by the events I never once  
29 managed to tell a soul what had happened until years  
10.21 30 later.

31 Q. And you've also described the effects it had on your  
32 health and your education.

33 A. I developed asthma around that time. My attention at  
34 school was sadly lacking and the nuns were pretty quick

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1 to dish out the strap or other punishments for this.

2 Green very quickly followed up the abuse with orders  
3 to the nuns for me to report to him at the presbytery  
4 after school for unspecified reasons. After just about  
5 sweating blood all day over this, sick and frightened  
6 about what might occur, I knew I could not ignore this  
7 instruction.

8 Once there, he would always accuse you of some sort  
9 of misdemeanour, all bullshit of course, theft, damage to  
10.22 10 the school or church or grave yard but his favourite  
11 subject was talking about masturbating. He seemed to  
12 have a fixation on this heinous sin but I didn't know  
13 what he was talking about. I became even more confused.  
14 I can still remember him asking me what colour the fluid  
15 was that came out of my penis when I played with myself.  
16 For me, an 8 year old boy, this was totally  
17 non-comprehensible. You know, like, I couldn't, you  
18 begin to doubt yourself. Your mind.

19 This type of interrogation happened on at least 4 to  
10.23 20 6 occasions that I recall, so you can imagine my  
21 attention at school had been well and truly diverted. I  
22 spent my time with my head over my shoulders worried and  
23 after school could not get the hell out of that place  
24 quick enough.

25 My asthma continued to plague me, meaning days at  
26 home in comparative safety and I can remember the doctor  
27 telling Mum that there didn't seem to be a clinical  
28 reason for the asthma, so it must be a nervous thing. I  
29 think he was spot on.

10.23 30 Funnily enough, as soon as I left secondary school  
31 and went working on a farm, the asthma disappeared and  
32 I've never had it since. I gave up church at that time  
33 too.

34 Q. And, Mike, you also talked about the abuse at the convent

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1 school but did Father Green also assert himself into your  
2 home life?

3 A. He did.

4 Q. Paragraph 54.

5 A. It wasn't really safe at home because Green turned up  
6 often because our Mum did typing for the church.  
7 Remember this priest was God on earth to an Irish  
8 Catholic family at that time. The intimidation continued  
9 on a regular basis. I remember once when my brother Gerry  
10.24 10 had a school mate come over for the weekend, Green heard  
11 about this. We found out years later that Green  
12 had also abused this boy. He called us both up to the  
13 presbytery after school, split us up into separate rooms  
14 and told us that the other boy had told him we'd all  
15 masturbated ourselves around the back of our house. We  
16 denied this but he kept us there until we finally  
17 admitted it and then he warned us that he would tell the  
18 nuns and our parents if we ever got together with that  
19 boy again.

10.25 20 On the way home, Gerry said he hadn't done it and I  
21 said I hadn't either but neither of us actually told the  
22 other of the abuse that had occurred to us at that time  
23 because it was a dirty, terrible, dark secret. I think  
24 Green was scared we would compare notes with that other  
25 boy too and I can tell you this, it was far from our  
26 minds. We were too scared to tell anyone about the  
27 nightmare we were now living.

28 Q. And at paragraph 59, you list a lot of the profound  
29 effects that it had on you?

10.25 30 A. Yes, like many other victim survivors we lived in  
31 confusion and silence, I achieved no qualifications. I  
32 mistrusted authority. I developed a blind hatred of  
33 intimidation which was to cost me a fair few good jobs.  
34 I did not feel safe letting people get close to me. I

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1 developed a drinking problem that I think I still have.  
2 I committed a few crimes in the latter 60s which could  
3 have had me in jail or Borstal if I'd been caught. But I  
4 always knew when to cut and run.

5 After I joined the Army, I did spend time in the  
6 Military prison.

7 Q. Up until that time, you had believed you were the only  
8 one experiencing abuse but what happened to them and how  
9 did you find out about your brothers?

10.26 10 A. I didn't know but obviously he tried me and because of  
11 the asthma and he wasn't getting a chance, he must have  
12 moved on to my younger brother Gerry, he's 11 months  
13 younger than me, so he could have only been 7 when this  
14 happened. We are very similar in thinking but we have a  
15 few differing personality traits. He is a very private  
16 man and I don't think he has told me the full extent of  
17 the abuse that occurred to him but I could be wrong about  
18 this.

19 What I do know is that, like a lot of the victims,  
10.27 20 he loathes the Catholic Church and distrusts them  
21 completely which you can't blame him for forgiven what  
22 happened and then the shameful way we were treated when  
23 we tried to get redress.

24 I asked him if he would like to say something to you  
25 today and he had this to say:

26 "Nothing much has changed. They (the church) go on  
27 about how sorry they are and how they now look after the  
28 victims, but you know, not once in the 17 years since we  
29 were forced to go public has anyone even rung to see how  
10.27 30 we were travelling or if we needed anything. They are  
31 full of shit and as far as I'm concerned, they can shove  
32 their sick religion right up their jacksy".

33 Thanks for that Gerry, that gets your point across  
34 pretty succinctly, I feel.

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1 My brother Chris was always a quieter far more  
2 gentle and more studious type than me and Gerry. He  
3 wouldn't hurt a fly. And Gerry and I used to have to  
4 fight his battles for him at school. Mum always used to  
5 say look after your little brother and so we did.

6 This part I find hard. Finding out in 2002 Green  
7 had got to him badly upset me greatly. I felt I had let  
8 him down and I cried. My sister, Mary, pointed out given  
9 the powerlessness of the situation we were in, I wouldn't  
10.28 10 have been able to do anything about it anyway. But if I  
11 had known earlier while Green was still alive I'd have  
12 nailed the bastard for sure.

13 Chris used the money he got from the church to go to  
14 Uni in Aussie. He achieved two degrees and had the  
15 education he was supposed to, that he would have got in  
16 his 20s had things been normal, with the chance of  
17 earning good money for far more years before retirement.

18 Like the rest of us who were abused, he hasn't got  
19 much to retire with. In fact, with the interference the  
10.29 20 abuse caused to our early education, and the subsequent  
21 loss of further education, qualifications and employment,  
22 we are a typical example of many bright intelligent  
23 children with potential to achieve and be financially  
24 independent who are now facing a meager retirement.

25 I asked Chris for you today and this is what he  
26 said, having read this book, Walking Towards Thunder by  
27 Peter Fox an ex-Aussie Policeman who was trying to  
28 inquire into sexual abuse within the Catholic Church, he  
29 now knows the Catholic Church did conspire to cover up  
10.30 30 sexual abuse crimes. His quote stems from the church's  
31 handling of the pedophile Priest Denis McAlinden who they  
32 knew had been abusing young girls for years. They  
33 claimed beyond transferring them what else could they do?  
34 My answer to that would be hand them over to the Police.

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1 But the church's canon law acknowledged the inherent  
2 sinfulness of clergy abusing children but only required  
3 McAlinden to be rebuked and given warnings. They tried  
4 moving him but that had failed.

5 Canon law also dictated that. "A priest's good name  
6 be protected, and secrecy demanded by Crimen  
7 Sollicitationis, a 1962 Holy Office instruction which  
8 American priests and academic Thomas Doyle would later  
9 describe as "an explicit policy to cover up cases of  
10.31 10 abuse by clergy".

11 So McAlinden's crimes were concealed a pontifical  
12 secret.

13 That gives the lie to the fact that they were  
14 conspiring to cover up sexual abuse.

15 Thanks, Chris, that tells a story and gives the lie  
16 to denials of organised cover ups.

17 Can I just explain Walking Towards Thunder? It is  
18 an Irish saying, it means in your life there will be  
19 trouble and storms, you walk towards the thunder and  
10.31 20 eventually you'll get through it and come out into the  
21 sunshine. I think you should all read this book. It is  
22 a compelling read and it is a sad read. I couldn't put  
23 it down.

24 Q. Thank you, Mike. And then you talk about the life, the  
25 effect on not only your life but your brother's life and  
26 the family's life at paragraph 76?

27 A. Life after the abuse. My sister summed it up with her  
28 statement:

29 "With the abuse came our journey from a happy family  
10.32 30 with the usual happy feisty kids to one of three troubled  
31 teenagers who became angry, abusing and self-abusing men,  
32 with consequences for themselves and traumatic results  
33 for our family".

34 Even today, there is still things in our family that

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1 have never been sorted because of religion, this sort of  
2 thing can split families.

3 As I have said, after the abuse by Green, my  
4 attention waned in school and I stopped achieving, my  
5 health was affected. I am not a professional man, nor am  
6 I well educated. In fact you could well say that I was  
7 brought up in the school of hard knocks and arse  
8 covering, literally. It is hard enough as a young child  
9 to recognise that the better your education, the better  
10.33 10 your employment would be without having someone having  
11 designs on your arse.

12 I left school after the 5th form after failing  
13 School Certificate. From memory, I had asthma around the  
14 time of the exams, which didn't help, but I feel I never  
15 really regained the ground that those last miserable  
16 years at that convent cost me.

17 I was certainly very mixed up and confused.

18 When you've been brainwashed by religion, and then  
19 sexually abused by a priest at a young age, it is not a  
10.33 20 good recipe for logical thinking.

21 Basically, I ran wild for four to five years, had  
22 jobs on farms, had altercations with bosses, had jobs at  
23 the freezing works, had altercations with fellow workers,  
24 couldn't hold down a job very long. I had an honest  
25 pathological hatred of intimidation and wasn't a  
26 successful drinker. I got involved in brawls and  
27 vandalism, caught a few good hidings and left a couple of  
28 towns one step ahead of the Police but I always seemed to  
29 know when to cut and run.

10.34 30 Many of my friends in those days were Maori and this  
31 remains so today. They thought I was a mad bastard, up  
32 north they called me crazy horse and I loved their  
33 humour, willingness to stand their ground and fight and  
34 also their stoicism when suffering from racism, which

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1 there was a lot of back then.

2 Doing national service in 1971, this is what I  
3 struck, the guys I was doing national service with a lot  
4 of Maori boys, camaraderie, humour. So, we decided to  
5 join the regular force, a lot of us, which was a good  
6 thing for me discipline-wise. It probably kept me out of  
7 jail. Although as mentioned, I did do time in the  
8 Military prison. I still hated intimidation and over the  
9 years had several fights with more senior people.

10.35 10 I did two tour up in Southeast Asia with the  
11 Infantry Battalion Station, missed Vietnam which we were  
12 brassed off about but as we got older we realised we were  
13 lucky.

14 In 1978 was talked into having a go the SAS  
15 selection course, surprising myself I was one of 9  
16 candidates from about 56 who passed and I spent the next  
17 7 years there. Nothing the SAS threw at me physically or  
18 mentally phased me as much as the sexual and mental  
19 abuse I suffered as a child at that convent.

10.35 20 Sadly, after 7 years with the SAS the old  
21 intimidation thing rose again when as a Corporal I  
22 attacked a Warrant Officer after an argument. The boys  
23 broke it up when it became obvious I was going to  
24 mangle him.

25 That effectively was the end of my service after  
26 15 years. In another 5 years I would have got a full  
27 Military pension.

28 I married a Maori girl I met in the Army in my 30s,  
29 although I still had closeness and trust issues. We had  
10.36 30 5 children rapidly. Sadly, one died just before she  
31 turned 3. My wife suffered from depression after this  
32 and with my own problems, as well as grief, I wasn't too  
33 much good to her and in the end we split after 25 years.

34 I brought my children up as heathens with a great



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1 contempt for any religion but they also knew if they  
2 struck any problems, especially people problems, Dad  
3 would be there for them. You don't need a Bible in your  
4 hands to be a good person.

5 I am lucky. My children all have a good work ethic,  
6 are good people with many friends from all cultures and  
7 walks of life. And I now live next door to one daughter  
8 who has two boys and 5 minutes away from another one, a  
9 girl, my Mokos.

10.37 10 I often look at the 8 year old boy sometimes and  
11 wonder, he's about the age I was when I got abused. And  
12 although they are a lot more sophisticated now, he is not  
13 as street-wise as we were back then. But I'll say this,  
14 if anyone ever touched him I'd cut their throat and  
15 happily go to jail for the rest of my life. Life is good  
16 you might say but I can't help feeling it should have  
17 been better for all of the victims. We all had something  
18 snatched away from us at a very young age that you can  
19 never get back, trust and innocence. The Bishop of  
10.38 20 Auckland claimed that nobody knew anything about Green's  
21 offending in the 12 years at Onehunga Parish, but I find  
22 that extremely hard to believe. I was a single soldier  
23 for 11 years before I got married, lived in the barracks  
24 for 7-8 of those years. When you live close with others  
25 like that you get to know what they are like and if they  
26 have any particular bad habits, like being bent.  
27 Fortunately, we only found a couple like that in my time  
28 in the service. With what we now understand to be  
29 Green's history of offending, the argument that nobody  
10.38 30 knew doesn't wash with me Mr Bishop of Auckland.

31 I firmly believe what Green did to me and others  
32 denied many of us our right and ability to determine our  
33 futures.

34 Q. And then, Mike, you reinforce in your following

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1 paragraphs some of the things that you've spoken about,  
2 about not feeling secure in your home, not being able to  
3 trust. Can I take you to paragraph 106. You talk there  
4 about the moment of truth coming when you found out about  
5 your youngest brother.

6 A. Can I just read something from 104 first?

7 Q. Yes.

8 A. My adolescent years instead of being a time of growth and  
9 development, instead I had to find out, to try and find  
10.39 10 myself which was to prove an elusive goal. I compensated  
11 for lack of confidence, especially around females, by  
12 drinking heavily, I lacked stability, drifting from one  
13 job to the next, never staying too long in one place and  
14 never being able to trust or form a close relationship  
15 with anyone, thinking there was something wrong with me  
16 because of what occurred, keeping my unspeakable secret  
17 buried deep.

18 The moment of truth came in 2002 August when our  
19 youngest brother Chris confided in Gerry and me about the  
10.40 20 abuse that he had suffered from Green and revealed that  
21 he had written to the church twice and they wouldn't  
22 answer him.

23 So, it was then we got together and understood what  
24 the abuse had cost our families and us.

25 Yeah.

26 Q. Carry on.

27 A. Carry on?

28 Q. Mm-Mmm. You've talked earlier about it took quite a  
29 while for you to fully disclose. This would probably be  
10.40 30 a good time to touch on why you hadn't reported earlier  
31 and also why your brothers hadn't reported earlier, and  
32 that's at paragraph 115.

33 A. We, like other victims/survivors, have been asked why we  
34 told no-one at the time, why has it taken so many years

- 1046 -

1 to report what happened to you? The culture of that time  
2 was that we, as children, had no power at all.

3 If you were accused of something by a nun or priest,  
4 you were automatically assumed guilty. If you did have  
5 the temerity to protest your innocence, you are generally  
6 punished twice; once for the misdemeanour you were  
7 supposed to have committed and once for calling the nun  
8 or priest a liar. Plus, of course, as children, the  
9 abuse that occurred was way beyond our meager  
10.41 10 comprehension to actually put it into words was  
11 impossible.

12 I was so traumatised by the events I never once  
13 managed to tell a soul until my brother Gerry and I  
14 finally spoke about it in 1985. I'd just been kicked out  
15 of the Army and he was heading to Perth and we had a big  
16 booze up, everyone else went home, we were sitting around  
17 talking and he said, he mentioned this Father Green and I  
18 said I think he was a fucken pedophile and Gerry said he  
19 was, he had a go at me and I said yeah, he had a go at me  
10.42 20 too. I've always been an attacking sort of a person, I  
21 said let's do the bastard. He was still alive then, but  
22 our Mum wasn't well and she believed in this all her life  
23 and we decided we couldn't take that away from her. I  
24 now wish we'd done something about it. It was  
25 not until 2002, my brother Chris encouraged by his  
26 counsellor shared his abuse with us. So, then he informed  
27 us he had written to the church twice in 2002 and been  
28 ignored.

29 And then we knew they'd been informed of his sexual abuse  
10.43 30 and we wrote further to tell them about we other two.

31 So, the response of the church. What did they do?  
32 They did what they're good at, ignored, delayed,  
33 deferred, detracted, denied. They did anything, anything  
34 they could not to accept responsibility until we felt  
forced to go public.

We didn't know really what to expect from the church

- 1047 -

1 but they seemed to draw it out for as long as possible  
2 with many excuses for lack of progress.

3 A visible complaints process didn't seem to be in  
4 place then and they drew things out for so long, both my  
5 brothers began to have nightmares and flashbacks.

6 Chris, not knowing we had also been abused had first  
7 written to Bishop Dunn on 18 April 2002 explaining what  
8 had happened to him and finishing with:

9 "I don't know what to expect from this letter, I  
10.44 10 just know I have to write it".

11 Having had no answer, he wrote again on 6 of June  
12 finishing with:

13 "I urge you to take some interest in this matter for  
14 our own mutual healing benefit".

15 He eventually got a reply from the Bishop on 1  
16 July 2002 and the church's professional Standards  
17 Committee on 11 July 2002. By then because it was taking  
18 so long, on advice he had confided in us and was shocked  
19 to learn we had also been abused. So, he wrote to the  
10.44 20 Professional Standards Committee telling them about us  
21 and giving them his Perth telephone number for a contact.

22 Despite various letters back and forward over the  
23 next few months, there did seem to be a deafening silence  
24 while they fluffed around with committees, meetings,  
25 excuses, claims of an unseen letter and nobody seeming to  
26 know what to do, we made the decision to engage a  
27 New Zealand lawyer, with no perceivable progress being  
28 made over the next weeks and realised just how much the  
29 Catholic Church were messing us about, we decided to take  
10.45 30 action.

31 There is an old infantry adage that I've always been  
32 fond of, "The best means of defence is attack". So, we  
33 went in boots and all.

34 We went public in the New Zealand Herald on the 7th

- 1048 -

1 of December 2002.

2 This certainly produced some reaction with Bishop  
3 Dunn flying over to Perth to meet us and also resulted in  
4 various other victims coming out of the woodwork.  
5 Certainly, it wasn't our greatest wish to have the whole  
6 sordid business public but we needed to get some sort of  
7 resolution while they appeared to be playing for time.

8 They did fly Chris and I over to Auckland for a  
9 hearing in 2003. Gerry hates them so much he couldn't  
10.46 10 stand to be near them and he couldn't take responsibility  
11 for what he might do, so he stayed where he is.

12 We went to their place in Ponsonby accompanied by my  
13 sister Mary and our lawyer. They had a couple of QCs  
14 with the Bishop and various other religious people  
15 present but not too much eventuated from this meeting.

16 They showed us a balance sheet showing there was no  
17 money and I do recall the Bishop actually stating that  
18 they didn't want to pay us too much because it might set  
19 a precedent for future cases.

10.46 20 The saga dragged on through 2003. There was another  
21 release in The Herald, "No joy for abused trio". Both my  
22 brothers were still having nightmares and flashbacks.  
23 So, in late 2003, when an offer was made, it was decided  
24 we accept this.

25 The matter was finally settled on 15 January 2004.

26 After the settlement, we never heard from the church  
27 again. And we only began to take - I only began to take  
28 interest after the outrageous statement from the Bishop  
29 of Adelaide which motivated me into finishing the book.  
10.47 30 I have to say, although the Bishop prattled on about  
31 closure, you don't ever feel you've got closure when you  
32 continue to wake up suddenly after having a dream about  
33 the whole sordid nightmare that was your main childhood  
34 memory.

- 1049 -

1           Tellingly, although I am now back living in  
2 New Zealand, both my younger brothers prefer the  
3 anonymity of living in Australia after being forced to go  
4 public with our story, although they are Kiwis at heart.  
5 Basically, they are refugees from their own country.

6 Q. And you set out in your evidence your belief that there  
7 are other abused -

8 A. We know there are others. After my book was published,  
9 my publisher was contacted immediately by a woman, told  
10.48 10 him her brother had also been abused by Green around that  
11 time and committed suicide.

12           My publisher put this lady in contact with the  
13 Commission and I believe she's made a submission.

14           Recently, I met and talked to an old school friend  
15 from those days. He stayed in the general vicinity all  
16 those years and he knew or suspected who the victims are  
17 when we were together at school. He shared with us his  
18 own horrific story of abuse by Green. Although he has  
19 passed away, he did speak to the Commission about 10 days  
10.49 20 before he died and I have his permission to share part of  
21 his story with you.

22           His father was killed in a car accident when he was  
23 7. Immediately after which, Green zeroed in on him and  
24 began abusing him. Soon he became pretty wild and  
25 uncontrollable, which you might well understand. His  
26 mother, with another 6-year-old brother and 4 other young  
27 girls, the youngest a babe in arms, could no longer  
28 control him. In desperation, she eventually sent him off  
29 to stay with relatives in the country. There away from  
10.49 30 the perverted attention of the predator he settled down  
31 and was happier again.

32           When I first spoke to him about this it was on  
33 Messenger and I'm deaf and Messenger is in and out. When  
34 we sat with Sandra, his story changed so I'm going to

- 1050 -

1 tell you what happened.

2 After some months of being away, Green told the  
3 mother that he should be at home with her and he, Green,  
4 would help control him. Green went down to where the  
5 child was staying, ostensibly to pick him up. Denis came  
6 home from school, saw Green's car in the driveway, went  
7 to the back of the farm and hid. As soon as Green went,  
8 he came back and went inside. Green stayed in the  
9 general vicinity for two days looking for this boy to  
10.50 10 take him back. Eventually, Green went back but he got to  
11 the mother and within a week he'd organised for Green -  
12 Green organised for him to be brought back home within a  
13 week. Green then continued abusing him until he was  
14 11 years old. Can you imagine that? I only remember the  
15 one instance of being abused but I do remember the mental  
16 abuse. This poor guy for 4 years at least he was abused  
17 by this priest. I think that's bloody horrific. Sadly,  
18 he has passed away but lucky he spoke to the  
19 Commissioners just before he died.

10.51 20 He saw our case in The Herald in 2002, got a lawyer  
21 himself and took issue with the church.

22 His experience of reporting to them was similar to  
23 ours. He said he had to face a board and felt very  
24 intimidated as they questioned him, seemingly looking for  
25 some sort of hole in his story that they could seize  
26 upon.

27 He reported the Bishop told him that the church was  
28 not responsible for the abuse because they did not employ  
29 Father Green.

10.52 30 So, Denis asked the Bishop, who did then? God?

31 This did not go down too well. The church by then  
32 had accepted responsibility for our abuse by Green, so to  
33 me this was a pathetic way to try and avoid  
34 responsibility to a single victim on his own.

- 1051 -

1 I reckon it's porky telling, although the Bishop may  
2 well differ.

3 A terminally ill man has no reason to lie you'd  
4 think? I know who I believe.

5 Support and compassion from the church you'd hope?  
6 This victim suffered a further trauma when he first went  
7 to have chemo. On his hospital record he was listed as  
8 RC, Roman Catholic, even though like the rest of us he'd  
9 tossed away religion years previously. A Catholic  
10.53 10 liaison officer rocked up to see him but he told her he  
11 was no longer a Catholic because he had been sexually  
12 abused by a priest as a child. "Are you sure it  
13 happened?", she said. "Are you sure it happened?" I'm  
14 sure I'm not allowed to repeat what he told her here but  
15 she got out that door pretty quick, he said.

16 This incident highlights a problem we found in this  
17 church, the denial, the denial the abuse happened, the  
18 denial of responsibility and the silence of the Laity.

19 Where are they, the Laity?

10.53 20 Why are they not questioning and asking for  
21 explanations from their leaders?

22 This is serious. These so-called leaders of faith  
23 are having input into what is being taught to the  
24 children in their schools.

25 Many are possibly guilty of permitting crimes  
26 against children to go unpunished.

27 I could never send my kid to any school like that.

28 My sister, who acted as conduit for us boys in  
29 dealings with the Catholic Church at the time had this to  
10.54 30 say:

31 "The church at the time did not handle them in the  
32 way that it should have. It is my most sincere prayer  
33 that those at the top will see the error of their ways  
34 and reconcile what was, in reality, further abuse, at



- 1052 -

1 that time".

2 Q. Mike, you have some suggestions that you would like to  
3 make to the Commissioners?

4 A. I do, I do. What needs to happen? Commissioners, I  
5 agreed to give this testimony today to give voice to the  
6 abuse that has happened, not just to us but many children  
7 in New Zealand, by church institutions, state  
8 institutions and in our case the Catholic Church.

9 So, I'm not just reporting our experience to you  
10.54 10 today, Commissioners. I'm reporting an experience that  
11 many other victims/survivors of the church in New Zealand  
12 and their families will recognise has only been too  
13 similar to their own.

14 The church must be held accountable.

15 The church cannot be trusted, in my experience, to  
16 do what must be done, so the criminal abuse of children  
17 stops.

18 Of the many things I think you need to look at, the  
19 confessional is one. I quote from the Heal Project's  
10.55 20 website:

21 "This culture of silence and shame around sex and  
22 sexuality creates a breeding ground for child sexual  
23 abuse".

24 This is exactly what the confessional does. It  
25 forgives these perverts of their crime, does nothing  
26 to stop them and allows them to continue on with their  
27 deviant ways.

28 Therefore, I strongly recommend the supposed  
29 sanctity of the confessional be totally disregarded,  
10.55 30 especially legally.

31 There is no doubt in my mind that many of these  
32 abusers went to confession after defiling children, got  
33 themselves back into a supposed "state of grace" then  
34 went on to reoffend, again and again.

Surely, the safety and sanctity of the children

1 comes first?

2 When the abuse occurs and is confessed, you have two  
3 serious criminal offenders - the abuser and the priest  
4 who heard the confession and did nothing about it.

5 This church needs to abolish this monstrosity  
6 immediately and all alleged abusers should be  
7 interrogated thoroughly as to who they confessed to  
8 and/or who knew about the offending.

9 This nonsense is what has allowed these abusers to  
10.56 10 flourish.

11 The other point I'd like to make to you,  
12 Commissioners, is the Catholic Church should in no way be  
13 allowed to handle allegations of sexual abuse in-house.

14 Serious sexual abuse is systemic right throughout  
15 this organisation worldwide, ably encouraged by their  
16 archaic confessional laws.

17 They are extremely reluctant to take ownership of  
18 the abuse suffered by my brothers and I, and were  
19 extremely difficult to engage in meaningful dialogue, and  
10.57 20 there were three of us. Imagine the difficulty facing a  
21 single victim.

22 Sexual abuse of children, especially of children is  
23 a crime after all.

24 All allegations of sexual abuse should be handled by  
25 the Police or, if historic, a non-aligned professional  
26 group funded by the group themselves.

27 The Catholic Church I believe is the biggest  
28 shareholder in faith-based abuse. They don't pay tax  
29 anyway, so why can they not take the burden placed on our  
10.57 30 society of the hundreds if not thousands of victims of  
31 abuse by their own clergy?

32 They have amply demonstrated they cannot honestly,  
33 fairly and charitably deal with the blight that affects  
34 their church. This church has a debt not only to victims

- 1054 -

1 and their families but also to the taxpayers. Talking to  
2 an old Army mate of mine who has been a prison guard for  
3 30 years, he told me most of the prisoners he looked  
4 after had been abused in some form or other and yes, many  
5 by faith-based institutions.

6 To the church, I'd say, stop reading from the Judas  
7 book of betrayal, denial and hanging onto the 30 pieces  
8 of silver and read from the Jesus file. Do the right  
9 thing. You have the assets. Sell some of them and fund  
10.58 10 the programme for victims run by professionals. I am  
11 sure Jesus would agree with that. You preach that you  
12 and your followers are going to inherit the Kingdom of  
13 Heaven, so you should be able to afford a few of your  
14 many castles on earth, use the money as reparation for  
15 the countless victims of your clergy.

16 I'd also like to address the abusers and enablers  
17 out there. Many of you are getting closer and closer to  
18 the big D day, death. You may think you have been  
19 forgiven by going to confession but I really do have my  
10.59 20 doubts. Why don't you do something to break the cycle of  
21 silence and perhaps gain back some vestige of your own  
22 self-respect. Simple. You are propagating a fraud and  
23 you are living a lie. Own up. Own up for the abuse  
24 and/or its cover up.

25 At least have the balls to stand up and be counted,  
26 a last chance to do the decent thing before you front up  
27 to the big man.

28 Finally, I am a great fan of the words in Bob  
29 Dylan's earlier protest songs, he had a great one  
10.59 30 protesting about weapon manufacturers, while young people  
31 died buried in the mud, called Masters of War. I have  
32 changed one of the versus and called it Masters of Shame.  
33 This is for all you abusers and enablers out there:

34 "I think that you'll find when your death takes its

- 1055 -

1 toll, all your money, power and confession could never  
2 buy back your soul. And I'll tell you further, for I  
3 know that it is true, even Jesus would never forgive what  
4 you do.

5 I stand here in solidarity with all abused victims,  
6 both State and faith-based. Most of us have been walking  
7 towards thunder all our lives. Commissioners, you have  
8 an opportunity here to perhaps allow a little bit of  
9 sunshine to shine on us, please do so. Thank you very  
10 much. Can I just say after this we're going down to tie  
11 some ribbons in memory of the abused victims down at the  
12 cathedral. Thank you very much.

13 **CHAIR:** Thank you, Mr Ledingham.

14 **MS JANES:** Thank you, Mike, for your testimony. I have  
15 no further questions of you but I will ask the  
16 Chair to check if there are any from counsel or  
17 whether there are any from the Commission.

18 **CHAIR:** Thank you, Ms Janes. Are there questions which  
19 counsel wish to address to Mr Ledingham?

11.01 20 **MS MCKECHNIE:** I appear as counsel on behalf of the  
21 Bishops and Congregational Leaders of the Catholic  
22 Church. I am here as counsel.

23 A. Sorry?

24 **MS MCKECHNIE:** My name is Sally, I am here as counsel on  
25 behalf of the Bishops and Congregational Leaders of  
26 the Catholic Church. I don't have any questions  
27 for you, Mr Ledingham, but I wanted to acknowledge  
28 your evidence. On behalf of the Bishops and the  
29 Congregational Leaders, I wanted to acknowledge  
11.02 30 what you've said today and your hurt and your anger  
31 about what happened to you when you were in care.  
32 We reiterate the Bishop of Auckland's apology to  
33 you for the wrongs that were done to you and your  
34 brothers. You should not have been harmed by

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1 Father Green. You should not have been hurt when  
2 you were in the care of the Diocese of Auckland.

3 Representatives of the Catholic Church of the  
4 Auckland Diocese are here, Mr Ledingham, and they have  
5 heard what you have to say and they have heard your anger  
6 and your concern about the redress process.

7 The Bishops and Congregational Leaders have a lot of  
8 lessons to learn from this Commission, and one of those  
9 lessons is going to be how to improve the redress  
11.02 10 process, how to help people like you, the survivors, with  
11 their healing.

12 A. I don't think you have the capacity to deal with it. I  
13 am saying it needs to be done by non-aligned, I don't  
14 think you have the capacity. You are a dinosaur; you  
15 are a thing of the past. I think you have to admit  
16 that you can't handle it and contract it out to non-  
17 aligned people. I would not trust you people as far  
18 as I could kick you, and I am sorry to have to say that  
19 but that's the way I feel.

11.03 20 **MS McKECHNIE:** Thank you, Mr Ledingham, I think we would  
21 acknowledge we haven't earned your trust and we  
22 will learn the lessons from the Royal Commission in  
23 this process when they examine the Catholic Church  
24 and try to improve and learn the lessons we will  
25 have from you and other survivors like you. Thank  
26 you for your evidence today, thank you for your  
27 courage.

28 A. No worries, I die a happy heathen.

29 **CHAIR:** I now wish to ask my colleagues if any of you  
11.04 30 have any questions yourselves that you might wish  
31 to address to Mr Ledingham. I'll start with you,  
32 Commissioner Paul Gibson.

33 **COMMISSIONER GIBSON:** No questions but thank you for  
34 your courage and testimony and to those of your

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1 brothers and others who stories you have come  
2 forward with, thanks.

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**MIKE LEDINGHAM**  
**QUESTIONED BY COMMISSIONERS**

**COMMISSIONER ALOFIVAE:** Thank you, Mr Ledingham, for the courage that you spoke with this morning and for the very clear and strong recommendations that you've asked us to look at.

11.04 Can I just ask you one question? The issue of celibacy in the church with the priests, do you think that is a problem that's worthy of further attention?

A. I think it stands out like a greyhound's balls.

**COMMISSIONER ALOFIVAE:** We can add that to the list of recommendations?

A. Yes.

**COMMISSIONER ALOFIVAE:** Thank you.

11.05 **COMMISSIONER ERUETI:** Mr Ledingham, I appreciate that you are giving this testimony not only on your own behalf but on behalf of your brothers. Thank you for giving this testimony on your own behalf but also on behalf of your brothers.

I am picturing you as a 7 or 8 year old when you first experienced this abuse and the difficulty it must have been, as you say, to articulate what you were experiencing. I suppose you think about if there's someone you're going to talk to it's likely to be your family but of course in your case, and it seems in the case of many other young children who have been abused in faith-based institutions, that the family are so closely affiliated to the church that you really can't turn and speak to them either; is that your experience?

A. Yeah, we knew we wouldn't be believed. You know, everything was tipped against us. I didn't understand

- 1059 -

1 what it was. You know what I mean? It screwed my mind,  
2 you know. And I never, it screwed my mind for years and  
3 I never really dealt with it until I learned about my  
4 younger brother. I never thought about killing myself  
5 but I thought about killing other people. Is there  
6 something wrong with me?

7 **COMMISSIONER ERUETI:** And I wanted to also ask about  
8 redress and plainly for you it is important that  
9 any process be with the Catholic Church, that it be  
10 independent.

11.07

11 A. I strongly, it is the only way it will ever, the truth  
12 will ever be got at, by them not being able to handle it.  
13 They don't deserve to handle it because of what they've  
14 done. Read this book, I recommend you read that, it is a  
15 brilliant read.

16 **COMMISSIONER ERUETI:** Thank you. There was a strong  
17 point emphasised in the context of State based care  
18 as well, the importance of independence. In your  
19 brief of evidence, you describe the tortuous  
20 process trying to get information about the redress  
21 scheme was difficult as well. So, in addition to  
22 independence, are there other features that are  
23 important to you that should be part of a redress  
24 scheme?

11.07

25 A. I wouldn't be letting priests near the kids. I'd be  
26 certainly, you know, I wouldn't want a priest near my  
27 kids. You don't trust them. Whatever it was they took  
28 from me, I will never get back. You know what I mean?  
29 Yeah. My kids give me love but they know I am a bit  
30 stand-offish but they accept that, that's who I am. You  
31 know what I mean? I've never been able to give them, you  
32 know, like when they get into trouble, one of them had a  
33 partner who was a moron, I dealt to him, that sort of  
34 thing they'll come to me but the love side I am not

11.08



- 1060 -

1 really good at. The Aroha.

2 **COMMISSIONER ERUETI:** In addition to monetary  
3 compensation, a cheque, are there any other parts  
4 that would form part of a redress for you?

5 A. I believe a lot of victims have clogged up the health  
6 system, particularly Mental Health System, druggies,  
7 they've cost the taxpayer thousands and people in the  
8 prison, the same. Why should the government be forced to  
9 fork out for that or the tax man? They (the Church) have  
11.09 10 got billions of dollars worth of assets, why can't they  
11 sell assets and fund the programme to look after these  
12 people? That is the least they could do, never  
13 mind going to confession and getting holy water thrown at  
14 you, that does nothing, and prayers, that's nothing.

15 They need to do something constructive  
16 to show they are sorry, you know, to show they are  
17 capable of showing Aroha for what has been done. And to  
18 me, they just sidle away from it all the time.

19 **COMMISSIONER ERUETI:** Kia ora, thank you.

11.09 20 **COMMISSIONER SHAW:** Mr Ledingham, I don't have any  
21 questions. I just want to acknowledge, first of  
22 all, the powerfulness of your account. You've said  
23 it like it is and that's deeply appreciated.

24 I also want to acknowledge that it's because of your  
25 experiences, you find it difficult to trust people and I  
26 fully understand that. And so, your demonstration today  
27 of some trust at least in the Commission to hear you, is  
28 deeply appreciated. I know it doesn't come easily and I  
29 think that you have shown enormous integrity in doing  
11.10 30 that, so I want to acknowledge that as well.

31 And could you just pass on from the Commission to  
32 your brothers our deep gratitude for the contribution  
33 that they have allowed you to make on their behalf, it's  
34 much appreciated.

A. Thank you. As I said, we've been walking through the

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1 thunder for a lot of years but also not only might we be  
2 coming out into the sun but the cliff face is there that  
3 we might fall off soon and die, so it needed to be done  
4 and thank you for bringing this Commission, it needed to  
5 be done before I die.

6 **COMMISSIONER SHAW:** Thank you very much indeed,  
7 Mr Ledingham.

8 **CHAIR:** Mr Ledingham, I have the final word. I simply  
9 want to reflect and endorse what has been said by  
10 my colleagues. You are to be thanked for having  
11 the courage to speak in public about what has  
12 happened and you are to be respected for the force  
13 with which you have applied to what needs to  
14 happen. Thank you.

15 A. Thank you very much for the opportunity.

16 **MS JANES:** Thank you, Mr Ledingham. That concludes your  
17 evidence and thank you very much for your testimony  
18 today.

19 A. Thank you.

11.11 20 **CHAIR:** Madam Registrar, would you please adjourn the  
21 sitting for the morning adjournment?

22

23 **Hearing adjourned from 11.12 a.m. until 11.30 a.m.**

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**EMERITUS PROFESSOR DESMOND CAHILL - AFFIRMED**

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**DR PETER WILKINSON - AFFIRMED**

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**EXAMINED BY MS JANES**

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8 **MS JANES:** May it please the Commissioners, I call to

9 the witness stand, they are there, Dr Peter

11.37 10 Wilkinson and Professor Des Cahill.

11 Chair, I will leave you to administer -

12 **CHAIR:** Gentlemen, as we start, the New Zealand

13 Inquiries Act 2013 requires me to ask you both and

14 to receive an answer to this question - (witnesses

15 affirmed).

16 **MS JANES:**

17 Q. Before we start, could you each please state for the

18 record your full name?

19 **DR WILKINSON:** Peter Julian Wilkinson.

11.38 20 **EMERITUS PROFESSOR CAHILL:** Desmond Phillip Cahill.

21 Q. Together, you have produced a comprehensive paper with

22 appendices which have been provided to the Commission and

23 that is to the best of your knowledge true and correct as

24 at the time it was written?

25 **EMERITUS PROFESSOR CAHILL:** Correct.

26 **DR WILKINSON:** Correct, yes.

27 Q. You have also produced a shorter summary paper which you

28 are going to be presenting today?

29 **DR WILKINSON:** Correct.

11.39 30 **EMERITUS PROFESSOR CAHILL:** Correct.

31 **MS JANES:** Chair, with your leave, I will produce the

32 shorter paper as an exhibit. I am not sure what

33 number we are up to.

34 **CHAIR:** Thank you.

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1 **MS JANES:**

2 Q. Professor Cahill, could you start please with the  
3 introductory remarks that you would like to make? But  
4 prior to that, can I ask you to provide background and  
5 experience and also Dr Wilkinson, so that the  
6 Commissioners understand the basis on which you are  
7 providing expert evidence today?

8 **EMERITUS PROFESSOR CAHILL:** Thank you, madam counsel.

9 Firstly, may I make it clear that I am not a  
10 victim. I was ordained a Catholic priest in 1970  
11 after studying in the Melbourne seminary and then I  
12 was sent to Rome where I did my four years  
13 theology. I came back and worked for 6 years and  
14 then I decided to do a career switch. I am married  
15 and am now a very happy husband, father and  
16 grandfather. And then I embarked on an academic  
17 career and I became a trained psychologist, but I  
18 focused on the areas of immigrant and refugee  
19 movements, cross-cultural communication, second  
11.39 20 language education, and then multi-cultural and  
21 multi-faith societies.

22 I am now the Chair of Religions for Peace which is  
23 the world's largest inter-faith organisation and I am  
24 Deputy Moderator of Religions for Peace Asia.

25 My engagement with child sex abuse began really way  
26 back but it was in 2012 that I made a submission to the  
27 Victorian Parliamentary Inquiry into Institutional  
28 Responses to Child Sex Abuse and I was called up on day  
29 2; initially, interestingly enough, to give evidence on  
11.41 30 child sex abuse in the non-Christian religions because we  
31 know that there are significant problems in countries  
32 like India, Thailand and Indonesia with the issue of  
33 child sexual abuse in ashrams, temples and boarding  
34 schools.

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1 In 2014, I was asked to go to -

2 **CHAIR:** Professor Cahill, can I intervene for just a  
3 moment, and I am sure you will realise why. When  
4 you speak, the stenotyper in front of you is taking  
5 it down and the signers are also keeping up with  
6 what you're saying, so if you would be good enough  
7 to moderate your pace by looking at them, you will  
8 get the notion of speaking at a rate where it can  
9 all be transcribed.

11.42 10 **EMERITUS PROFESSOR CAHILL:** Thank you, Chair. I am too  
11 used to lecturing.

12 So, I went to a workshop in Spain, organised by the  
13 International Institute of Sociology and the Law that  
14 focused on sex abuse in the Catholic Church which brought  
15 together the world's leading scholars and researchers.

16 After that, I was asked by the Australian Royal  
17 Commission to be the senior consultant on the Catholic  
18 Church to the Commission. And so, I worked with my  
19 colleague, Peter Wilkinson, to produce the RMIT report  
11.43 20 which, when it was released went global.

21 More recently, I was asked to go to London to give  
22 advice to the UK's Independent Inquiry into Child Sex  
23 Abuse, commonly known as the Jimmy Savile Inquiry and now  
24 I have been asked to come here.

25 I appreciate the opportunity for you to hear of our  
26 expertise and insights that we hope we bring to your  
27 considerations.

28 Q. Thank you, Professor Cahill. Dr Wilkinson?

29 **DR WILKINSON:** I am a Melbourne boy and at the age of 18  
11.44 30 I was admitted to the seminary of the Missionary  
31 Society of St Columban. I was ordained in 1961 as  
32 a Catholic priest and did my postgraduate studies  
33 in Rome on two occasions, first for missionology  
34 and then a doctorate in missionology.

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1 I taught in the Columban seminary in Melbourne and  
2 also in Sydney for approximately 4 years and after  
3 receiving my doctorate I was appointed to South Korea to  
4 work as a missionary there and was there for 4 years.

5 Then I decided to seek laicization in order to marry  
6 and at the moment I am married and I have four adult  
7 children and four grandchildren.

8 My association with the subject of child sexual  
9 abuse began I think in 2010 when I was asked to join a  
11.45 10 small renewal group in Australia called Catholics of  
11 Ministry. At that time I wasn't particularly interested  
12 in church matters and my approach was to buy a copy of  
13 the Australian Catholic Directory and examine it as a  
14 piece of research, and what I found was that, looking at  
15 the evidence, there was a serious crisis within parish  
16 ministry within Australia. And looking further, it  
17 became clear that one of the causes of this crisis was  
18 child sexual abuse in the Catholic Church in Australia.

19 So, I had two reports on parish ministry published.

11.46 20 Also, at around that time, another group formed in  
21 Melbourne and we called ourselves Catholics for Renewal.  
22 One of the first actions of that group, was to write a  
23 letter to Pope Benedict XV and call the Bishops of  
24 Australia and state that the church was in crisis and  
25 that the question of child sexual abuse had to be  
26 addressed openly, if the church in Australia was to be  
27 Christ-centered.

28 At that time also, the Victorian Parliamentary  
29 Inquiry was setup. So, our group decided that we would  
11.47 30 make a submission to the Victorian Parliamentary Inquiry  
31 and that the subject of our submission would be good  
32 governance which we believed was lacking.

33 We also argued that the Victorian Government should  
34 establish mandatory criminal reporting for instances of

1 child sexual abuse.

2 The recommendation of the report Betrayal of Trust  
3 recommended that that action be taken by the Victorian  
4 Parliament and it did.

5 Des has already spoken about our work with RMIT and  
6 what we did in regard to the Australian Royal Commission.  
7 Thank you.

8 Q. Thank you, that provides very good context, so I now  
9 invite you to begin with your introduction.

11.48 10 **EMERITUS PROFESSOR CAHILL:** Well, I'd like to  
11 congratulate the government and the people of  
12 New Zealand for conducting this high level Inquiry  
13 into child abuse, and to have included in its Terms  
14 of Reference those government based and faith-based  
15 institutions.

16 As we learnt this morning, the road to this Royal  
17 Commission has been long and arduous, particularly for  
18 the victims/survivors. Their suffering must be paramount  
19 in our minds and hearts. Our focus, as we've already  
11.49 20 indicated, will be on child sex abuse in faith-based  
21 institutions but particularly the Catholic Church.

22 Of course, this is not New Zealand's first Royal  
23 Commission into child sexual abuse. In August 1900, a  
24 short Royal Commission investigated the Marist Brothers'  
25 Stoke residential facility outside Nelson. The  
26 Commission's report found much to criticise in its  
27 management, staff and standard of care. And the Marist  
28 Brothers eventually were forced to vacate that facility.

29 So, the physical, emotional and sexual abuse of  
11.50 30 children, even though it occurs more often in families  
31 and we need to keep that in mind, is a scourge. In  
32 Christian history we can trace it back to the New  
33 Testament times when the paterfamilias would abuse the  
34 slave boys and slave young women of his household. And

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1 in our RMIT report, we document that the examples  
2 throughout history where it has happened as much as we  
3 know.

4 One outstanding example that is relevant to  
5 Australia and New Zealand, was that in 1871, Mother Mary  
6 MacKillop, Australia's first saint, whose Josephite nuns  
7 came to New Zealand in 1880, was excommunicated by the  
8 Bishop of Adelaide and one of the major reasons was  
9 because she had been a whistle blower on a parish priest  
11.51 10 in a rural parish outside Adelaide who was sexually  
11 abusing children attending the nun's school. The priest,  
12 other priests and the Bishop were all Franciscans and  
13 they ganged up on her and she was excommunicated.

14 The real reason for her excommunication was kept  
15 hidden from the Australian and New Zealand Catholic  
16 communities for more than 140 years and one wonders what  
17 salutary effect knowledge of this incident might have had  
18 on religious offenders in subsequent decades.

19 The Irish Christian Brothers who came to Dunedin in  
11.52 20 1876, in Australia the first one was jailed in 1919, and  
21 that particular religious order had problems in every  
22 decade of the 20th Century.

23 The Christian Church has always condemned child sex  
24 abuse but unfortunately in recent decades has seen it as  
25 a sin and not as a crime. And so we've had, as we've  
26 heard this morning, the ravished innocence of the child  
27 abused, assaulted, violated, raped and sodomised, and  
28 that lies at the centre of this religious catastrophe.

29 In the Christian tradition, children are seen as  
11.53 30 close to the mystery of God. Each and every child is  
31 embraced in God's infinite tenderness, and for parents to  
32 have their patient, time-consuming and loving handiwork  
33 of raising a child, damaged and destroyed by abusing  
34 clergy and religious is at the very core of this



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1 religious tragedy.

2 In educating our children about their own  
3 self-protection, I like to use the very useful Christian  
4 maxim, highlighting bodily ownership and integrity; no  
5 trespassing: this is MY body.

6 It cannot be denied that the public image of the  
7 Catholic priesthood and religious life has been  
8 irrevocably damaged. This has impacted upon the public  
9 image and self-image of countless good, committed and  
10 saintly priests who have dedicated their lives  
11 administering to the Catholic communities here in New  
12 Zealand and across the world. I suppose this has shown  
13 to us that there needs to be a thorough going renewal of  
14 the Catholic Priestley ministry, including the  
15 aggregation of mandatory celibacy so this would not be a  
16 panacea. We have just in the last two weeks seen that  
17 process begin in Rome with the findings of the Amazonian  
18 Synod driven by the desire of Pope Francis to reform the  
19 church.

11.54 20 I'd like to make a few reflections, madam counsel.

21 Child sex abuse is always about power and the abuse  
22 of power. Power corrupts and ecclesiastical power  
23 corrupts ecclesiastically. Pathologies can infect any  
24 organisation. Further, child sex abuse is always hidden,  
25 very hidden, hidden by the priest and religious  
26 perpetrator, and that is why it is so insidious. The  
27 crime takes place in secret and the victim is neutralised  
28 into silence, going back to that point. The Australian  
29 Royal Commission found very little evidence of pedophile  
11.56 30 rings in religious settings.

31 An additional reflection that I want to make is  
32 this. Priest and religious offenders are very great  
33 deniers, continually and determinedly protesting the  
34 denial of their own criminal behaviour. And some

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1 Catholic bishops and religious superiors have found this  
2 to their great cost. And the higher up the church  
3 hierarchy the offender, the more determined is the  
4 denial. And so, we have to understand this within the  
5 parameters of dysfunctional governance, and we will be  
6 emphasising this during our presentation. The lack of  
7 transparency and accountability all within the culture of  
8 secretive clericalism and within flawed selection,  
9 screening and training processes in previous decades and  
10 centuries.

11.58

11 Q. You've set yourself four tasks for today which you  
12 outline on page 5. Perhaps you could just quickly  
13 summarise those and then we'll start moving through them?

14 **EMERITUS PROFESSOR CAHILL:** Okay. We want to bring to  
15 your attention the recommendations of the various  
16 government-sponsored and church-sponsored inquiries  
17 because we were asked by the Australian Royal  
18 Commission to look at 27 Australian and  
19 international Inquiries.

11.58

20 To present the findings, some of the findings  
21 and recommendations of the Australian Royal  
22 Commission which are contained in volume 16 of the  
23 7,400 page report to give you a roadmap for  
24 understanding why it happened.

25 And then to present some ways forward for you here  
26 in New Zealand.

27 And then we will address some special issues which  
28 Peter will do, about mandatory reporting, the religious  
29 confession redress issues.

11.59

30 Q. For this specific Inquiry, Terms of Reference 20 (d)  
31 requires our Commission to have regard to information and  
32 evidence from other Inquiries and reviews. You have  
33 evidence about the Australian Royal Commission, I'd now  
34 invite you to go through that section.

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1 **EMERITUS PROFESSOR CAHILL:** The Australian Royal  
2 Commission's figures show that 572 Australian  
3 priests, 597 brothers, as well as 543 lay persons  
4 sexually offended in Catholic settings against  
5 children, usually boys, about 70%.

6 Comparable to the US evidence, and using the  
7 weighted figures, between 1950 and 2012, 1 in 13 diocesan  
8 priests, 1 in 17 religious order priests sexually  
9 offended against children under 18.

12.00 10 The offending was worst in regional diocese and the  
11 least was in the archdiocese of Adelaide.

12 An estimated 1 in 8 religious brothers sexually  
13 offended against children, especially amongst the St John  
14 of God brothers who care for mentally disabled children,  
15 as well as the Christian brothers, the Marist brothers  
16 and the De La Salle brothers teaching in orphanages,  
17 day-time and boarding schools.

18 When we look at the New Zealand context, there is  
19 nothing to suggest in historical terms, based on the  
12.01 20 prevalence data in comparable countries, that the  
21 offending rate with New Zealand diocesan priests would  
22 not be in the range of 5-7% and 2-5% amongst religious  
23 order priests, although it may be lower because fewer  
24 male religious priests had charge of schools and youth  
25 ministries.

26 New Zealand has always had a relatively high  
27 proportion of religious order priests compared to  
28 diocesan priests and this may have had a dampening effect  
29 of offending priests and the number of victims.

12.02 30 There's other reasons why amongst religious brothers  
31 it may be less than the Australian rate. First,  
32 New Zealand was less impacted by the child migration  
33 scheme. And there's a long history to that.

34 Secondly, New Zealand moved -

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1 **COMMISSIONER ERUETI:** Would you be able to explain the  
2 difference between a diocesan priest and a  
3 religious order priest? I don't think it would be  
4 clear to everyone.

5 **EMERITUS PROFESSOR CAHILL:** A diocesan priest is one who  
6 is ordained, and incarnated is a technical term,  
7 into a particular diocese. A religious order  
8 priest, such as the Marist, they are called  
9 religious order priests because they are founded by  
10 a specific founder like St Mary of the Cross.  
11 Okay?

12 Some of those may work in parishes but others may  
13 work in schools, in universities, in welfare groups,  
14 advocacy groups, all sorts of other kinds of work that  
15 the church is engaged in across the world. Okay?

16 The second point I was going to make is that  
17 New Zealand seems to have moved a little bit earlier than  
18 Australia and Ireland away from large scale orphanages to  
19 foster care arrangements, which again are not without  
12.04 20 their problems.

21 The exception is that Catholic boarding schools but  
22 their numbers greatly declined in the post-World War II  
23 period.

24 The third reason we think is that through Peter's  
25 research particularly, is that the number of religious  
26 brothers in New Zealand has been relatively modest, 116  
27 at the moment, and it peaked at 385 in 1966. We also  
28 note in the post-World War II period, all the Catholic  
29 orphanages, as which understand it, were being run by  
12.05 30 female religious orders.

31 Now, I need to talk about the nuns. The Australian  
32 figures show there was very little sexual offending by  
33 nuns. Sometimes, through sheer sexual naivety, they did  
34 permit priests and handymen to have access to children in

- 1072 -

1 their orphanages. However, both the relevant Australian  
2 and Irish reports have documented serious emotional and  
3 physical abuse by nuns against children in their  
4 residential care institutions, though also many former  
5 inmates regard their nun carers with love and affection.

6 Now, I think we need to explain the very high  
7 offending rate amongst religious brothers. The central  
8 factor was their lack of interface with the feminine.  
9 Whilst this has now partially changed, their contact with  
10 women was generally minimal, beginning with the fact that  
11 they were educated usually in male only schools, went to  
12 male only juniorates, novitiates and scholasticates. And  
13 then they went on, they did go to university but they  
14 were then appointed to male only schools and lived in all  
15 male religious communities. This was a recipe for a  
16 psycho-spiritual disaster.

17 The Irish Ryan Report has studied this best and they  
18 highlight within the Christian brothers their failure to  
19 appreciate the emotional needs of the children in their  
20 care or to pursue appropriate training in community child  
21 and youth welfare. It documented their lack of  
22 acknowledgment of congregational responsibility for what  
23 happened, the consequences of the regime of blind  
24 obedience with its humiliating punishments, their fear of  
25 change, the lack of institutional memory, and their use  
26 of government funds to cross-subsidise other activities.  
27 Their psychological fear of women were factors that  
28 operated across their structures but also right across  
29 the structures of the Catholic Church, both in its  
30 decision-making structures and in its ordained ministry.

31 While there is much talk, very little seems to be  
32 changing in the Catholic Church, although with the recent  
33 Amazonian Synod two weeks ago, Pope Francis will look at  
34 the issue of the female diaconate but amongst

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1 traditionalist Catholics they have gone ballistic in  
2 their opposition.

3 Terrible as these statistics are, they must be  
4 balanced by the fact that 59% of Catholic priest  
5 offenders had only one claim of redress against them.  
6 This suggests they had only one victim who perhaps was  
7 abused many times. And from our own research, we know  
8 that the probability of a young Catholic child being  
9 abused in a religious setting was always relatively small  
12.10 10 but not low. It ranged from about 1 in 200 to 1 in 400.  
11 The risk, however, was very much higher for boys,  
12 especially if they were altar boys and choir boys, and it  
13 was very high for boys in Catholic residential  
14 institutions cared for by religious brothers.

15 We know from the American data that when altar girls  
16 were introduced in the 1980s, the rate of abusing of both  
17 the altar boys and girls was about equal, and this brings  
18 up the issue of access and we'll talk about that.

19 This brings out the issue, as we heard this morning,  
12.10 20 of the serial predator priest and brother who abused at  
21 least 10 children. And we know that the serial offender,  
22 Gerard Ridsdale in Australia abused more than 100  
23 children.

24 Another offending category is the recycled  
25 seminarian; the one who began training in one seminary,  
26 was asked to leave and then was accepted by another  
27 seminary. This has happened right across the world, we  
28 now know, and so there have been Inquiries that we looked  
29 at in the US (7), Canada (2), England and Wales (2),  
12.11 30 Ireland (4), Belgium (1 but was never finished) and the  
31 Netherlands (1). But I must say that none has been as  
32 well funded or as thorough or as detailed as the  
33 Australian Royal Commission.

34 In September 2018, a year ago, the German Catholic

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1 Bishops published a very useful research report. And  
2 last night the French Bishops received a draft report of  
3 their research study. The Australian methodology was  
4 built around private sessions and written accounts, and  
5 then the Prime Minister, in October last year, made a  
6 formal apology in Parliament to all survivors, as well as  
7 those who didn't survive through natural death or  
8 suicide.

9 The Royal Commission subpoenaed 1.2 million  
10 documents and its major other strategy was to conduct  
11 57 case studies.

12 The Commission made 2250 referrals to the Police and  
13 exactly half of those related to religious settings and  
14 those are now working through Police investigation and  
15 Court Criminal Justice processes.

16 Q. And we will return a little later to talk about  
17 additional matters relating to the Australian Royal  
18 Commission but before moving to that, there was some  
19 myths that you thought it was important to discuss and  
12.13 20 why they should be looked at differently?

21 **EMERITUS PROFESSOR CAHILL:** Yes. In Australia as  
22 elsewhere, some Catholics have accused the various  
23 government Inquiries such as this one of conducting  
24 anti-Catholic vendettas. Anti-Catholicism and  
25 anti-clericalism has always been around.

26 Other Catholics have accused the Inquiries, have  
27 been disapproving of the media and its journalists,  
28 alleging that they're exaggerating its scope and  
29 repeating again the same material, and certainly there  
12.14 30 has been some of this.

31 But it's been journalists, together with female  
32 researchers and priest and ex-priest researchers,  
33 particularly psychologists, who have brought this out  
34 into the open.

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1           When we look at the figures, except for the Jehovah  
2 witnesses, no other religious group came close to the  
3 Catholic Church, in the level of offending, though the  
4 Anglican level was relatively high and the Jehovah  
5 Witness contains instances of family abuse that was  
6 mishandled by the elder.

7           The second myth is that clerical sex abuse occurred  
8 only after World War II and it was made worse by the  
9 sexual revolution of the 1960s, and the Second Vatican  
12.16 10 Council in the 1960s and the general climate of secular  
11 and Catholic 'libertine' liberalism which led priests and  
12 religious to experiment. Based on research evidence,  
13 we've concluded the Holy See Vatican knew right  
14 throughout the 20th Century, as we can see in the 1922  
15 Instruction Crimen Sollicitationis, the crime of  
16 solicitation which was reissued in 1960.

17           Sexual soliciting by means of the confessional has  
18 always been a problem for the church and the situation  
19 was made worse in 1910 by Pope Pius X when he lowered the  
12.17 20 age of confession from 12-13 to 7-8 years of age.

21           This second myth was driven especially by two very  
22 good John Jay reports. John Jay is the John Jay Centre  
23 for Criminal Justice administration attached to the  
24 university of New York. It was commissioned by the  
25 New York Catholic Bishops and produced wonderful data as  
26 we will be emphasising, but unfortunately it gave  
27 credence to this myth.

28           It started its study in 1950 in its data, whereas it  
29 really should have gone back further. But we don't have  
12.18 30 proper data for the first half of the 20th Century but we  
31 now know but we will never be able to quantify it to  
32 compare it with later decades.

33 Q. Can I just confirm that in your evidence you talk about  
34 two John Jay reports, one in 2004 and another one in  
2011?



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1 **EMERITUS PROFESSOR CAHILL:** Mm, yes. The first one was  
2 collecting data from all the diocese across the  
3 United States, okay? And it was only focused on  
4 diocese and diocese and priests, unlike the  
5 Australian Royal Commission which was much broader.  
6 Okay? And the second one looked at associated but  
7 other issues between 2004 and 2011.

8 Q. And you set out the basis of the data available, if you  
9 could go through that, that would be helpful.

12.19 10 **EMERITUS PROFESSOR CAHILL:** Yes. I need to mention also  
11 that this second myth has been perpetuated in a  
12 recent letter, a very unfortunate letter by  
13 Emeritus Pope Benedict XVI unfortunately.

14 There was a rise in offending during the 1950s, into  
15 the 1960s, the 1970s and the first part of the 1980s, and  
16 later on we'll talk about why. But let us think about  
17 why there was this rise.

18 There was greater access to vulnerable children in  
19 the aftermath of the Second World War, where there were  
12.20 20 increased numbers of such children in orphanages,  
21 including migrant children as well and children who were  
22 orphaned, abandoned and displaced as a result of the  
23 Second World War and wartime dalliances, let us say.

24 There was a marked increase in the Catholic  
25 population in the migrant receiving countries such as  
26 Australia. So, there was pressure on the Bishops to fill  
27 vacant parishes as the Catholic population expanded and  
28 they sometimes ordained less than suitable priests who  
29 simply should not have been ordained. And there was  
12.20 30 remarkable irresponsibility in rejecting the advice of  
31 seminary staff.

32 There was a changing lifestyle of the priests, the  
33 proliferation of one-priest presbyteries from the 1960s,  
34 the greater and easier mobility with access to cars from

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1 1930s by the priests and, as a consequence, less  
2 monitoring of priestly activity and less accountability.

3 Also there was an increasingly positive image of the  
4 Catholic priesthood and that attracted young members who  
5 were prepared to accept mandatory celibacy as part of the  
6 priesthood package without fully understanding the  
7 commitment. There was greater access to children through  
8 the growth of schools, youth clubs Boy Scouts etc.

9 And also greater turbulence in the church  
10 immediately and during the Second Vatican Council which  
11 may have had unsettling effects upon priests. And there  
12 was the impact of sexual revolution but I think that's  
13 just one factor.

14 Lastly, there was a deep rejection by the Catholic  
15 faithful of the church's theology of sexuality based on  
16 the interlinking of sexuality and procreation, following  
17 the Humanae Vitae and its condemnation of artificial  
18 contraception, with the result the church was unable to  
19 offer a credible and acceptable theology of sexuality, a  
12.23 20 situation that still exists today.

21 Q. To try and help us understand how and why clerical abuse  
22 of children occurred, you've actually identified what you  
23 call a constellation of features and you have five of  
24 those. You will set out (a)-(d) and then Dr Wilkinson  
25 will talk to (e).

26 **EMERITUS PROFESSOR CAHILL:** Let's begin with the  
27 psychosexual abnormalities and situational factors.

28 Our reading of the literature points to the central  
29 conclusion that young and vulnerable Catholic children,  
12.23 30 especially boys, were in danger and at risk in the  
31 presence of psychosexually immature, psychosexually  
32 maldeveloped and sexually deprived and deeply frustrated  
33 male priests and male religious, especially those who had  
34 not satisfactorily resolved their own sexual identity.

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1           Psychosexual maldevelopment was usually, not always,  
2 but usually associated with the religious perpetrators  
3 themselves being sexually abused during their childhood,  
4 and this occurred to about one-third of the priest  
5 perpetrators. And the notorious Australian serial priest  
6 offender Gerard Ridsdale was abused by his uncle, his  
7 cousin and a religious offender.

8           This offending behaviour was also mediated, and I  
9 know this is complex, but it was mediated by a set of  
12.25 10 cognitive and emotional distortions, denial mechanisms  
11 and neutralisation techniques. And behind that, were the  
12 theological ideas of a patriarchal idea of God that  
13 lacked intimacy and closeness in their spirituality.

14           There was a sacrificial theology of priesthood based  
15 on their own divine calling as priests and brothers.

16           There was the flawed theology of sexuality that I've  
17 referred to.

18           And as well as that, there was a set of  
19 psychological realities, unresolved sexual identity, an  
12.26 20 ungrieved loss of sexual intimacy in their celibate  
21 commitment and overwhelming feelings of emotional  
22 loneliness.

23           As well as that, I'll draw on the German study that  
24 they were often in stressful situations. Firstly, a  
25 general sense of overburden with official duties or  
26 problems in their ministry, isolation and loneliness,  
27 substance abuse, alcohol, medicines, illegal drugs,  
28 inadequate social skills, particularly interacting with  
29 parishioners due that immaturity, particular stress or  
12.27 30 changes or difficulties related to their personal  
31 circumstances, such as financial problems, illness or  
32 caring for or death of relatives.

33           This issue of sexual identity raises the whole issue  
34 of confusion or denial about those with a homosexual

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1 orientation and their training and operating in a  
2 profoundly homophobic church environment.

3 There's little psychological evidence that the  
4 priest and religious offenders were suffering from  
5 psychotic illnesses. In fact, most of the offenders were  
6 talented and attractive men, and they are better educated  
7 and had higher IQ than the normal child sex offender.  
8 They came from intact families. But there was evidence  
9 of a pattern where discussion of sex in the family was  
10.28 10 taboo, where the father was generally distant and aloof,  
11 perhaps alcoholic or physically abusive, while the mother  
12 was a smothering mother, perhaps vicariously covering up  
13 her own unhappiness through her son whose priesthood  
14 boosted her image and the social status of the family.

15 Now, the issue of homosexuality is important to  
16 raise because traditionalist Catholics are basically  
17 saying that this whole tragedy is due to homosexuality  
18 and the solution is to get rid of all gay priests.

19 Now, Catholic moral theology has always insisted  
12.29 20 that homosexual behaviour is intrinsically disordered,  
21 based on scripture and on natural law theory. That says  
22 that human sexuality is principally about penetration and  
23 procreation. There's no Biblical evidence to support  
24 that. Whereas, condemned in the Bible is generally about  
25 gay prostitution, particularly in temples.

26 Of course, the issue of homosexual behaviour was  
27 developed over centuries well before the emergence of  
28 concepts such as sexual orientation, sexual preference  
29 and same-sex attraction. The traditional Catholic  
12.30 30 tradition was not complemented by a relational ethic.  
31 And comprehensively rejects the experience of gay people.  
32 Now the church has increasingly accepted the presence of  
33 conscientious gay people but the official Catholic  
34 position is still that all gay people have to live lives

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1 of enforced celibacy without sexual expression, through  
2 the virtues of self-control and self-mastery.

3 The final report of the Australian Royal Commission  
4 stressed that current, "Vatican documents that link  
5 homosexuality to child sex abuse by clerics are not in  
6 keeping with current understandings about healthy human  
7 sexuality."

8 And this report and every other report intrinsically  
9 insists that homosexuality is not the cause of the sexual  
10.32 10 abuse of children. There are many well integrated and  
11 mature gay priests who do not abuse children.

12 Let us now go on and try to enter the mind of the  
13 perpetrator. This is difficult for us.

14 We find that the offending, the thinking of the  
15 offenders was much more distorted than those of the  
16 non-offending priests and brothers.

17 As well, their mechanisms of denial and their  
18 techniques of neutralising and ensuring the silence of  
19 the child victims had a religious overlay.

10.33 20 Now, with the "normal", if that's the right word,  
21 the child sex offender, their cognitive distortions say,  
22 "oh well, having sex with children is a good way for  
23 adults to teach them about sex". But with religious  
24 offenders there's another layer which is driven by  
25 psychospiritual and theological factors and by the  
26 offender's wilful deliberate suspension of their own  
27 moral standards.

28 So, these rationalisations were, "When God called  
29 me, he knew what I was like, what my needs were", "I have  
12.33 30 a right to love and affection because I spend my life  
31 doing good for others" and "God will look after this  
32 particular child and see that it comes to no harm; it  
33 will have its special protection".

34 Now, these distortions we find from the two best

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1 studies that the offenders blamed their behaviour on  
2 things like alcoholism, mental health problems, their  
3 parents, their need for intimacy, their sexual  
4 orientation. And so, their denial leads to more denial.

5 Now, I want to give an example from the Queensland  
6 report which is an example of the gross misuse of  
7 spiritual power. And this is a young victim speaking,  
8 this is what he said:

9 "Father told me it wasn't a sin as I was one of  
10 God's chosen children and that God made boys to be  
11 special so that those who did God's work were not led  
12 into the temptation of sinning with women. I was told by  
13 him that I was to say nothing to anyone because God would  
14 be very angry with me for revealing his secret ways."

15 The second factor -

16 Q. On that sobering note, you then go on to talk about  
17 access to children and that situational opportunity that  
18 permits that to occur?

19 **EMERITUS PROFESSOR CAHILL:** Yes, as part of this jigsaw.  
12.36 20 There's a fairly direct correlation between  
21 religious offending and access to children because  
22 there are some religious orders that have no access  
23 to children and the rate of offending is nil or  
24 extremely low.

25 But the unfortunate reality is that access to  
26 children, particularly vulnerable children, has grown  
27 immensely over the last two centuries in particular. One  
28 was the growth in educational opportunities for children,  
29 the massification of education for children and that led  
12.36 30 to the founding of many male and female teaching  
31 religious orders. It led to the formation of the Catholic  
32 schooling system which is quite extensive in many  
33 countries. But I do want to say publicly at this  
34 point in time, that certainly in Australia, and I am sure

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1 it's true also in New Zealand, that Catholic schools are  
2 now very safe institutions because they have brought in  
3 proper protocols; and secondly, they are staffed almost  
4 100% by laymen and lay women.

5           Alongside this schooling expansion was the  
6 development of residential schools and I think we've  
7 talked enough about that. We know from the Dutch study,  
8 that there were many orphan children after World War II.  
9 In fact during World War II and the Dutch Bishops were  
12.38 10 aware of this issue in the 1940s.

11           And then there was a point about some countries  
12 introducing the foster care strategy.

13           The John Jay report says 40% of the abuse occurred  
14 in the priest's residence. In the residential care,  
15 often the offender's bedroom was next to the dormitory of  
16 the children and so, the child would be dragged into that  
17 bedroom, often as a punishment for something the child  
18 may have done during the day.

19           The other thing was the Child Migration Programme,  
12.38 20 which I've already mentioned, and according to the  
21 current UK Inquiry, only 549 children were sent to  
22 New Zealand, although I'm not totally convinced of that  
23 figure. Just over 6,000 were sent to Australia. It was  
24 a well intentioned but badly monitored programme and the  
25 British Government knew its flaws in the 1950s.

26 Q. Then you talk about the flawed response of the Bishops  
27 and other religious leaders to the findings of sexual  
28 abuse or complaints of sexual abuse.

29 **EMERITUS PROFESSOR CAHILL:** Thank you, madam counsel.

12.39 30           One thing that strikes anyone who looks  
31 systematically at this, is the startling uniformity  
32 of the response of the Catholic Bishops in every  
33 country. And any report, including the Australian  
34 Royal Commission, have heavily criticised the

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1 Catholic Bishops, their failures, their deliberate  
2 attempts to cover up the abuse which is all  
3 embedded in the secrecy and secretiveness at the  
4 heart of Catholic governance, and little has  
5 changed.

6 During the 20th Century, more and more secrecy  
7 provisions were imposed, beginning with the secret of the  
8 Holy Office in 1922 and later the pontifical secret  
9 because with the development during the 20th Century of  
12.41 10 radio transmissions, newspapers, television,  
11 investigative journalism, now with the social media and  
12 so on, the Holy See became increasingly fearful of public  
13 scandal because it and the diocese bishops were all  
14 fearful of scandalising the Catholic faithful.

15 So, they covered up to protect the image of the  
16 Catholic Church as an all holy institutions but all  
17 religious leaders do that.

18 Holy See was always concerned about the accused  
19 priests and religious leaders would not receive a fair  
12.42 20 civil trial but the Vatican showed no concern whatever  
21 for the victims of the accused priests and their  
22 families. And  
23 they used veiled speech and mental reservations, and we  
24 go into that in some detail in our longer presentation.  
25 But Bishops even kept his priest consultants in the dark  
26 about why he wanted to shift this particular priest or  
27 religious brother to another parish, to another diocese,  
28 overseas or whatever, all in the good name of protecting  
29 the reputation of the priest.

12.43 30 Now, we've called that, using a social psychologist  
31 Albert Bandura who is trying to understand why is it good  
32 men do bad things? And why much destructive behaviour  
33 has been perpetrated by people such as bishops, and he  
34 was looking at the Vietnam War, and how that's been done  
in the name of righteous ideologies, religious principles



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1 and nationalist frameworks. And we go into some detail  
2 about that and how that process operates through very  
3 questionable moral justification, exonerating social  
4 comparisons and using euphemistic labels, the offending  
5 priest is having health problems, other phrases like  
6 that.

7 So, that meant the Holy See officials, the diocese  
8 and priests, the leaders of religious orders, could  
9 minimise their role in causing harm to the victims and  
10 their families through the defusion and displacement of  
11 responsibility.

12 And as Bandura states:

13 "The triumph of evil requires a lot of good people  
14 doing a bit of it in a morally disengaged way with  
15 indifference to the human suffering they have  
16 collectively caused".

17 **MS JANES:** Chair, that might be a good time to give the  
18 witness' voice a rest and also to take a break.

19 **CHAIR:** We have reached a convenient point on page 16 of  
12.45 20 the brief. I think we all agree this is a suitable  
21 time to take the luncheon adjournment. Madam  
22 Registrar, would you please adjourn the sitting?

23

24 **Hearing adjourned from 12.45 p.m. until 2.15 p.m.**

25

26 **MS JANES:**

27 Q. Professor Cahill, prior to the lunch break, you were just  
28 about to move on to the next section, which was the  
29 cultural and praxis factors on page 13 of your brief.

14.19 30 A. Thank you very much, madam counsel. We are onto the  
31 fourth of the five factors and Peter will deal with the  
32 fifth.

33 It is necessary to understand the cultural and  
34 praxis factors operating in an institution. And the

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1 Australian Royal Commission listed the following cultural  
2 risk factors in institutions caring for children, whether  
3 they're schools, orphanages or whatever residential care  
4 institutions, whether they're government based or State  
5 based.

6 Firstly, a lack of understanding or awareness of  
7 child sexual abuse or its possibility.

8 Secondly, failure to listen attentively and  
9 sensitively to children, especially when they are  
10 attempting to disclose.

11 Failure to educate children about healthy and  
12 appropriate sexual development.

13 The prioritisation of institutional reputation over  
14 the safety of children and the harm done to them.

15 Cultivation of a culture of secrecy and isolation.

16 Failure to see prevention of child sexual abuse as a  
17 shared responsibility for all staff.

18 Failure to address racism and prejudice in an  
19 institutional culture.

20 And lastly, normalisation of harmful practices.

21 From the Australian report, we know that for the  
22 Anglicans, the problems were in the church of England  
23 Boys' Society and in their secondary schools,  
24 particularly boarding schools.

25 And for the Anglican's, the Royal Commission said  
26 their risk factors included:

27 Weaknesses in structure and governance preventing a  
28 consistent approach.

29 The role of the bishops and failures of leadership.

30 Conflicts of interest for bishops and other  
31 office-holders.

32 Cultural issues, including forms of clericalism.

33 The practice of forgiveness and confession.

34 And lastly, inadequate screening, selection,

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1 training and supervision of people in ministry.

2 For the Catholic Church, the contributing factors  
3 were:

4 Individual pathology, factors I mentioned this  
5 morning.

6 Clericalism in all its facets.

7 Monarchical and feudal aspects of governance,  
8 including lack of transparency and accountability of  
9 those in leadership and the lack of any meaningful  
10 participation of the laity especially for women.

11 Lack of leadership, including poor education for  
12 leadership.

13 The failure of canon law and its secrecy provisions.

14 The poor selection, screening and inadequate initial  
15 formation of priests.

16 Celibacy and the associated sexual dysfunction as  
17 the linchpin of the clericalist system.

18 The lack of oversight, support and ongoing training  
19 of priests and religious.

14.23 20 And lastly, the practice of the sacrament of  
21 confession and its cheap forgiveness which allowed  
22 perpetrators to minimise the impacts of their sexual  
23 abusing.

24 The Salvation Army were criticised for the  
25 questionable environment of its residential institutions  
26 with poor resourcing, the hierarchical leadership, the  
27 devaluing of children and its type of muscular  
28 Christianity.

29 The Jehovah Witnesses were criticised for the  
14.24 30 absence of women from their decision making processes,  
31 their separateness from the world and their two witness  
32 rule which maintains a person can only be sanctioned if  
33 the sexual abuse has been observed by two witnesses, this  
34 is based on Deuteronomy 19, 15.

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1           As we look at the report, I think it should have  
2 given more attention to whistle blowing. It showed  
3 not much interest in restorative justice, which is not  
4 strong in Australia.                   And a failure to  
5 advocate for a healing strategy.

6           And an organisation called For the Innocence Support  
7 has produced a healing strategy for the - although it's  
8 directed at the Catholic Church. And its 22 strategies  
9 incorporate a lot of things from the Royal Commission's  
10 recommendations. But it would envisage the appointment  
11 of chaplains for survivors, Gardens of Healing,  
12 particularly in the hotspot parishes where much abuse  
13 took place, and contritional eucharists.

14 Q. Just before you move on, are you able to confirm what the  
15 status of the Hearing Strategy is at this point in time?

16 **EMERITUS PROFESSOR CAHILL:** It has no status. It's been  
17 sent to every Catholic Bishop twice now. We get  
18 responses from a handful. To what extent they're  
19 implementing it varies, I think, across Australia  
14.25 20 because the response is more diocesan based than  
21 nationally based, although now you do have a  
22 Catholic Professional Standards body but that's  
23 focused on redress.

24           Madam counsel, I would like now to move on to  
25 looking at secretive clericalism, the culture of  
26 secretive clericalism.

27           The term is often used and everyone says it's bad  
28 but it's not always defined. The Australian Royal  
29 Commission called upon I think the world's foremost  
14.26 30 expert in clerical sex abuse, Dr Thomas Doyle who was  
31 mentioned this morning, a Dominican priest and canon  
32 lawyer who was working in the office in 1984 in  
33 Washington. And he noticed all these cases coming across  
34 his desk and he wrote a report that went to Pope John

1 Paul II and nothing happened, so that led.

2 He's identified the following elements of the  
3 culture of clericalism:

4 The vocational belief that all priests are unique  
5 and special because of the supernatural effects of  
6 priestly ordination and that links up with the idea that  
7 a priest upon ordination is ontologically changed and  
8 that is a very questionable theoretical concept.

9 Secondly, consciousness of a special bond of  
10 solidarity that exists among all priests and bishops  
11 because of the sacred nature of ordination.

12 Priestly authority which is derived from their role  
13 as sacramental Ministers and not necessarily connected to  
14 their office as priests.

15 The public perception of priests as men set apart  
16 and entitled to deference because of their special  
17 calling and they're entitled to respect and credibility  
18 because of their priesthood, not because of their  
19 personal competences.

14.28 20 Life as celibates in a homo social environment where  
21 they interact with women and married people but their  
22 essential living environment is all male, with no truly  
23 intimate relationships allowed.

24 Priests are part of a monarchical culture that is  
25 hierarchically stratified and which creates a clerical  
26 aristocracy.

27 Priests have a high degree of discretion in their  
28 behaviour and a very low degree of supervision and  
29 accountability.

14.29 30 Priests' official dress which sets them apart and  
31 when exercising their official ministry at mass and  
32 other sacramental celebrations, they are the central  
33 focus of rituals that are generally medieval in nature.

34 The Royal Commission then went on and talked about

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1 similar things, and I won't go through these in the  
2 interests of time and you will appreciate that, but I  
3 just want to focus on a few things.

4 One is I bring forward the concept from centuries  
5 old theology of the church as a *societas perfecta*, a  
6 perfect society and how damaging that was in the  
7 development of the theology of priesthood and the  
8 hierarchy.

9 The other point I want to point out is also the  
10.30 10 obligation of mandatory celibacy for Latin right priests.

11 In the very complex Catholic church, you have 23  
12 eastern Catholic churches like the Ukrainians, the  
13 Maronites and the Melkites.

14 And we know from the Canadian and American data,  
15 that in these eastern churches where priests are allowed  
16 to marry, there's always been married priests in the  
17 Catholic Church but not in the Latin right. In those  
18 eastern Catholic Churches, there was virtually no  
19 offending, no offending.

10.31 20 And so, the Commission found that compulsory  
21 celibacy was a contributing factor but not the cause.

22 So, I think we'll now go on to the next part and  
23 it's time for Peter.

24 Q. Dr Wilkinson, thank you, and you're going to be speaking  
25 to the Commission about the pre-service and in-service  
26 training aspects.

27 **DR WILKINSON:** Thank you, Ms Janes. This Royal  
28 Commission is looking at historical sexual abuse  
29 and the Australian Royal Commission found that most  
10.32 30 of the historical abuse occurred in the period of  
31 the 1950s through to the 1980s.

32 So, in order to give you a better understanding of  
33 the formation programme, what I'm going to talk about  
34 most is the formation programme for priests being formed

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1 in the period prior to that or in the period during the  
2 time when the abuse was mostly taking place.

3 I'll say a few words about the programs, current  
4 programs, but the essential focus will be on the  
5 formation programs for the priests who were abusing in  
6 that historic period.

7 The literature on the screening of candidates for  
8 the priesthood and religious life, I am making the  
9 distinction there between the priesthood, the diocesan  
14.33 10 priesthood and the religious priesthood. That's priests  
11 working in diocese that are incarnated into a diocese  
12 that don't take the vows of poverty, chastity and  
13 obedience but they do make a promise of celibacy.  
14 Whereas, the religious priests and brothers and sisters,  
15 they take a vow of poverty, a vow of chastity and a vow  
16 of obedience. But I'll talk about both of them in the  
17 same address as it were.

18 The literature concludes that the selection and  
19 screening processes for young people, and we're talking  
14.34 20 essentially about young people, wishing to enter a  
21 seminary or officiate or juniorate, those processes were  
22 inadequate and often defective.

23 The 1917 Code of canon law, this is a code of church  
24 law, and this is the first Code for the Latin Church, was  
25 put together in 1917. In that Code, there are canons  
26 that specifically talk about who should be selected and  
27 how they should be formed.

28 Canon 1354 says that bishops should recruit  
29 adolescents for training for the clerical state, that's  
14.35 30 for the priesthood. And that they should establish two  
31 kinds of seminaries, a minor seminary for younger boys  
32 and a major seminary for older boys.

33 Now, in Australia we had just one minor seminary and  
34 I understand that in New Zealand you also had one minor

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1 seminary in Christchurch.

2 The Code's screening requirements were focused  
3 mainly on the candidate's legitimacy of birth, prior  
4 reception of the sacraments, baptism and confirmation and  
5 known adolescent life and morals. The prevailing policy  
6 was to recruit young boys, and girls if they were going  
7 to be religious sisters, showing signs of what was  
8 usually called a 'vocation'.

9 And to recruit them as early as possible before they  
10 were humanly and sexually mature, and to admit them to a  
11 seminary or a religious junior at or owe vitiate to  
12 "protect them from the contagion of the world". That is  
13 canon 1353.

14 This policy continued the policy adopted by the  
15 Council of Trent in the mid 70s which called for young  
16 boys from the age of 11-12 years, preferably young poor  
17 boys, to be trained in piety and religion before habits  
18 of vice took possession of them.

19 At such a young age, proper screening is nigh  
14.37 20 impossible, so the real screening was assigned to the  
21 seminary formators who, as time passed, and we're talking  
22 about considerable time, years, were expected to dismiss  
23 "the disruptive, incorrigible and unruly candidates;  
24 candidates whose lifestyle and characteristics seemed  
25 unsuitable for the ecclesiastical state; those not  
26 progressing well in their studies or likely to; and above  
27 all, those who offend against good morals and faith".

28 Many of the 27 Australian and international reports  
29 that we studied in our review on child sexual abuse  
14.38 30 expressed serious misgivings about the screening  
31 processes, as well as the use of personality tests which,  
32 while they might identify certain personality defects,  
33 could not provide a fully accurate assessment of a young  
34 candidate's capacity for chaste and celibate living.



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1           Once admitted to the seminary or the religious house  
2 of formation, the candidates were placed in the hands of  
3 priest or religious formators, for their spiritual,  
4 intellectual and disciplinary formation. Prior to the  
5 90s, there was no mention of human formation. The  
6 formators were meant to be the best people available and  
7 professionally trained in their respective fields,  
8 particularly philosophy, theology, scripture, canon law,  
9 liturgy and spirituality. Sometimes they were not.

14.39 10           For priest candidates, the major seminary programme  
11 lasted for a minimum of 6 years, at the end of which the  
12 rector or superior of the formation house was responsible  
13 for advising the Bishop on each candidate's suitability  
14 for ordination. And occasionally, as Des mentioned, some  
15 bishops did not take that advice and ordained candidates  
16 who were unready or unsuitable.

17           Canon law also warned of the danger of accepting  
18 seminarians dismissed from other seminaries and Des  
19 mentioned that about the recycled seminarian, and some  
14.40 20 Bishops were also lax in this area and did not take the  
21 necessary screening precautions. It created a problem  
22 and that problem was specifically addressed in 1996 with  
23 a Holy See instruction but it appears it has reemerged.

24           Instructions have also been issued on screening of  
25 candidates with homosexual tendencies in 2005 and  
26 Guidelines For the Use of Psychology in Seminary  
27 Admission and Formation in 2008.

28           The 2005 document on homosexuality was interpreted  
29 by some as suggesting that homosexuality was tied to the  
14.41 30 sexual abuse of children and Professor Cahill has  
31 addressed that in his presentation.

32           In many respects, priests and religious were not  
33 well served by the pre-Vatican II formation programme.  
34 The curriculum was heavily intellectualised and  
rationalistic with lectures often given in Latin and  
Latin textbooks used. The content and teaching  
methodology was

1 scholastic and favouring the text of the 13th Century  
2 theologian St Thomas Aquinas.

3 The principles of competency-based and  
4 work-integrated learning were not integrated into  
5 seminary teaching and curriculum until recent times,  
6 and there was a serious mismatch between competencies  
7 and capabilities, particularly in respect of the  
8 knowledge, skills and attitudes required by a priest for  
9 effective parish ministry.

14.42 10 Until the 1970s, Catholic seminaries and religious  
11 houses of formation were usually situated in isolated  
12 rustic settings, outside urban areas, and often cut off  
13 from secular culture and the dangers of female  
14 interaction.

15 They were segregated, regimented and all celibate  
16 places, where the regime was obedience to the 'rule' and  
17 superiors, and conformity to the system.

18 The rule was essentially based on the rules drawn  
19 up by St Charles Boromao of Milan in the mid 16th  
14.43 20 Century.

21 Yet, they were generally happy places, filled with  
22 the natural exuberance of youth and they were places of  
23 innocence and youth infused with a spirit of generosity.  
24 And for all their shortcomings, they did produce many  
25 good competent and pastorally minded priests.

26 More serious were the deficiencies in the spiritual  
27 and psychological formation for healthy and mature living  
28 of a celibate life.

29 Candidates for the priesthood and religious life  
14.44 30 were also inculcated into a clericalist ethos. Des has  
31 spoken about that, where priestly and religious holiness  
32 were seen as superior to lay holiness. And the 1917 Code  
33 stipulated, "Clerics must lead an interior and exterior  
34 life holier than that of laity", canon 124. And the  
Council of Trent decreed that consecrated virginity was a

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1 higher calling than marriage because of the sacrificing  
2 of sexual intimacy.

3 Preparation for celibate living was minimal and  
4 usually entrusted to priests who lacked special training.  
5 Celibacy, as Des has already mentioned, was simply part  
6 of the package and it was presented in terms of sacrifice  
7 to a higher ideal of sexual purity in imitation of the  
8 celibate Jesus Christ. Serious discussion of sexuality  
9 never happened and the psychological aspects were  
10 completely ignored.

11 In the pre-Vatican years and even for decades after,  
12 though much of the formation programme was the same in  
13 every seminary because it was a systemic programme set  
14 down in canon law, each seminary or house of religious  
15 formation did its own thing, resulting in much  
16 duplication, fewer resources because many of the  
17 seminaries were very small and poorer educational  
18 outcomes. It has changed however in recent years.

19 Following the second Vatican Council in 1962-1965,  
20 serious efforts were made to reform, update and  
21 contextualise priestly formation. Between 1965 and 2019,  
22 over 40 official documents addressing priestly formation  
23 were issued by the Holy See. The most notable being Pope  
24 John Paul II Apostolic Exhortation on Priestly Formation  
25 in the present circumstances. The Latin name of the  
26 document is Pastores dabo vobis. The other documents  
27 were the Fundamental Programme For Priestly Formation,  
28 first published in 1970 and revised in 2016 and the  
29 Directory on the Ministry of Life of Priests, first  
30 published in 1994 and revised in 2013.

31 These documents have been augmented by others,  
32 developed by local episcopal conferences to ensure that  
33 the fundamental programme with its key principles is  
34 suitably adapted to the local social, religious and

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1 cultural context of the particular country, such as  
2 Australia or New Zealand, where the programme is used.

3 In Australia, the national programme for priestly  
4 formation was developed by the Australian Catholic  
5 Bishops Conference in 2007 and revised in 2016. The  
6 New Zealand Catholic Bishops Conference has produced a  
7 similar document which I understand has recently been  
8 sent to the Holy See for approval. It includes a Ratio  
9 Studiorum curriculum, if you like, and follows the  
10 emphasis on priestly identity and formation for  
11 priesthood from the perspectives of human, spiritual,  
12 intellectual and pastoral formation. One must assume the  
13 document addresses the contemporary issues which  
14 challenge priests in New Zealand and which challenge  
15 their ministry.

16 **CHAIR:** Can I intervene to ask you to just slow down a  
17 little so that the signers, as well as the  
18 stenotyper, can keep pace with you?

19 **DR WILKINSON:** Thank you, Mr Chair. I would also assume  
14.48 20 that the prevention of child sexual abuse would  
21 have to be included in that national programme as a  
22 challenge to be included.

23 If I may talk now about the source of priests.  
24 During the 19th and early 20th Century, the churches in  
25 both Australia and New Zealand relied heavily on priests  
26 and religious brothers and sisters imported from churches  
27 outside both of those countries, mainly from Ireland and  
28 from European countries. In the last two decades,  
29 certainly in Australia, that reliance on priests and  
14.49 30 religious from overseas has reemerged, except now it is  
31 mainly Asian churches that are supplying the needed  
32 priests and religious for the needs of both Australia and  
33 New Zealand.

34 In Australia, local seminaries and locally-born

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1 seminarians did not appear in significant numbers until  
2 the 1930s. At that time, there were just 7 seminaries,  
3 and then in 1940 there were 30, in 1960 there were 39.  
4 And in the 1970s, they peaked at 43 seminaries and houses  
5 of formation.

6 Seminarians, both diocesan and religious, number  
7 just 200 during the 1920s, rose to 622 in 1940 and peaked  
8 at almost 1400 in the mid-1960s.

9 Since 1970, the number of seminaries has decreased  
10 from 43 to 15 and seminarian numbers have fallen from  
11 1400 to just 302 at the end of 2017.

12 Moreover, at the end of 2017, more than half of all  
13 the diocesan seminarians were born outside Australia,  
14 mostly in Vietnam, Philippines and several African  
15 nations, and an even greater proportion of religious  
16 seminarians are from overseas.

17 In New Zealand, the data shows there were 4  
18 seminaries in the 1950s and from a low base in the 1940s  
19 seminarian numbers grew rapidly to peak at 335 in 1954.  
14.52 20 Currently, there are just two seminaries remaining and a  
21 total of 26 seminarians, 21 diocesan and 5 religious.

22 Q. Just to confirm, that is a change in the numbers from  
23 what's in the document by one?

24 **DR WILKINSON:** Thank you.

25 Q. Professor Cahill, you've identified that there has been a  
26 decline in sexual abuse since the 1980s and outlined ten  
27 reasons for that. Can you summarise those now, please?

28 **EMERITUS PROFESSOR CAHILL:** Thank you. It has declined  
29 but I want to insist that offences are still being  
14.52 30 committed, as we shall see.

31 But the reasons for the decline are, I think the  
32 high and sustained public visibility given to the issue  
33 since the 1980s, particularly through the media  
34 attention, this has been a mitigating impact.

1 The better child protection mechanisms now in place,  
2 including through State legislation.

3 The greater vigilance of Catholic parents and church  
4 employees.

5 The declining number of active priests over the past  
6 four decades and the associated aging of the remaining  
7 group.

8 The dismissal of many at-risk priests and religious  
9 brothers.

14.53 10 The almost total collapse of the altar-boy system.

11 Substantial decline in the number of Catholics who  
12 regularly make a confession.

13 The closure of the majority of Catholic boarding  
14 schools, farming schools, orphanages and other  
15 residential institutions.

16 The reduced interaction of students with Catholic  
17 priests in Catholic schools which have become much more  
18 professionalised, as I was saying earlier, and more run  
19 by lay people.

14.54 20 And the partial reform of the selection processes  
21 that Peter has been talking about.

22 The Catholic Church has only, in Australia it's only  
23 belatedly followed Catholic churches in other comparative  
24 countries by putting in place safeguarding mechanisms in  
25 every parish and by setting up better monitoring and  
26 training mechanisms, or by establishing special  
27 initiatives such as hotlines and helplines, as in  
28 Germany.

29 We'll come back a little later on to the precautions  
14.55 30 that have been put in place in the Ireland, UK and the  
31 US.

32 Now I would like to move on to, if I may, providing  
33 transformed care in faith-based institutions, and the  
34 recommendations of the Australian Royal Commission.

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1 I'll skip over a lot of the detail but I want to  
2 emphasise the points, the points which I see as  
3 important. The Australian Royal Commission made 58  
4 recommendations pertaining to religious institutions.  
5 And this has all happened within the establishment of the  
6 National Office of Child Safety which last year was  
7 placed in the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet.

8 It recommended that all religious bodies, with all  
9 their institutions, should adopt the 10 Child Safe  
14.56 10 Standards and work closely with State and territory  
11 oversight bodies.

12 So, those religious agencies will have to report  
13 their compliance to the National Office, as well as to  
14 the religious institution itself, and that all religious  
15 leaders must be provided with leadership training in  
16 child safety and mechanisms in place for regularly  
17 receiving additional professional expertise. And they  
18 need to be accountable to an appropriate authority, as  
19 well as a provision for managing conflicts of interest.

14.57 20 Any institution with children in its care should be  
21 provided with age-appropriate prevention education for  
22 the children, including about the power and status issue.  
23 And family and community should be involved in commenting  
24 and evaluating child safety policies.

25 They further went on and looked at all candidates  
26 for religious ministry. They should have an external  
27 psychological testing, not in-house. And they've  
28 undergone training that equips them with the  
29 understanding of the ten standards and about ethical and  
14.58 30 boundary issues and how to work with children and  
31 understanding the impact of child sexual abuse.

32 And that all people in ministry should have  
33 effective management and oversight with regular  
34 appraisals and with independent professional supervision.

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1           They particularly focused on the point that Peter  
2 was making about priests coming from overseas and  
3 seminarians coming from overseas to work in religious  
4 ministry and there's about 2000 of those coming to  
5 Australia each year for all religious communities and  
6 that they should need to be properly screened, trained  
7 and professionally supervised and undergo regular  
8 training.

9           Another point they made about sacramental confession  
10 which pertains to Anglican, Catholic and orthodox  
11 churches, if a child is making a confession it should be  
12 done in an open space with a clear line of sight from  
13 another adult, as well as the priest hearing the  
14 confession.

15           There are other recommendations about handling of  
16 complaint and removal from ministry, including permanent  
17 removal from ministry of anyone who's convicted.

18           And then recommendation 16.57 deals with the  
19 situation where a person, a religious person or a lay  
15.00 20 person, has been convicted of child sex abuse, has been  
21 released from jail, if jailed, and then comes back in a  
22 normal way with the particular parish or local community,  
23 and how there needs to be a risk management plan put in  
24 place for such people, and that there should be a  
25 National Register for each religious organisation.

26           Five recommendations applied particularly to the  
27 Anglican Church regarding a uniform episcopal standards  
28 framework that ensures the accountability of bishops to  
29 an appropriate authority. In other words, they can't be  
15.01 30 King of their own castle.

31           The management of actual or perceived conflicts of  
32 interest, the amending of a Code of Conduct for lay  
33 people to incorporate offending against children. The  
34 church should adopt a national approach to the selection,



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1 screening and training of ordination of candidates and  
2 ensure that all in pastoral ministry undergo mandatory,  
3 regular professional development, mandatory professional  
4 supervision and regular performance appraisals.

5 The Australian data highlighted that child sexual  
6 abuse and its mishandling by the Jehovah's Witnesses'  
7 elders which included some family abuse cases, was a  
8 serious problem and this has been confirmed in a recent  
9 UK study done by the Independent Inquiry over there where  
10 in a study 11% of all victims of religious perpetrators  
11 belonged to the Jehovah's Witness faith.

12 The Australian Commission recommended they abandon  
13 their two-witness rule in such cases, involve women in  
14 assessing allegations and no longer require its members  
15 to shun those who have basically been whistleblowers.

16 The Royal Commission conducted one case study of  
17 Jewish Yeshiva congregations making one recommendation  
18 that all religious institutions should ensure that their  
19 complaint handling policies explicitly state that the  
20 halachic concepts of mesirah, moser and loшон horo do  
21 not apply to the communication and reporting of  
22 allegations of child sexual abuse to Police and other  
23 civil authorities.

24 There were 21 recommendations in respect of the  
25 Catholic Church. 8 of those were to do with  
26 technicalities with regard to common law, and I won't go  
27 into the detail except to mention that one is asking the  
28 Vatican authorities to redefine a minor from someone aged  
29 from 14 and under, to someone aged 18 and under. The  
30 Catholic Church still allows girls of 14 and boys of 16  
31 to enter into a marriage if their parents approve. And  
32 this is an issue about the age of marriage and child  
33 marriage which is an issue especially in the developing  
34 world.

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1           Another major recommendation was for the Australian  
2 Catholic Church to conduct a national review of  
3 governance and management and that has now commenced,  
4 and we're impressed by its membership.

5           The Commission expressed concern about the quality  
6 of bishops and their decision-making capacity.

7           So, it's asked the Australian Catholic bishops to  
8 request the Holy See to publish its criteria for the  
9 selection of bishops and establish a transparent  
15.05 10 appointment process. Nothing has happened. We've heard  
11 no word of that.

12           The Royal Commission came to the conclusion that  
13 mandatory celibacy was a contributing factor and it  
14 requested the bishops to allow voluntary celibacy for  
15 diocese and priests.

16           There was also a series of recommendations about  
17 guideline documents and current models of initial  
18 formation.

19           I now would like to move on to Catholic safeguarding  
15.06 20 initiatives.

21 Q.   Just before you do that, for anyone who is interested in  
22 reviewing all of the recommendations, can you confirm  
23 that the 17 volumes of the Australian Royal Commission  
24 are available online and those specifically relating to  
25 religious institutions are also there?

26 **EMERITUS PROFESSOR CAHILL:** Yes, they are all there.

27 Q.   Thank you. We will move now onto safeguarding.

28 **EMERITUS PROFESSOR CAHILL:** Yes. In our review across  
29 the countries outside Australia, I think the three  
15.07 30 models of safeguarding that this Royal Commission  
31 ought to look at, is the Irish, the UK and the USA,  
32 and there's more detail in our document. But I  
33 particularly want to focus on Ireland because  
34 that's the model for the Australian one. In many

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1 ways it's a very good one but there are other ones  
2 but that's the one I'm focussed on.

3 The Catholic bishops in Ireland which covers  
4 the Republic and Northern Ireland, establish the  
5 National Board for Safeguarding Children in the  
6 Catholic Church and its website is there and you  
7 can follow all this if you wish.

8 They establish the Towards Healing process, the  
9 counselling and support service and one principal focus  
10 15.08 has been on the auditing of diocese and religious orders  
11 which are published on the website.

12 By September 2015, it had completed 43 such audits  
13 and it's now begun this year another round of audits.

14 And an interesting new initiative was to provide  
15 training in good child safeguarding practices for those  
16 Irish missionary priests and volunteers who are going to  
17 work in overseas countries, in Africa and Asia, for  
18 example.

19 Its 2018 annual report notes that it received 143  
15.08 20 new notifications against priests and religious, which  
21 were mainly of a historic nature.

22 It receives thousands of calls on its helpline and  
23 provides face-to-face counselling. And its advocacy  
24 service dealt with many different matters, including  
25 connecting clients to services, financial, homelessness,  
26 and educational services. And some of its clients are  
27 engaged in restorative justice processes.

28 It meets regularly with the Irish Police and the  
29 government child and family agency and provides training  
15.09 30 for clergy, current trainers and volunteers. And it's  
31 done two reviews also of its services.

32 In the UK, they have the National Catholic  
33 Safeguarding Commission, this is there on its website.  
34 In every parish, the UK has a safeguarding

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1 representative, every parish.

2 Its 2018 annual report revealed that in 2017 there  
3 were 152 new allegations and that is increasing, although  
4 almost all of them are of a historic nature.

5 The US, which is obviously much bigger, its  
6 Secretariat of Child and Youth Protection, you can find  
7 it on the United States Catholic Conference of Bishops.  
8 It's a bit hard to find but it puts out an annual report  
9 and last year's June 2019 report, there had been a sharp  
10 rise in allegations, 858, these were mostly historical  
11 but there were 26 allegations made by those who are still  
12 today minors, and 7 had been unsubstantiated.

13 So, I think there's a lot of material on those  
14 websites.

15 Q. Thank you, Professor Cahill. Dr Wilkinson, turning to  
16 you and the microphone, there are now a matter of some  
17 special interest topics that you will address and  
18 summarise, please.

19 **DR WILKINSON:** Thanks, Ms Janes. I would like to talk  
15.11 20 about mandatory reporting and the seal of  
21 confession.

22 Des has already pointed out the occurrence of child  
23 sexual abuse by clergy and religious and lay persons has  
24 been present in the Catholic Church since early times.  
25 It has always been condemned, it has always involved  
26 power and the abuse of power, it has usually been denied  
27 and kept secret, and in recent times, has been viewed as  
28 a sin, not a crime.

29 During the 20th Century, there was substantial  
15.12 30 criminal child sexual abuse in the Catholic Church in  
31 many countries, perpetrated by Catholic priests and  
32 members of Catholic religious orders. The Holy See,  
33 could I just explain the Holy See? The Holy See in  
34 Catholic legal terms means the Pope and the various

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1       bureaucracies, it's called secastories, that serve the  
2       Pope in the work that he does.

3               So, I'll use that term the Holy See. If I refer to  
4       the Pope, that will mean specifically the Pope.

5               So, the Holy See, the highest authority in the  
6       church, knew about the abuse during the 20th Century and  
7       developed a range of legal instruments, including the  
8       1917 and the revised 1983 Code of canon law, to construct  
9       a wall of secrecy around the abuse, both past and  
15.14 10       present, on the pretext that the church faithful needed  
11       to be protected from grave scandal and grave offence and  
12       that souls must not be harmed.

13               What the Irish and Victorian Parliamentary Inquiry  
14       found, however, was that the whole legal construct was  
15       designed essentially to keep the handling of abuse  
16       in-house and to secure a systemic coverup on an  
17       international scale in order to protect the reputation of  
18       the church and to prevent perpetrators being held  
19       accountable.

15.14 20               Rather than identifying and addressing the problem  
21       openly and accountably, looking for the causes of the  
22       abuse and seeking to eradicate them, the systemic coverup  
23       arrangements ensured that local communities were kept  
24       uninformed of the abuse that had happened, and was still  
25       happening, allowed the perpetrators not to be held  
26       accountable, and contributed to, even facilitated, more  
27       abuse. And this happened particularly with the movement  
28       of known abusers from one parish where the situation  
29       became too hot and the priest was moved to another parish  
15.15 30       or to overseas or to another diocese.

31               The arrangements were found to be derived from  
32       dysfunctional governance, a culture of secrecy and  
33       clericalism, and Des has already spoken about that.

34               In the church's effort to protect its own

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1 reputation, it often either entirely overlooked or gave  
2 scant consideration to the welfare of the abused  
3 children, the effect of the abuse on them and their  
4 families, as well as their just entitlement to  
5 counselling, compensation and redress.

6 As public awareness of these horrific crimes  
7 committed by clergy and religious became widespread,  
8 essentially through the media, various responses from the  
9 Holy See emerged. One was a special grant for the  
10 statute of limitation, it was extended to 10 years, and  
11 the age of minors extended up to 18 years, first in the  
12 US in 1994 and then in Ireland in 1996 and everywhere in  
13 2001. In 2002 a special limited dispensation from the  
14 pontifical secret was granted to the US to allow the  
15 reporting of abuse allegations to civil authorities but  
16 only in states with mandatory, civil mandatory reporting  
17 laws.

18 In 2010, a document entitled, "A guide to  
19 understanding basic CDF", CDF is one of the Holy See  
20 congregations, called the congregation for the doctrine  
21 and faith usually referred to as CDF, "Understanding of  
22 their procedures concerning child sexual abuse  
23 allegations".

24 And that guide stated, I quote, "Civil law  
25 concerning reporting of crimes to the appropriate  
26 authorities should always be followed".

27 So, for the first time in worldwide, the Holy See  
28 was instructing that wherever civil jurisdictions had  
29 reporting laws for child sexual abuse, allegations were  
30 to be reported.

31 I'd just like to say something about the duty of  
32 care. Before talking about mandatory reporting, let me  
33 say that a duty of care is a well defined legal duty  
34 placed on institutions to take reasonable steps to

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1 prevent and minimise the risk of child abuse within their  
2 organisations. It also gives abuse survivors a clear  
3 cause of action to commence legal action against an  
4 institution for the abuse that they have suffered, even  
5 with the institution having to prove or with the  
6 institution having a prove that it did take reasonable  
7 steps to prevent the abuse.

8 The Victorian Parliamentary report Betrayal of Trust  
9 found that in the State of Victoria, offenders in  
10 institutions often obtained credibility, trustworthiness  
11 and easy access to children in the institution, with the  
12 abuse facilitated by the trust relationship.

13 But the liability for the abuse was often unclear  
14 and limited. So, the Parliamentary Inquiry recommended a  
15 clear legal obligation for the institution to implement  
16 appropriate measures to ensure the safety of children in  
17 their care with the institution liable for the abuse by  
18 any person associated with the institution.

19 So, where a child is found to have been abused, the  
20 institution, including a religious institution, is  
21 presumed to have breached its duty of care.

22 Mandatory reporting. In the Victorian Parliamentary  
23 Inquiry, there was a distinction made between two types  
24 of mandatory reporting. The first was mandatory welfare  
25 reporting to the child protection authorities, and the  
26 other is mandatory criminal reporting, the reporting of a  
27 crime or credible evidence of a crime to Police.

28 Welfare reporting is for the protection of a child  
29 at risk. Criminal reporting is aimed at catching,  
30 prosecuting and convicting offenders. It is meant to  
31 prevent the concealment of child sexual abusers. Child  
32 sexual abuse is a crime, or perhaps we should say is  
33 above all a crime, as well as a welfare issue.

34 The Catholic Church in Victoria was initially

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1           opposed to the extension of mandatory welfare reporting  
2           laws to religious personnel but later accepted it, but it  
3           did not want mandatory criminal reporting and has  
4           consistently sought to retain the exemption for  
5           information received during the religious right of  
6           confession.

7           The Catholic Archdiocese of Sydney, however, has  
8           stated "sexual abuse is a crime which must be reported to  
9           the Police. The best way to investigate it is to report  
15.22 10          criminal conduct to the Police". But in Australia prior  
11          to 2015, New South Wales, of which Sydney is the capital,  
12          was the only Australian jurisdiction with a civil  
13          criminal reporting law.

14          In its evidence to the Victorian Parliamentary  
15          Inquiry, the Victorian Police stated that mandatory  
16          criminal reporting creates "a public duty to report such  
17          suspicions and send a message to everyone with the  
18          organisation who may know such issues, but are reluctant  
19          to become involved". The seriousness of criminal child  
15.23 20          sexual abusing cannot be denied.

21          The Victorian Inquiry concluded that, "It should be  
22          a crime for any person who knows or believes that a  
23          serious offence has been committed by another person  
24          against a child, and has information that they believe  
25          might be of material assistance - it should be a crime to  
26          fail to report that information to Police". The  
27          Australian Royal Commission came to the same conclusion  
28          about the need for a failure to report offence. But it  
29          came to a different conclusion regarding an exemption for  
15.24 30          information gained in a sacramental confession.

31          Let me talk about mandatory reporting and the seal  
32          of confession. The Australian Royal Commission examined  
33          both mandatory reporting and the seal of confession. Its  
34          criminal justice report recommended the introduction of a



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1 failure to report offence, such as recommendation 33, and  
2 its final report, volume 7, in respect of "Improving  
3 institutional responding and reporting recommendations"  
4 made 6 recommendations. Recommendation 7.1-7.6 on  
5 mandatory reporting, including two recommendations, 7.3  
6 and 7.4 on religious confession. A practice used  
7 especially by the Anglican, Catholic and orthodox  
8 churches.

9 Recommendation 7.3 reads, "State and territory  
10 Governments should amend laws concerning mandatory  
11 reporting to child protection authorities to achieve  
12 national consistency in reporter groups. At a minimum,  
13 they should also include the following groups of  
14 individuals as mandatory reporters in every  
15 jurisdiction."

16 Then it listed the groups and at group (e) was:

17 "People in religious ministry".

18 Recommendation 7.4 reads:

19 "Laws concerning mandatory reporting to child  
15.26 20 protection authorities should not exempt persons in  
21 religious ministry from being required to report  
22 knowledge or suspicions formed in whole or in part on the  
23 basis of information disclosed in or in connection with a  
24 religious confession."

25 During the public hearings for case study 50, and  
26 that case study was Institutional Review of Catholic  
27 Church Authorities held on 6-24 February 2017, the  
28 evidence given by the Catholic bishops and canon lawyers,  
29 all the Archbishops of the church in Australia gave  
15.27 30 evidence at that hearing, as well as several leading  
31 canon lawyers, they discussed the seal of confession and  
32 the responses of the bishops amongst themselves was  
33 confused and the responses of the bishops and the canon  
34 lawyers also did not line up.

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1           And it was over two issues. One was the confession  
2 of a child who had been abused, I forget the name, the  
3 name I think used was Sally. Sally goes to confession  
4 and says, "Bless me father, I have sinned, I have been  
5 abused by a priest". The legal question was, is that  
6 Sally's sin that she is confessing? No, it's not her  
7 sin. But is that information that Sally has given in her  
8 confession, information that is covered by the seal of  
9 confession? And there was confusion amongst the lawyers  
15.29 10 and the bishops about whether that was covered.

11           The other question was, if a priest offender comes  
12 to you in confession and confesses that he has abused a  
13 child, what are your options? In canon law, the  
14 confessor can forgive, give absolution, he can deny  
15 absolution or defer absolution.

16           The question arose, is it possible for the confessor  
17 to make absolution conditional upon the offender  
18 reporting his crime of child sexual abuse to the Police?

19           That wasn't able to be resolved at the hearing  
15.30 20 because of the confused responses of the lawyers and the  
21 bishops.

22           So, the Australian Royal Commission made  
23 recommendation 16.26 and it reads, "The Australian  
24 Catholic Bishops Conference should consult the Holy See  
25 and make public any advice received in order to clarify  
26 whether (a) information received from a child during the  
27 sacrament of reconciliation, that's confession, that they  
28 have been sexually abused is covered by the seal of  
29 confession. And (b) ask the Holy See if a person  
15.31 30 confesses during the sacrament of reconciliation to  
31 perpetrating child sexual abuse, whether absolution can  
32 and should be withheld until they report themselves to  
33 civil authorities".

34           I made an inquiry of the General Secretary of the

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1 Australian Bishops Conference before coming here to  
2 present to this Commission and I asked what had  
3 transpired with regard to these recommendations, the 7.3,  
4 7.4 and specifically 16.26.

5 I was advised that all the recommendations of the  
6 Royal Commission had been sent to the Holy See and that  
7 there had been consultation between the Australian  
8 Bishops Conference and the Holy See concerning the  
9 specific recommendations. That the consultation is  
10 ongoing and that during the Australian bishops visits to  
11 home, they are going to visit in June of this year,  
12 further consultation had taken place.

13 I was also advised that on the 29th of June of this  
14 year, the Holy See's Apostolic Penitentiary, one of the  
15 departments of the Holy See, had issued a document  
16 titled, "Note of the Apostolic Penitentiary on the  
17 Importance of the Internal Forum and the Inviolability of  
18 the Sacramental Seal". It was published on the website  
19 and approved by Pope Francis and that note is significant  
20 for this Royal Commission for it contains very strict  
21 interpretations of the seal of confession, including the  
22 following:

23 The sacramental seal is indispensable. No human  
24 power has jurisdiction over it, nor can any human power  
25 lay claim to it. It is indispensable for the sanctity of  
26 the sacrament and for the freedom of conscience of the  
27 penitent, who must be certain at any time that the  
28 sacramental conversation will remain within the secrecy  
29 of the confession.

15.34 30 Second point, the inviolable secrecy comes directly  
31 from the revealed divine right. It does not omit of any  
32 exception in the ecclesiastical sphere, nor least of all  
33 in the civil one.

34 Point 3. The church has always taught that priests,

1 in the celebration of the sacraments, acts in the very  
2 person of Christ the head.

3 Point 4. The confessor must defend the sacramental  
4 seal if necessary "to the spilling of his own blood".

5 The seal is regulated by canon law and explained in  
6 the Catechism of the Catholic Church which states "every  
7 priest who hears confessions is bound under very severe  
8 penalties to keep absolute secrecy regarding the sins  
9 that his penitents have confessed to him".

15.35 10 Point 6. The confessor is never allowed for any  
11 reason whatsoever "to betray in any way a penitent in  
12 words or in any manner" just as "a confessor is  
13 prohibited completely from using knowledge acquired from  
14 confession to the detriment of the penitent even when any  
15 danger of revelation is excluded".

16 Point 7. The sacramental seal includes "all the  
17 sins of both the penitent and others known from the  
18 penitent's confession, both mortal and venial, both  
19 occult and public, as manifested with regard to  
15.36 20 absolution and therefore known to the confessor by virtue  
21 of sacramental knowledge"

22 Point 8. The sacramental seal concerns everything  
23 the penitent has admitted, even in the event that the  
24 confessor does not grant absolution. If the confession  
25 is invalid or for some reason the absolution is not  
26 given, the seal must be maintained in any case.

27 Point 9. The priest becomes aware of the sins of  
28 the penitent "not as man but as God". To such an extent  
29 that he simply "does not know" what he was told during  
15.37 30 confession because he did not listen to the penitent as a  
31 man but precisely in the name of God.

32 Point 10. The confessor can therefore "swear"  
33 without any prejudice to his conscience to "not know"  
34 what he knows only as a Minister of God.

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1 Point 11. In the presence of sins that involve  
2 criminal offences, it is never permissible, as a  
3 condition for absolution, to place on the penitent the  
4 obligation to turn himself in to civil justice. Where a  
5 penitent has been a victim of the evil of others, the  
6 confessor must instruct the penitent regarding his rights  
7 and the practical juridical instruments to refer to, in  
8 order to report the fact in a civil and/or ecclesiastical  
9 forum to invoke justice.

15.38 10 Q. Peter, may I just stop you there and check with the  
11 Chair? I am very conscious that we have gone past the  
12 adjournment, that would be a convenient point to stop and  
13 pick up.

14 **CHAIR:** Yes, I think this would be a suitable time for  
15 the afternoon adjournment to be taken.

16

17 **Hearing adjourned from 3.40 p.m. until 3.55 p.m.**

18

19 **MS JANES:** With the indulgence of the Commission, we are  
15.58 20 very conscious of the time. So, if we could move  
21 very briefly to redress and civil litigation.

22 I foreshadow the comments that this is a  
23 summary of the Australian Royal Commission  
24 findings, so they are available to the Commission  
25 and anyone else who is interested, and we also have  
26 the written long brief and summary, so without any  
27 disadvantage to the information available to the  
28 Commission.

29 Q. Dr Wilkinson, can I ask you to summarise what the Royal  
15.59 30 Commission found was an appropriate redress framework?

31 **DR WILKINSON:** In essence, what the Commission insisted  
32 was appropriate redress for survivors who were  
33 looking for justice, that the redress should  
34 include three elements: direct personal response;

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1 counselling and psychological care; and monetary  
2 payments. And then that's expounded on in the  
3 document you have before you.

4 Q. Thank you, Dr Wilkinson. Turning the microphone now to  
5 Professor Cahill, just emphasising that you're not here  
6 speaking about the New Zealand context but are there  
7 recommendations you would like to make to this Royal  
8 Commission as it embarks on investigation of this aspect  
9 that you would want them to consider?

16.00 10 **EMERITUS PROFESSOR CAHILL:** I think one of the key  
11 things that you would need to look at is really  
12 prevalence data and trying to collect that,  
13 particularly with regard to the Catholic Church.

14 I think the English Norlan Inquiry in 2000 was  
15 certainly not a failure but it would have been much more  
16 strengthened if it had had prevalence data, so that's what  
17 I would say. .

18 So, in conclusion, in concluding our input, I think  
19 you're going to have to deal with the issue of the  
20 governance and management of religion and religious  
21 diversity, especially when you have bad religion or bad  
22 religious practices. And connected to that is the whole  
23 issue of the right to religious freedom.

24 In 2011, I was a co-author of a study of the  
25 Australian Law Reform Commission on this freedom of  
26 religion. I think you need to keep in mind that the  
27 right to religious freedom is a relative, not an absolute  
28 right. And, therefore, the difficulty is where do you  
29 draw the line? And that's an issue which needs a lot of  
30 debate across the world actually by legal philosophers ,  
31 moral theologians and so on. And lastly to say in all of  
32 this, let us never forget the child. Children with  
33 their openness, trust and receptiveness give us a glimpse  
34 of openness to God.

- 1114 -

1                   And we have concluded our presentation with a quote  
2                   from the Catholic Education Office from South Australia  
3                   highlighting the wonder of children.

4                   Thank you very much.

5   **MS JANES:**   And the absence of. The Jehovah's Witness has  
6                   raised some issues about findings of the Royal  
7                   Commission, these two witnesses are not able to  
8                   assist with that but if I may introduce through  
9                   them an exhibit so that the Commissioners have  
16.03 10                  available the findings of the Australian Royal  
11                  Commission but also the independent review about  
12                  data that looks at those issues so that the  
13                  Commission may make its own findings on those  
14                  points.

15                  I produce as Exhibit 17 Jehovah's Witnesses and the  
16                  final report of the Royal Commission into Institutional  
17                  Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, 14 November 2018.

18   **Exhibit 17 produced**

19                  I'll leave you there, we do have an indication from  
16.04 20                  counsel that there are two who would like to question  
21                  Professor Cahill and Dr Wilkinson. I will just check if  
22                  that's still correct. First, Ms Guy Kidd QC.

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**EMERITUS PROFESSOR DESMOND CAHILL**

**DR PETER WILKINSON**

**QUESTIONED BY MS GUY KIDD QC**

Q. Tena koutou, good afternoon, my name is Fiona Guy Kidd and I appear for the General Synod known as Taonga Whanui of the Anglican Church of Aotearoa New Zealand and Polynesia.

I just have a few questions arising out of your evidence today.

Firstly, on page 14 of your shortened report, the one you've been referring to today, when dealing with the issue of cultural and praxis factors - am I correct in understanding praxis is another word for practice?

**EMERITUS PROFESSOR CAHILL:** Yes.

Q. You talk about the findings of the Australian Royal Commission and you speak of the problems for the Anglicans were in the Church of England Boys' Society and in their secondary schools.

I am curious, what is the Church of England Boys' Society?

**EMERITUS PROFESSOR CAHILL:** I'm not an expert on the Anglican Church but, as I understand it, it was a society specifically for boys, adolescent boys, to encourage them to remain in the Anglican faith. And also as a kind of youth group. And so, it didn't exist in every parish, as I understand it. It was more a diocesan thing. And the problems was partly to do with clergy but it was more to do with the youth workers that were employed by the church who ended up abusing younger people, younger adolescents.



- 1116 -

1 Q. Thank you. On page 15, this is a part that you didn't  
2 speak to orally. You write there about the culture of  
3 secretive clericalism in the Catholic Church and you  
4 comment there, "Similar features are found in the  
5 Anglican Church". And my question is, are you referring  
6 to the Anglican Church in Australia?

7 **EMERITUS PROFESSOR CAHILL:** That comes from the Royal  
8 Commission, so, yes, it is referring to the  
9 Anglican Church in Australia. But evidence - may I  
10 draw your attention because I think that, as a  
11 result of the introduction of women to ordination  
12 and to the episcopacy, there's now a feeling that  
13 the level of clericalism is much diminished in the  
14 Anglican Church.

15 And I'd like to draw your attention to the  
16 work of Bishop Alison Taylor who was the fourth  
17 woman in Australia to be consecrated as an Anglican  
18 Bishop for the Diocese of Brisbane. She is  
19 currently doing a PhD on interrogating holiness, a  
20 contribution to the ecclesiology of the Anglican  
21 Church of Australia in light of the child sex abuse  
22 scandal. She spoke last year at a conference  
23 organised by the University of Divinity in  
24 Melbourne. I think she would be a very good source  
25 for you in looking at this whole issue from an  
26 Anglican perspective. As I understand, it is  
27 complicated by the different traditions within the  
28 Anglican Church, the Anglo-Catholic, evangelical  
29 and the more liberal progressive.

16.08 30 Q. We've identified that's the Anglican Church in Australia  
31 and it comes from their recommendations, and you are  
32 talking here about cultural and practice factors in  
33 relation to this culture of clericalism. Would you agree  
34 that to determine to the extent that clericalism is

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1 active in the Anglican Church in New Zealand, one would  
2 need to look at the composition of the people in  
3 authority in the church? You're nodding. The rules,  
4 governing rules? The gender makeup? And maybe even the  
5 ethnic makeup of who's involved in that church; would  
6 that be fair?

7 **EMERITUS PROFESSOR CAHILL:** I think that's fair but  
8 anything I've said about the Anglican Church in our  
9 presentation is taken directly from the Royal  
10 Commission report and I cannot comment at all with  
11 any knowledge about the Anglican Church in  
12 New Zealand.

13 May I add also, the Anglican Church in Australia has  
14 instituted a new procedure for the sacrament of  
15 confession which does allow for mandatory reporting if a  
16 priest comes to the knowledge of child sex abuse in the  
17 confessional but I can't give you the detail.

18 Q. And even within the Anglican Church in Australia, there  
19 are some conservative parts in relation to the ordination  
16.10 20 of women?

21 **EMERITUS PROFESSOR CAHILL:** Yes.

22 Q. For instance, in Sydney, which I understand is the  
23 largest diocese of the Anglican Church in Australia,  
24 still does not permit the ordination of women. Whereas,  
25 in New Zealand all parts of our structure permit,  
26 encourage the ordination of women. And we led Australia  
27 by 15 years in the ordination of women, so that is  
28 another example of a different factor.

29 **EMERITUS PROFESSOR CAHILL:** Sure.

16.11 30 **MS GUY KIDD:** Thank you for your assistance.

31 Commissioners, we had sought leave to ask  
32 questions but in light of the range of issues  
33 raised and the focus on Australia, it now doesn't  
34 seem the appropriate time to interrogate those.

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1           And so while my clients don't necessarily accept  
2           all the evidence that has been given, and there is  
3           a range of perspectives that you will hear in the  
4           future, now is not the time that we will support  
5           those. Thank you.

6   **MS JANES:** Thank you, Sir. I now hand the witnesses to  
7           the Commissioners.

8   **CHAIR:** Thank you. I will now ask my colleagues if any  
9           of them has a wish to ask questions of Professor  
16.12 10          Cahill and Dr Wilkinson?

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**EMERITUS PROFESSOR DESMOND CAHILL**

**DR PETER WILKINSON**

**QUESTIONED BY COMMISSIONERS**

**COMMISSIONER GIBSON:** I think just briefly, a clarifying question about timing. The document on the viability of the sacrament of confession, that was written after the Australian Royal Commission Inquiry?

**DR WILKINSON:** Yes.

**COMMISSIONER GIBSON:** Was your sense in response to some recommendations of it?

**DR WILKINSON:** My response to the content of the note?

**COMMISSIONER GIBSON:** Yes, the viability document was written in response to the Australian Inquiry, is that your sense of -

**DR WILKINSON:** Yes, it was definitely written in response, I think, to those questions that were posed or recommended by the Australian Royal Commission and referred to Rome for explicit clarification by the relevant authority at the Holy See.

**COMMISSIONER GIBSON:** Thanks.

**COMMISSIONER ALOFIVAE:** Thank you, Dr Wilkinson and Professor Cahill. Just clarifying, you were referring to the note there?

**DR WILKINSON:** Yes. When Professor Cahill and I met with the Australian Royal Commissioner, Justice Peter McClelland, one of the things he asked us was, in the recommendations that we're likely to make, what is the appropriate way for our recommendations to reach the Holy See because canon

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1 law is made by the Holy See and specifically by the  
2 Pope, so the Pope can change canon law as and when  
3 he wishes.

4 The Royal Commission was aware that it was probably  
5 going to need to recommend changes but it wasn't sure how  
6 its recommendations could reach the Holy See.

7 So, our response to Justice McClelland, was to say  
8 the appropriate way would be to make a recommendation to  
9 the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference, and through  
10 them the recommendation could then be forwarded to the  
11 Holy See for whatever response that you required, and  
12 that was the way the Australian Royal Commission worked.

13 So, they made the recommendation to the Australian  
14 Catholic Bishops Conference, that they should refer this  
15 matter to the Holy See for clarification. And subsequent  
16 to that, this note, which is only a couple of months old,  
17 has been written and is now published and available on  
18 the Vatican website.

19 **COMMISSIONER ALOFIVAE:** Thank you. So, following up,  
16.15 20 that note then is, for want of a better phrase,  
21 it's your current policy or it's the - how is that  
22 perceived in terms of influence, if it's on the  
23 website?

24 **DR WILKINSON:** It would be perceived as the current  
25 policy of the Holy See. Now, I'm not sure what its  
26 status would be as canon law because it's not  
27 formulated as legal decrees but it is giving an  
28 official opinion as to how the seal is now being  
29 interpreted by the Holy See, not only in respect to  
16.16 30 that question about what is covered and is  
31 conditionality acceptable, but across a wider range  
32 of concerns about what is covered by the seal of  
33 confession and how seriously it may be protected.  
34 And particularly, whether civil law has any, not

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1 only influence but any effect on the seal.

2 **COMMISSIONER ALOFIVAE:** Okay, thank you. And so,  
3 appreciating that that would have happened at a  
4 high level, in terms of the administration -

5 **DR WILKINSON:** Highest.

6 **COMMISSIONER ALOFIVAE:** The highest level. If you bring  
7 it down a couple of levels, what is the discourse,  
8 what was the socialisation of the final  
9 recommendations that came out in the note amongst  
10 the Australian Catholic public at least?

11 **DR WILKINSON:** I would say at this stage that the  
12 Australian Catholic public are not aware of this  
13 note. It's not the sort of thing that the media  
14 have picked up on as yet. It's not the sort of  
15 thing that ordinary Catholics go hunting for.

16 And bear in mind that the practice of  
17 sacramental confession in Australia is extremely  
18 low. I think the figure normally tossed around is  
19 maybe 1% of Catholics go to confession, maybe  
16.18 20 lower, because at the moment only 10% of Catholics  
21 regularly go to mass, and the practice of going to  
22 sacramental confession is very, very low.

23 **EMERITUS PROFESSOR CAHILL:** Can I just add to that? The  
24 note is a document for the universal church, okay?  
25 It's not specifically for Australia. And no doubt  
26 there may be things that came from other episcopal  
27 conferences.

28 Now, the Australian bishops, for all the  
29 recommendations, except for the seal which they didn't  
16.18 30 recommend to be followed, they sent all those off to  
31 Rome, okay? But we don't know about the supporting  
32 documentation with regard to each of the recommendations  
33 that was forwarded to Rome and that were relevant to  
34 Rome, so I think that's an important point.

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1 Secondly, every 5 years the bishops have to give a  
2 quinquennial report on their own diocese prior to their  
3 making what's called an ad limina visit to the Pope,  
4 where they meet the Pope and the heads and it's really a  
5 stocktake on each particular diocese and the national  
6 church.

7 Your bishops here in New Zealand have just finished  
8 theirs a week, two weeks ago. Whereas, the Australian  
9 one was in June, I think, yes, June. I think it would be  
10 very interesting if the Royal Commission subpoenaed those  
11 quinquennial reports, not only about, particularly this  
12 latest one on the issue of confession, the seal of  
13 confession, but also the prevalence data, if they have  
14 done any prevalence data within their own diocese and how  
15 truthfully their quinquennial report reflects the real  
16 situation in their particular diocese.

17 **DR WILKINSON:** The quinquennial report is mandated at  
18 canon 399.1 of the 1983 Code of Canon Law and each  
19 Bishop who is in charge of a diocese must submit  
16.21 20 that report, and there is a form that they must  
21 follow. It has 22 sections in it and section, I  
22 think, 7 relates to the life and ministry of  
23 priests, so they must report on that. And  
24 section 8 is to do with religious members of the  
25 congregations and they must report on that.

26 Furthermore, each Bishop in the report is urged to  
27 be objective, precise and succinct and must include his  
28 pastoral difficulties in the diocese, the causes of those  
29 difficulties, means being used to resolve them, pastoral  
16.22 30 issues yet to be resolved and confidential matters which  
31 can be sent directly to the relevant congregation. And  
32 the Bishop's personal contribution is essential.

33 So, they are matters that must be in those  
34 quinquennial reports. We're not sure where those

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1 quinquennial reports go to. I asked the archivist in the  
2 Melbourne archdiocese in archives, "Are those reports in  
3 the archives?" She said, "Peter, there are no reports in  
4 the archives, not even in the secret archives". I have  
5 found only one and that seems to be accidental.

6 So, I'm not sure what the Australian Royal  
7 Commission, whether they tried to get hold of those  
8 documents or whether they were unobtainable but that  
9 might be something that you would like to take up with  
10 the attorney in Australia.

11 **COMMISSIONER ALOFIVAE:** Thank you. Just one final  
12 question. In a lot of our private sessions, a  
13 recurring theme or insight that's coming through is  
14 around the concept of celibacy. So, very - I  
15 looked at your comments very carefully about what  
16 came out of the Australian Royal Commission and  
17 actually, there's evidence to support why canon law  
18 should be changed to revisit that?

19 **DR WILKINSON:** Yes, and it is - local bishops or local  
16.24 20 episcopal conferences cannot change that law, it is  
21 beyond their competence, is the phrase. That is  
22 something that only the Pope can change. Now,  
23 there is - I don't think you'd call it pressure but  
24 certainly within the Catholic community, within  
25 Australia, there are certain quarters that would  
26 enthusiastically support the removal of mandatory  
27 clerical celibacy. Others would say it must  
28 remain. But that is a decision beyond the  
29 competency of the Australian church or the church  
16.24 30 in Australia.

31 I should imagine that at the upcoming 2020  
32 Preliminary Council that is to be held in Australia, that  
33 that issue will be on the agenda.

34 **COMMISSIONER ALOFIVAE:** Thank you, no further questions,



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1 much appreciated.

2 **COMMISSIONER ERUETI:** It seems that in Australia even  
3 though there are - if you could clarify for me -  
4 mandatory reporting laws even for confessions made  
5 in the confessional across several states; is that  
6 correct?

7 **DR WILKINSON:** Yes.

8 **COMMISSIONER ERUETI:** And yet, I saw recently that the  
9 Archbishop of Melbourne, that's your hometown,  
10 isn't it?

11 **DR WILKINSON:** Yes.

12 **COMMISSIONER ERUETI:** Said that he would defy the law,  
13 is that correct?

14 **DR WILKINSON:** Yes.

15 **COMMISSIONER ERUETI:** So, there is this deeply  
16 entrenched culture of opposition to mandatory  
17 reporting in these Australia states?

18 **DR WILKINSON:** When a Bishop is appointed, he swears, I  
19 am not sure whether it's an oath, I think it is, to  
16.26 20 be obedient to the Pope, to maintain the communion  
21 within the Catholic Church. Therefore, whatever  
22 the official position of the Catholic Church is, a  
23 Bishop would be expected to observe that position.  
24 And, therefore, if there is a mandatory civil law  
25 that says you break the seal of confession, then  
26 effectively that would break the communion within  
27 the church between the Bishop and the Pope.

28 So, I think that is the source of that response.

29 **EMERITUS PROFESSOR CAHILL:** It's true that the  
16.27 30 Archbishop of Melbourne basically said I would go  
31 to jail. That was very clear.

32 Now, here in New Zealand, I suspect that it's a  
33 matter of some sensitivity because during World War II a  
34 New Zealand Columban priest was executed by Japanese

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1 soldiers because he refused to give any information about  
2 the confessions of guerillas who were living up in the  
3 hills and they knew that the - the Japanese soldiers knew  
4 about that.

5 That priest's name is Francis Douglas and I think  
6 there is some moves to try and canonise him as a saint  
7 because he is seen as a martyr for defending the seal of  
8 confession.

9 **COMMISSIONER ERUETI:** It seems even in your paper, that  
10.28 10 you're not insisting that the church change this  
11 principle but rethink it in light of the factors  
12 that you outline on page 27 of your paper; is that  
13 right?

14 **EMERITUS PROFESSOR CAHILL:** Yes.

15 **COMMISSIONER ERUETI:** The balance is freedom of  
16 religion?

17 **DR WILKINSON:**Our position is the child must come  
18 first. The safety of the child, we feel, is  
19 greater than the sacredness of the seal, and that  
16.29 20 needs more discussion and that will be something I  
21 think for you as Commissioners that you will have  
22 to look at clearly because there will be an  
23 expectation, I suspect, that you say something  
24 about the seal of confession in your final report.

25 **EMERITUS PROFESSOR CAHILL:** There is a 2000 year history  
26 to this because initially, the church only had the  
27 practice of open confessions made publically. Then  
28 by about the 5th century, it started to change to  
29 private confession being heard by the confessor.

16.29 30 After the Second Vatican Council, there were other  
31 forms of confession that were brought in, particularly a  
32 communal penitential or reconciliation session, where the  
33 person would confess in private to God and then  
34 absolution would be given to the whole community. Then

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1 that was abrogated by Pope John Paul II.

2 So, I think there needs to be a conversation that  
3 goes on within the Catholic Church at a universal level  
4 about whether to go back to that or to even have new  
5 forms of confession.

6 **COMMISSIONER ERUETI:** Another question, this is part of  
7 the puzzle, is trying to, there's plainly a man or  
8 boy issue here of sexual abuse in the context of  
9 the church and you seem to provide some explanation  
10 referring to psychosexual issues and also location.  
11 At the same time, I think you said with nuns,  
12 religious nuns, even though you would, perhaps you  
13 would have some features of psychosexual and also  
14 accessibility, yet it still remains a male, older  
15 male on boy is a prominent feature. Are you able  
16 to explain, unpack that for me?

17 **EMERITUS PROFESSOR CAHILL:** With regard to the priest or  
18 religious brothers or to the nuns?

19 **COMMISSIONER ERUETI:** Well, the comparison is that it's  
16.31 20 not so prevalent in the context of nuns and  
21 children, right?

22 **EMERITUS PROFESSOR CAHILL:** Yes.

23 **COMMISSIONER ERUETI:** Even though it would seem to me  
24 there would be some sort of psychosexual  
25 abnormalities as you describe them and also access,  
26 but it seems to be mostly, there is abuse but it's  
27 mostly physical and not sexual.

28 The sexual abuse is largely men, priests on boys?

29 **EMERITUS PROFESSOR CAHILL:** Yes.

16.32 30 **COMMISSIONER ERUETI:** Why is there this distinction, is  
31 the question fundamentally?

32 **EMERITUS PROFESSOR CAHILL:** I'm not sure I have  
33 understood you fully. Don't forget that 30% of the  
34 victims were girls, females, okay, and it was

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1 partly an access issue but also of orientation.  
2 So, you know, there are many factors coming into  
3 this.

4 With regard to the low offending rate among nuns,  
5 the Australian Royal Commission, the figures are 96 and  
6 we think that's an exaggeration for various reasons but  
7 it's quite low.

8 But with regard to the sexual abuse by nuns of  
9 children, the rate was extremely low and I suppose you  
10 have to explain that in terms of, one is the lack of  
11 sexual knowledge of nuns during - up until the 60s and  
12 70s, was extremely low, and that comes out in the  
13 Queensland Ford report but also I think that nuns had a  
14 better appreciation of their own virginal commitment and  
15 perhaps the level of sexual desire was not as immediate  
16 or as strong as it is with priests and brothers.

17 **COMMISSIONER ERUETI:** Thank you.

18 **COMMISSIONER SHAW:** May I thank both of you for your  
19 evidence. All of the questions that I had have  
16.34 20 already been covered by my colleagues, so I won't  
21 labour the point. Thank you both very much.

22 **CHAIR:** I have one question which relates to, and I am  
23 not going to use the language you used, but the  
24 Royal Commission made its findings to the Bishops  
25 Conference on the basis that the bishops would send  
26 a request or the finding to the Holy See. Was it  
27 ever canvassed that they might simply make the  
28 recommendation to the bishops and leave it at that?

29 **EMERITUS PROFESSOR CAHILL:** Well, the Royal  
16.35 30 Commissioners were very aware, they had a deep  
31 knowledge of the Catholic Church. They knew that  
32 on some of recommendations it was only Rome that  
33 could make the decision, do the necessary  
34 recommended changes. And so, that's why the

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1 recommendations are worded that way. And so, the  
2 Australian bishops had no trouble accepting those  
3 recommendations because, in a sense, they were  
4 acting as a postbox to send it to Rome.

5 What we don't know, and it's never been  
6 revealed, is what was the covering letter and the  
7 comment by the bishops on each of those  
8 recommendations? Did they make no comment? Did  
9 they put a negative view of the particular  
10 recommendation or a positive view? We don't know.

11 It wasn't until 8 months later that the bishops  
12 actually came together and made an explicit decision on  
13 each of the relevant recommendations. And there's been a  
14 lot of criticism that it took them so long to get to that  
15 point of making that decision because there's a lot of  
16 division within the Australian Episcopal Conference, and  
17 that is part of the problem, that they find it very hard  
18 to get cohesion and agreement on almost anything. I  
19 think Peter would probably agree with that.

16.36 20 **DR WILKINSON:** The Australian Catholic Bishops  
21 Conference setup a mechanism or a structure that it  
22 called the Truth, Justice and Healing Council, that  
23 would be the liaison group between the Australian  
24 Royal Commission and the Catholic Bishops  
25 Conference. And I understand the New Zealand  
26 Catholic Bishops Conference has setup a similar  
27 structure.

28 I would imagine that before that mechanism that we  
29 talked about, namely sending the recommendations through  
16.37 30 the Catholic Bishops Conference, that would have been  
31 discussed with the Truth, Justice and Healing Council to  
32 sound out whether this was a process that was acceptable  
33 to the bishops.

34 At no stage, that I am aware of, was there any

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1 discussion about it being an unsuitable process for  
2 getting the recommendations from the Commission to the  
3 Holy See.

4 **CHAIR:** Thank you for clarifying that. I join my  
5 colleagues, gentlemen, in thanking you for the  
6 broad expanse of your evidence which you can be  
7 assured will be of great assistance to the Royal  
8 Commission. Thank you.

9 **DR WILKINSON:** Thank you, Commissioners.

16.38 10 **MS JANES:** Thank you, Chair, and thank you Professor  
11 Cahill and Dr Wilkinson for your evidence, that is  
12 now concluded and you may step down.

13 Chair and Commissioners, while they're doing that,  
14 Ms McKechnie has requested and been given leave to make a  
15 short statement.

16 **CHAIR:** Thank you.

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**STATEMENT BY MS MCKECHNIE QC**

**MS MCKECHNIE:** Thank you, Chair, Commissioners.

Following the close of this hearing, the next focus of the Royal Commission is going to be on the State and the Crown response. It's going to be some time before Catholic matters come back before the Commission and, because of that, the Bishops and Congregational Leaders have sought and have been granted leave to make some remarks at this point, so thank you for leave.

I make these remarks, Commissioners, on behalf of Te Ropu Tautoko which has been setup by both the Bishops and Congregational Leaders of the Church of Aotearoa New Zealand.

At this Contextual Hearing, there has been evidence which sets the scene for the work that you will do in the coming months and today there has been extensive evidence about Catholic matters. Representatives of Te Ropu Tautoko and the Auckland diocese, as we are here in their diocese, have attended the hearing, each day of hearing and listened to the evidence, both State and faith-based. And have learned much from the witnesses. Their presence here, I want to say to you and to those who are listening on the livestream, is part of the commitment by the Bishops and Congregational Leaders of the Catholic Church to listen, to learn from and to support the survivors.

Our clients are very conscious that there may well be survivors listening to this hearing who have not approached the Catholic entities for the civil authorities about their experiences and they are

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1 encouraged to do that, to approach the National Office of  
2 Professional Standards which represents the Catholic  
3 entities here or to approach the Police, so I say that to  
4 those of you who may be listening who have not yet come  
5 forward.

6 We also encourage them to approach you and share  
7 their experiences with the Royal Commission.

8 Turning to the evidence that this Royal Commission  
9 will hear in the future about the Catholic Church and the  
10 entities of that church in New Zealand, the Catholic  
11 Bishops and Congregational Leaders are very aware that  
12 dark chapters of their history will be examined.

13 Some of that evidence has been heard in this hearing  
14 already.

15 Sadly, it is very clear that many things have  
16 happened within the Catholic diocese and congregations in  
17 New Zealand which should not have happened. All forms of  
18 abuse are unacceptable and indefensible. And all people  
19 should have been safe in the care of Catholic entities in  
20 New Zealand.

21 The Bishops and Congregational Leaders are committed  
22 to working with the Royal Commission in this Inquiry and  
23 have asked me to publicly reiterate that both to you and  
24 to those who are listening this afternoon.

25 They are committed to their errors and omissions  
26 being examined transparently and openly.

27 They acknowledge that as part of a global church,  
28 there will be a significant number of - there have been a  
29 significant number of Inquiries and investigations into  
30 entities around the world, including extensively today in  
31 Australia, many of these Inquiries have revealed events  
32 that should never have happened and to which the Pope and  
33 Catholic leaders in those areas expressed great regret.  
34 The evidence of Professor Cahill and Dr Wilkinson at this  
hearing



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1 have discussed some of that context in other countries  
2 and has sought to draw parallels in New Zealand and make  
3 a number of global generalisations around what you may  
4 find here.

5 Now, while our clients do not agree with all of the  
6 evidence given by Professor Cahill and Dr Wilkinson, and  
7 as you have heard there is a range of perspectives  
8 amongst Catholics and Catholic entities around the world  
9 and indeed in New Zealand, they accept and acknowledge  
16.43 10 that there are very serious issues to consider.

11 There will be parallels which you can draw from the  
12 global experience but because of the size and the  
13 structure and the nature of the Catholic community and  
14 leadership here in Aotearoa, there are significant  
15 differences that will need your exploration. Professor  
16 Cahill and Dr Wilkinson highlighted some of those  
17 differences in their evidence this afternoon.

18 The history of care provided by Catholic entities in  
19 New Zealand is also complex. As you will hear in  
16.43 20 evidence in your future Inquiries I am sure, it is a  
21 history of both significant societal good and times of  
22 intense shame.

23 As you embark on your work, Commissioners, the  
24 Catholic Bishops and Congregational Leaders ask that you  
25 consider the entities within the Catholic Church and  
26 Aotearoa New Zealand in their full context and in the  
27 context of Aotearoa New Zealand, its work, its errors,  
28 the lessons they have learned and the lessons that they  
29 are still to learn.

16.44 30 We anticipate, and Counsel Assisting indicated this  
31 morning, that investigations into faith-based churches  
32 will begin shortly. We anticipate there will be an  
33 investigation into care by Catholic entities here. The  
34 Catholic Bishops and Congregational Leaders welcome that

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1 opportunity.They are committed to accepting  
2 responsibility and their responsibility to act to stop  
3 future abuse in the Catholic Church and to learn the  
4 lessons of how to respond to what has already happened  
5 and should not have happened in the care of the Catholic  
6 entities in Aotearoa New Zealand. They are committed to  
7 learning the lessons that will come from your work.

8 Thank you.

9 **CHAIR:** Thank you.

16.45 10 **MR MOUNT:** Mr Chair, Commissioners, as we draw towards  
11 the close of this Contextual Hearing, may I seek  
12 your indulgence to make some closing remarks?

13 **CHAIR:** Certainly.  
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**CLOSING REMARKS**1  
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**MR MOUNT:** I begin by acknowledging mana whenua Ngati Whatua Orakei for generously hosting us, for opening each day and for closing each day. Your support and your welcome are very much appreciated.

I also acknowledge survivors and members of our Survivor Advisory Group and our ambassadors who have either joined us here in person or who have watched on the livestream or who have otherwise been involved in this hearing.

I also acknowledge the witnesses who have participated and in many cases have very generously shared some of the most important aspects of their lives with us over the last two weeks.

And I also acknowledge the other participants who have contributed to this hearing and of course the members of the Secretariat and others who have made this complicated process possible.

As you know, this is New Zealand's largest ever Royal Commission. No doubt there are many different ways in which we could measure size, but what we have seen in the last two weeks is that perhaps the most appropriate measure is to say that this is perhaps the largest in terms of the number of people affected and the largest in terms of the impact on New Zealanders who have been abused or neglected in care, as well as their families, their communities and also the generations over time.

We've heard from 29 witnesses in this room. But in many cases they have spoken on behalf of large numbers of others, from Judge Henwood who spoke on behalf of 1100

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1 people who came forward to the Confidential Listening and  
2 Assistance Service, to Sonja Cooper and Amanda Hill who  
3 represented more than 1,000 clients of their firm.  
4 Survivors such as Rawiri Waretini-Karena and Arthur  
5 Taylor who represented the thousands of people in prison  
6 and the generations before them. If nothing else, it is  
7 obvious that this Inquiry is a lot bigger than any one  
8 person. But, Mr Chair, we won't see you at another public  
9 hearing and so it is appropriate to acknowledge at this  
10 time that you are not only the first among equals at the  
11 Commissioner table but you were also the first to take on  
12 the responsibility of this important work.

13 It was early last year when you accepted the request  
14 of the government to lead public consultation on the  
15 Terms of Reference for this Inquiry. It was the first  
16 time that had been done in New Zealand, to lead a fully  
17 public consultation process for the Terms of Reference of  
18 the Royal Commission. And you brought to that task your  
19 mana, and the respect in which you are held as our former  
20 Governor-General and the holder of several high public  
21 offices. I know that the many people that you met with  
22 very much respected and appreciated the way you  
23 approached that task.

24 It was then you who recommended to the government  
25 that the scope of this Inquiry be broadened from State  
26 care to include non-State care, particularly faith-based  
27 institutions.

28 And importantly, you recommended that Te Tiriti o  
29 Waitangi be built into the Terms of Reference and woven  
30 into the fabric of the Royal Commission. Those were your  
31 suggestions which were accepted by the government and  
32 they form a very important part of the work of the  
33 Inquiry.

34 Late last year, you were joined by your four

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1 colleagues and, having helped to design the ship, you  
2 have captained it to its first waypoint, the start of  
3 the private sessions earlier this year, and now to this  
4 significant waypoint, the end of the first substantive  
5 contextual public hearing.

6 And if I may say, what you have shown throughout the  
7 time since you took on this important work, is an  
8 uncompromising commitment to the substance of the work, a  
9 steady resolve to do the work in a principled, inclusive  
16.50 10 and sensitive way and a deep compassion for the  
11 New Zealanders of all backgrounds who are at the centre  
12 of this work.

13 Very soon you will be passing on the responsibility  
14 of captaining the ship to a new Chair and what we have  
15 seen, if I may say so, in the last two weeks, is that  
16 this is an Inquiry in good health and one with real grass  
17 roots support. And for that, Mr Chair, we thank you.

18 There will, I hope, be other opportunities to thank  
19 you and to acknowledge you for what you have done but I  
16.51 20 do know that I speak on behalf of a very large number of  
21 people in wanting to acknowledge you today on this public  
22 occasion.

23 Now, Madam Registrar, I believe that you may have a  
24 further exhibit that you may be able to present directly  
25 to the Chair? (Bouquet of flowers presented to the  
26 Chair).

27 And on that note, for the final time in this public  
28 hearing, may it please the Commission, kia ora tatou  
29 katoa.

16.51 30 **CHAIR:** Thank you, Mr Mount.

31 **MS McCARTNEY QC:** I am speaking on behalf of all counsel in  
32 addressing you, Sir Anand, because we wish to  
33 acknowledge your retirement as Chair. And,  
34 speaking on behalf of all counsel, they have all

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1 asked me to convey to you our thanks for the mana  
2 that you have brought to these hearings. And such  
3 was the mana that you have brought, that in the  
4 nine days we have been here, we have seen survivors  
5 of the abuse, witnesses who have been prepared to  
6 speak publicly about their most personal  
7 experiences. And of those survivor witnesses,  
8 there are survivors who, while they started out in  
9 terrible circumstances, they were able to tell us  
10 how they went on to get high education degrees,  
11 some of them having been gang leaders went on to do  
12 this, another is a United Nations representative  
13 and there were quite a number who have written  
14 books.

15 The indictment on New Zealand is that so many of  
16 them said there were times when they felt they were not  
17 human and every one of them said that they lost trust in  
18 authority. Yet, before this Royal Commission they were  
19 able to stand up and speak of their experiences.

16.54 20 You, Sir Anand, spoke directly to each one of them.  
21 You provided a personal and sincere thanks to each one.  
22 You conveyed respect and empowerment. And those who are  
23 here of the survivors, they saw that. Your dignified  
24 leadership has really set the course of this Royal  
25 Commission.

26 If I may turn and just speak to the survivors who  
27 are here. As counsel, we hope that having seen these  
28 last 9 days, that you can be optimistic that this Royal  
29 Commission may bring about the transformational change  
16.55 30 that you are seeking.

31 We, as counsel, are optimistic of that. And we wish  
32 to convey to the survivors that in the time that you have  
33 spoken in the time of these hearings, the hope that we  
34 have that many more will come forward has in fact been

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1 expressed to us already. We are already hearing that  
2 this is happening.

3 Sir Anand, counsel appearing here have a great  
4 affection for you. It has been a privilege to be here  
5 for your final sitting.

6 **CHAIR:** Ladies and gentlemen, I am going to exercise a  
7 right of reply and I'm conscious as I start of  
8 needing to be brief and to say what I ought in the  
9 words of one Corinthians 40, that is decently and  
10 in order.

11 I first acknowledge, as I ought, mana whenua Ngati  
12 Whatua Orakei whose presence has indeed been a central  
13 point of reference in the last fortnight. The connection  
14 is appropriate for a number of reasons. I have had many  
15 associations with Ngati Whatua, ranging from standing  
16 with the late Takutai 'Doc' Wikiriwhi at many public  
17 occasions, through seeking and obtaining the help of  
18 Kahurangi Naida Glavish on many topics, including how  
19 this Royal Commission should work when I was doing the  
20 public consultation last year.

21 And lastly, I recall, when having the privilege of  
22 being Governor-General and the equal privilege of hosting  
23 Prince William at Government House in Epsom, the  
24 centre-piece was a magnificent hangi put down by the Hall  
25 family, to all of you greetings.

26 The whakapapa element of my speech is to reflect on  
27 a life that has been steeped in the law and the  
28 community. All of that has been relevant to the setting  
29 up of the Royal Commission and it's been a real  
30 professional thrill to be part of this Contextual Hearing  
31 and to observe the lawyers applying their skills in the  
32 course of this hearing.

33 On the basis of doing the right thing, I want at  
34 this point, Mr Mount, to return to you, through the

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1 Registrar, the wonderful book called The Conduct of  
2 Public Inquiries by Ed Ratushny that you gave me when we  
3 started the work together. It has never been far away  
4 from me at work and at home, and I have made frequent  
5 reference to it.

6 The whaikorero element of my speech is to reflect  
7 that today is Friday the 8th day of November 2019, the  
8 312th day of our 2019 year. We're just two days short of  
9 an anniversary of the 10th of November in 1942, which  
10 incidentally was a Tuesday. On that day, 77 years ago,  
11 in the midst of World War II, in a memorable speech at  
12 Mansion House in London, speaking at a crucial turn of  
13 events in that war, the Prime Minister of the UK, the  
14 Rt Hon Winston Churchill, said in the context of things  
15 that had occurred, now this is not the end. It is not  
16 even the beginning of the end but it is perhaps the end  
17 of the beginning.

18 That statement about the end of the beginning  
19 characterises, to my mind, the positioning today of where  
20 we all are in mid-2019 in the life of the Royal  
21 Commission into Abuse in Care. We are truly here in  
22 New Zealand at the end of another beginning and the  
23 successful completion of this Contextual Hearing has  
24 provided that.

25 A considerable amount to date has been done and  
26 spoken about since I started in office as Chair of the  
27 Royal Commission, appointed on 1 February 2018, into a  
28 role which was to galvanise the purpose of the Royal  
29 Commission.

30 Looking at you and acknowledging you, makes a number  
31 of things clear. As I see you, may I say in a nutshell,  
32 the contribution that everyone has made is made up of a  
33 number of little things, all of which point to making two  
34 important points.



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1           Number one, in a country like New Zealand, we  
2 support whatever is the game and its followers. The work  
3 of the Royal Commission is important and vital as a  
4 number of the nearly 30 witnesses over these two weeks  
5 have said in a variety of ways.

6           Number two, in the same setting, we support those  
7 people who have put in time and effort to ensure that we  
8 have done well. I refer, of course, and principally, to  
9 the survivors, to the survivors and their advisers and  
17.02 10 families. I refer to the academic community, to the  
11 media representatives and the staff that the Royal  
12 Commission has amassed, the logistics staff, the  
13 wellbeing staff, the people who have made sure that  
14 things over a lengthy time have started on time and ended  
15 in the same way. Everyone has provided a professional  
16 input to make things go as well as they have.

17           This brings me to the wiri element and the challenge  
18 to the Royal Commission that has been laid down by many  
19 witnesses. One is the work which is unique. Another is  
17.03 20 the breadth of what's involved. And another yet, is the  
21 people who service it. It is inherently difficult for a  
22 government department whose natural territory is  
23 libraries, raffles and passports, to take on the  
24 servicing of the largest Royal Commission that the  
25 country has known but the Department of Internal Affairs  
26 has us and we have them.

27           Everyone deserves encouragement in what lies ahead  
28 and I offer mine. It has been a privilege to be a  
29 central part of the build up and delivery of what lies  
17.04 30 ahead. I will now go to the sideline and watch with  
31 interest how it all plays out.

32           I am grateful, of course, for the kind remarks that  
33 you, Mr Mount, and you, Ms McKechnie, have made. I wish  
34 everyone well.

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1 Tena koutou tena koutou tena koutou katoa. Kia ora.

2 **MR MERRICK:** (Address in Te Reo Maori).

3 **REPRESENTATIVE FROM NGATI WHATUA:** I would like to say  
4 on behalf of us, thank you for the very kind words.  
5 The next time I go, I must talk to Uncle Doc that  
6 we were here on the last day of this with you, Sir  
7 Anand.

8 I would like to thank everybody for welcoming  
9 us here, we have enjoyed it, it's been brilliant.

17.08 10 I only have one other thing, and that has to  
11 do with my father making me read The Herald from  
12 5 years old, which is 65 years ago now, so that  
13 every opportunity I see your name in the paper, I  
14 read The Herald and I've known these things.

15 When you leave tonight, and you and your Lady  
16 get on your charges, don't ride away too far  
17 because your mana, your understanding, and your  
18 love is still needed here.

19 Tena koutou tena koutou tena koutou katoa.

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**Hearing adjourned at 5.15 p.m.**

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