

**ABUSE IN CARE ROYAL COMMISSION OF INQUIRY
TULOOU – OUR PACIFIC VOICES: TATALA E PULONGA**

Under The Inquiries Act 2013

In the matter of The Royal Commission of Inquiry into Historical Abuse in State Care and in the Care of Faith-based Institutions

Royal Commission: Judge Coral Shaw (Chair)
Ali'imua Sandra Alofivae
Mr Paul Gibson
Dr Anaru Erueti
Ms Julia Steenson

Counsel: Mr Simon Mount QC, Ms Kerryn Beaton QC,
Ms Tania Sharkey, Mr Semisi Pohiva, Ms Reina Va'ai, Ms Nicole Copeland, Ms Sonja Cooper, Ms Amanda Hill for the Royal Commission
Ms Rachael Schmidt-McCleave, Ms Julia White and Ms Alana Ruakere for the Crown
Mr Alex Winsley for the Bishops and Congregational Leaders of the Catholic Church in Aotearoa New Zealand

Venue: Fale o Samoa
141 Bader Drive
Māngere
AUCKLAND

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TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

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1 the silence for so long. But breaking it today is deeply appreciated and very significant and
 2 an example to I think everybody in the community that where abuse is occurring there
 3 should not be silence. The only way that we can stop the abuse is through shining a light
 4 on it. And your father has made an important contribution and you've been very brave in
 5 bringing his voice to us. And I just wish to address your father as well.

6 Pulotu Arthur, thank you, thank you for presenting your evidence through your
 7 children and having the courage to do so. And thank you finally to the aiga who's come
 8 today to support your family, we appreciate your presence as well. Thank you. I think
 9 we'll take a short adjournment before the next witness.

10 **Adjournment from 10.31 am to 11.09 am**

11 **CHAIR:** Just before we begin, a couple of things. First of all I acknowledge the presence today
 12 of Dave Mullins and Sister Jane O'Carroll from the Auckland Diocese and Mr Winsley
 13 from the - hello, welcome. They have come to listen to the evidence of the next witness.

14 The second thing I want to say is that as you will have observed, the next witness
 15 wants to preserve her privacy and therefore will not be seen by the general public. I'm
 16 going to ask you please in consideration of her request for privacy that there be no phones
 17 that take photos or videos or anything else like that. So I'd ask you to respect our next
 18 witness for that. Thank you. Ms Sharkey.

19 **MS CU**

20 **QUESTIONING BY MS SHARKEY:** Good morning Ms CU.

21 A. Good morning.

22 **Q.** Before we start, are there any opening comments you'd like to make?

23 A. "Tapu moe vunivalu 'o lototatau ko e 'aoniu moe pule fakaleveleva i he fononga
 24 fakapilikimi 'oku tau fai 'i taimi ki 'itaniti. Tapu mo King Tuheitia mo e kelekele 'eiki 'o e
 25 Mana Whenua, oku tau Iōnuku mai ai ki heni he 'aho fakakoloa ni. Tapu moe Tangata'i
 26 fonua moe Fefine'i fonua 'o Aotearoa oku nau talia 'a e feinga moe fekumi 'oku tau fai ki ha
 27 kaha'u lelei ma'a 'etau fanau tupu. E nga mana, e nga reo, rau rangatira ma, tēnā koutou,
 28 tēnā koutou, tēnā tātou katoa.

29 Tapu mo Hou'eiki mo ha'a Matapule kae 'uma'a e kau Matai, Ali'i moe Matai
 30 Tulafale 'oku nau talitali 'etau fonotanga. 'Ou te fa'atalofa atu ma le fa'aaloalo 'i lo 'outou
 31 pa'ia ma lo 'outou mamalu. Tapu kihe ha'a faifekau mo e ha'a Faka'olunga 'o Tonga mo e
 32 ngafa fatongia 'i he kōsipeli. Tapu mo e kau komisona 'o e Royal Commission Inquiry ko e
 33 Pacific Investigation kae pehe ki he kau tataki ngāue ki he va'a fakatotolo ma'ae kakai
 34 Pasifiki.

1 Fakatulou atu mo faka'apa'apa atu kihe kau to'a oku nau tu'u ke fai ha fakamo'oni
 2 mo ha fekumi kihe mo'oni mo e fakamaau totonu. 'Oku ou ongo'i mo'oni 'a e mafa tukituki
 3 'o e ngaue fakahisitolia ko 'eni ma'ae kakai Pasifiki kae pehe ki he fonua oku tau fakapaea
 4 mai ki ai, ko Aotearoa.

5 Ne ikai koha fili faingofua 'eni, keu kau he fakamo'oni ki he fakatotolo 'o e
 6 komisoni. Ko e kaveinga ko e Tatala e Pulonga pea ko 'eku i heni, ko e feinga ke
 7 veteveteki 'a e ha'iha'isia 'i hoku loto mo fakatau'ataina'i au mei he pulonga kuo ne 'akilotoa
 8 'a 'eku mo'ui.

9 Pea ko e ngaue ni leva oku pau ke uesia ai e ngaahi kupu fekau'aki kae pehe ki he
 10 nofo a kāinga, makatu'unga mei ha ngaahi tui tukufakaholo moe taufatungamotu'a 'o Tonga,
 11 'a e tapu ke te lea ki ha faifekau pe ki he siasi ko e uHINGA he koe fakafofonga ia a Kilisito i
 12 hotau lotolotonga pea oku ou ongo'i mo'oni 'eku tu'u keu lea, 'uhinga ko e ngaahi tui koia
 13 mo e ngaahi uesia 'e hoko 'uhi ko 'eku fakaha ki tu'a 'a e me'a neu a'usia mo e siasi mo e
 14 Siasi neu tupu ai mo faitonunga ai 'a 'eku ongo matu'a kae pehe kihe ngaahi kui ki mu'a, 'a
 15 ia ai oku 'ikai koha fili faingofua 'eni ka 'oku ou lotolahi keu kau he tatala e pulonga na'a
 16 'aonga kihe fakalelei'i 'a e ngaue kihe kōsipeli mo hoko 'a e kau Taki Lotu ko ha tāuhi sipi
 17 lelei mo'oni ma'ae kakai.

18 'Oku ou tuku ha fakamālō ki he ngaahi famili moe ngaahi maheni kae 'uma'a 'a e
 19 timi ngaue fakatotolo, ko e 'uhia ko e tokoni mo e poupou 'o lava ai 'a e ngaue mahu'inga ni.
 20 Hōunga 'aupito homou 'ofa, toka'i mo e tokoni. Pea 'oku ou ma'u ivi ai he aho ni fakataha
 21 moe konga veesi folofola mei he tohi 'a Sione 8:32. Pea 'e faifai pea mahino kia kimoutolu
 22 'a e mo'oni pea 'e fakatau'atāina ki moutolu 'e he mo'oni'. "

23 Today I chose to begin my talanoa in my first language to centre my mind, body
 24 and spirit. When I do this, I call upon my ancestors so that I can feel the power of their
 25 presence. I call those that are here in the Fale and watching via the net to comfort and bear
 26 witness with me. Finding strength for our tamariki, our mokopuna and those that are yet to
 27 come, because I am acutely aware that what we are doing here is preparing the earth, sea
 28 and sky for their journey to be better, for their journey to be safer, and for their journey to
 29 be free of abuse and violence.

30 Tapu acknowledges the sacredness of vā and I acknowledged the vā between us
 31 and the omnipresent God in our journey here in time to eternity. I acknowledge vā between
 32 us and Mana Whenua and Tangata Whenua, the lands and oceans that sustain us and the
 33 manaaki given to whanaunga from Moana Nui a Kiwa so that we can swim and dance and
 34 play in the milk and honey we dreamed off.

1 I acknowledge the vā between us and our chiefly ariki lines, the kings and queens
2 of Moana Nui a Kiwa, house of Matapule and today especially, Matai Ali'i and Matai
3 Tulafale of Fale o Samoa, who, with generosity of spirit, tautua and alofa will host this
4 historical talanoa over the next few days.

5 I acknowledge the vā between us and the men and women of the cloth who are
6 guardians of the gospel and who are charged to proclaim and live by the word.

7 I acknowledge you as Commissioners for the Royal Commission Inquiry Abuse in
8 Care, Pacific investigation and the daring and gifted army of warriors and wāhine toa here
9 today leading the investigation and assisting in the Inquiry.

10 Last but no means least I acknowledge the brave and courageous men and women
11 that will hold space here and raise their voices from silence, stepping forward into the light
12 so together we can tatala e pulonga and it is with solemn and heartfelt appreciation and
13 gratitude that I acknowledge the vā that you and I will enter into, building vā as you speak
14 and as I speak, telling our stories so the truth can be set free.

15 And to those of you that listen with your ears and eyes and more importantly your
16 hearts, this vā that we build is sacred and I tell my story because I can, because it is mine to
17 tell, this is me taking control of lifting the cloud that follows me and some days consumes
18 me. I am finding my way out so I can feel freedom once again, feel my stride is no longer
19 heavy and my voice is lifted beyond murmurings and self-doubt.

20 The decision to be here today was not taken lightly because the consequences to
21 relationships that binds me and holds me will be impacted. The rich culture I belong to and
22 take immense pride in will be challenged because the Church I was brought up in and
23 raised my children in, the Church that my parents served and those of my grandparents and
24 generations before me is today the focus of my story and as I tell it, it will shake the core
25 essence of vā with many and yet I am here, standing on the shoulders of my giants,
26 embraced by my loved ones and taking courage that I am on the right side of this story.

27 I want to express gratitude to loved ones, family and friends and the investigation
28 team that continue to awhi and tautoko us through this journey and I look forward to this
29 talanoa so that the pulonga is indeed lifted and I can move on with more hope today than I
30 had yesterday, taking solace in scripture from John 8:32, then you will know the truth and
31 the truth will set you free. Leveleve e malanga kae tau, tu'a Eiki ofa atu.

32 **Q.** Malo 'aupito, Ms CU, for your very powerful opening statement. In front of you, you do
33 have your statement and, as you were saying, this is a talanoa between you and I, a
34 discussion. I'll take through that statement. Your statement is taken as read and the

1 Commissioners have this, they have seen it. So if we could look at paragraphs 2 and 3 of
2 your statement, just to clarify for the purposes of your evidence today the parameters or
3 boundaries of what you'll be talking to us about, if you could please read out paragraphs 2
4 and 3.

5 A. I want to start by making it clear that this is my niece's story. I am here to tell my
6 experience of trying to support my niece who was abused by a Catholic priest and what has
7 happened since coming forward about the abuse she suffered. My niece was 15 years old at
8 the time. I'm also coming forward because, while trying to support my niece, a number of
9 people have shared with me experience that they had or things they heard about this priest.
10 The people that share stories with me are leaders in the Tongan Catholic community. I
11 believe the Church failed in their duty of care to my niece and other young people. This
12 issue is bigger than the priest, in this particular case it's about the Catholic Church.

13 Q. Thank you Ms CU. And just to clarify, you're an anonymous witness and just to confirm
14 that is to protect your niece?

15 A. Yes, that's right.

16 Q. There's a suppression order in place to protect her identity. Otherwise, you would have
17 been without anonymity today, is that correct?

18 A. Yes, that's correct.

19 Q. Okay, so we're not going to get into the exact details of the abuse, it's in your statement.
20 We will just outline some context as far as you are able to. So Ms CU, how would you
21 describe the abuse experienced by your niece by the Catholic priest?

22 A. The impact of what happened continues to this day. We are now three, four years after the
23 actual incident, so when it happened the impact started within our own family first. The
24 impact has had huge complications for my niece and her family, and it is ongoing, so
25 there's no real way to sort of explain in a timeframe that this is what's happened, this is
26 what has been felt because it's just continued.

27 Q. Right. So in terms of what we're - the context of the abuse, it was communication by the
28 priest?

29 A. Yes.

30 Q. Towards your niece?

31 A. Yes, that's right, it was communication on a platform, on a phone, on a device, yes.

32 Q. And that was a social media platform?

33 A. Yes, that's right.

34 Q. And when did that occur?

1 A. We had a huge family gathering reunion and he was the priest at the reunion, he said our
2 Mass, he was there at every event, was treated like the dignitary that he was, he also closed
3 the reunion with Mass. And at this reunion he approached or he met my niece and that's
4 how they started talking. After the reunion he made contact to her over the social media
5 platform.

6 Q. And it's the nature of that communication that was inappropriate?

7 A. Yes, absolutely.

8 Q. And he invited your niece to send him images, is that correct?

9 A. Yes, yes, he did.

10 Q. How did you discover the priest's messages with your niece?

11 A. So she at the time used - we were at home, we had a barbecue and had the family over, and
12 on that night she used [GRO-B] phone to access her social media platform, and it was late in
13 the night and everybody started leaving, going back home, and she did also, but she had not
14 logged out of [GRO-B] phone. And so [GRO-B] saw the images and saw the discussion on
15 the social media platform, and they brought it to me two days after the family event at my
16 house.

17 Q. Okay, thank you. When they showed you these messages, please, Ms CU, can you describe
18 the emotions, the feelings experienced by you when you saw the messages and the images,
19 the communication between the priest and your niece?

20 A. It was initially shock, shock was the first thing and then I felt for [GRO-B], because they had
21 been trying to manage it, you know, I asked them why they hadn't given it to me earlier and
22 they said they were trying to sort it out. I don't know how they were going to sort it out, but
23 in their minds they thought they could. And when they realised it was getting more serious,
24 they came to me, so shock was the first thing.

25 Disbelief, I just couldn't believe what I was reading, what I saw, and then the next
26 action was I needed to see my niece, you know, I wanted to reach out because she was not
27 staying with us, she was staying at another relative's home, and they had travelled from
28 Tonga for the reunion. So I needed to reach out to her and start making a plan as to how we
29 were going to approach this - these messages that we had.

30 Q. Okay, so just looking at paragraph 53 of your statement, take your time.

31 A. What number sorry?

32 Q. Paragraph 53. Right, so you write to the priest and just looking at paragraph 53, what did
33 you say to him in that message?

- 1 A. I told him that it was me writing. I told him to stop all communications with my niece and
2 I also told him that I'd be putting in a formal complaint to the diocese.
- 3 Q. And then in the next paragraph, paragraph 54, can you explain how he responds?
- 4 A. He sent me three messages, the first message was - all of them were apologetic, all asking
5 for forgiveness. He told me that he was trying to help my niece because she had disclosed
6 some things to him. He also told me that he had no intention or no malice towards her.
7 And he wanted to work this out in a confidential and dignified way and requested to meet
8 with me.
- 9 Q. So just looking at that paragraph and all the different things that the priest is saying to you
10 in those messages, in your opinion, what were his messages designed to do?
- 11 A. I think they were designed to - I think he was reaching out to have a meeting face-to-face so
12 that he could convince me not to take this further. Also so that he could tell me what he
13 was trying to do and what he - what help and support he was trying to give her. I did not
14 respond to any of the messages, I just left them. But I did take that - I included that into the
15 information I gave to the diocese.
- 16 Q. Right. So we'll continue that discussion. So you do bring a complaint to the diocese,
17 which we'll come to.
- 18 A. Yes.
- 19 Q. But before we do that, we'll just gain an understanding of the cultural factors that come into
20 play here. Right, so just in terms of your family background, you say you're a child of the
21 Pacific migrant journey to New Zealand. Where were you born?
- 22 A. I was born in Tonga and I came here with my mother in 1974. I was 3 years old and
23 I turned 4 later that year. So when I say that it means - it means that I was part of a group
24 of people who, as a child - and I say child of the migration because it means that I had to
25 help my parents navigate their new world, and while I was just a child I still had to help
26 them understand what forms meant, what doctors were saying, what teachers were saying,
27 what landlords were saying, what their bosses were saying and so always in that - in those
28 early years I stood between my parents and Crown agencies, Pākehā people or any people
29 that didn't fully understand our ways. And so when I say a child of the migration, that's
30 what we did. We helped our families navigate our new life and our new homes.
- 31 Q. Okay, we'll just take a moment. And so when you and your family move here, what has
32 your connection been with Tonga since you moved to New Zealand?
- 33 A. You know, the timely apology of the Dawn Raids, my parents lived here for 30 years,
34 worked in the factories, cleaned hospitals, but they never felt they belonged. And so they

1 returned, after 30 years of service in this country, they returned to Tonga because they
2 never felt they belonged here in New Zealand. And so the ties to Tonga remain strong. My
3 mother lives there, my father has now passed on, but my mother still lives there. My sister
4 lives there, my brother lives there, their families live there.

5 And so we have always had a strong connection to Tonga. We were taught to
6 speak Tongan, we were encouraged to learn Tongan. We were - at home my parents
7 expected us to speak Tongan, and that's something I've brought into my own family, you
8 know, to my own children and while their Tongan is not as fluent but they try and they
9 understand and they can have a conversation with their Nana, you know, in their first
10 languages. So our connection to Tonga or my family's connection to Tonga is still very
11 strong. I've married a Tongan man who grew up in Tonga, his connections to his family are
12 still very strong, yeah.

13 **Q.** Okay. And just the next natural progression is your involvement with the Catholic Church
14 and the Tongan community?

15 **A.** Yes.

16 **Q.** So we're looking at paragraph 14 of your statement, we'll start there. So just a couple of
17 paragraphs down, if you could please read paragraphs 16 and 17 of your statement.

18 **A.** The Church is a place where Tongan people congregate and share culture and faith. So
19 much of the cultural and social aspects of Tongan life are tied up in the Church. The
20 Church is so intrinsic in the way it weaves through our lives.

21 And 17. We, as Tongans, have always been communal people. We have always
22 been people who did things together. Christianity has wrapped it up in a package that
23 almost that's the only way and there is no other way.

24 **Q.** So you talk about how the Church is so intrinsic in the way it weaves through lives. Can
25 you give us an example about how the Church is weaved in that way?

26 **A.** I think more so here when we migrate to other countries our Church community become
27 our, you know, in Tongan it's called kāingalotu. So our family, our Church family. Our
28 blood families might live all over Auckland and you only see them on occasion or see them
29 on, you know, sporadically, but our Church family we would be seeing every once, twice,
30 three times a week, you know, whether we're worshipping on Sunday or choir practice or
31 youth programmes. And so the Church community become a very intrinsic part of your
32 life, and because we have a Tongan community, that's where our children practice their
33 language, learn their songs, you know, learn our scripture, learn their songs, you know,
34 learn our scripture, learn our songs in Tongan, that is where we celebrate and they do

1 tau'olunga and performances.

2 So culture is intrinsically woven into those communities and those communities
3 are formed because of the faith of the Church that we belong to. And Churches, the power
4 of Churches and families, you know, you can see when there is an event, especially for
5 funerals and weddings, when there is an event, regardless of how your family is, or the
6 structure of the blood ties that you have, if one family belongs to, say, the Mormon Church
7 or another family belongs to a Methodist tradition, and, you know, we belong to a Catholic
8 tradition, when family events happen, we will go to that Church, not necessarily everyone
9 come back to the home Church of the grandparents or the home Church of which our
10 heritage is in, but we will go and follow the doctrines of the Mormon Church if that's where
11 the family are having their celebration or the funeral or the event. We will go and follow
12 the traditions of the Methodist Church if that is where the family is, and so Churches and
13 religion weave right through our families and more so, yeah, that's how we experience the
14 Church is in our whānau.

15 **Q.** Thank you Ms CU. So just looking more closely at your upbringing and your involvement
16 with the Catholic Church, can you please read paragraphs 14 and 15.

17 **A.** My family is part of the Tongan Catholic community. We have a long history with the
18 Catholic Church. When we came to New Zealand my parents were members of the Tongan
19 Catholic community in Auckland. They were heavily involved with the Tongan
20 community and the Tongan chaplaincy in Auckland. Initially it was a very small
21 community, but it has since grown. I think there are about 26 parishes now right across
22 Auckland and the chaplaincy looks after.

23 Since moving to New Zealand, our whole life revolved around the Church. The
24 Church became our new village. The families we engaged with in our Church community
25 became our brothers, our sisters, our aunts and uncles and that's how we grew up.

26 **Q.** So just to clarify, you had a Catholic education?

27 **A.** Yes, I did.

28 **Q.** So did your siblings?

29 **A.** Yes, they did.

30 **Q.** You married in the Catholic Church?

31 **A.** Yes, I did.

32 **Q.** Your kids were raised in the Catholic Church?

33 **A.** Yes, they have been.

34 **Q.** They received a Catholic education?

1 A. Yes, they have.

2 Q. And your family received the sacraments of the Catholic Church?

3 A. Absolutely.

4 Q. So leading up to the abuse of your niece by this priest, you were very active in the Catholic
5 Church?

6 A. Yes, I was.

7 Q. And you held a number of leadership roles?

8 A. Yes, I did.

9 Q. And just briefly in summary, because we will come to it, following the abuse by the priest
10 towards your niece, Ms CU, and your experience in coming forward to the Church, what is
11 your involvement with the Church now?

12 A. I don't have any involvement with the Church now.

13 Q. And that's the impact of what you've gone through in this experience?

14 A. It is the impact.

15 Q. So let's take a look at how matters came to be as they are.

16 A. Okay.

17 Q. So we're looking at paragraphs 22. This is where you talk about the standing of priests,
18 ministers in the Tongan culture. You set out in your statement how Tongan society is
19 hierarchical and just briefly what do you mean by that?

20 A. The hierarchical nature of the Tongan society, we have - we're a monarchy and so in
21 society we have the monarchs, the nobles and the commoners. It is something that we
22 historically have adopted from a Westminster system, but it has gone through our whole
23 society and that's the way we are structured now. That hierarchy also plays into different
24 parts of those levels in society, and so for commoners, for example - so, you know, if you're
25 royal you're born royal, that's in your blood and that's hereditary, there's no change or shift
26 in that space. The same with nobles, that's hereditary, it goes through blood lines.

27 For commoners there's not - there's not many ways where you can shift within the
28 hierarchy of a commoner. But becoming a minister of the cloth or minister of the Church is
29 one way where you shift in the hierarchy and society. Other ways is through education.
30 People - Tongans value education highly. And so if you are well-educated that's another
31 way that you can shift within the hierarchy. Other ways in shifting in the hierarchy is
32 business people, people who are successful.

33 But within your family ties, within your own family structure, there is hierarchy
34 by the roles that men play, the roles that women play and so for Tongans women have very

1 high rank in families. That's what I mean about, you know, even the plant and the flowers
2 has - there's a structure around what's a good flower, what's a bad flower, you know, and
3 when farmers gift their produce there's a hierarchy in what kind of yams you would gift and
4 what kind of yams you would never gift, you know, taro the same thing. So hierarchy is
5 woven right through our Tongan society.

6 **Q.** Yes, thank you. And so the emphasis there is that ministers, priests elevate in status when
7 they do take on those roles?

8 **A.** Yes, yes, they do.

9 **Q.** And are priests acknowledged by royalty and those others with high standing in the
10 community?

11 **A.** Yes absolutely, they are.

12 **Q.** So in your view, when often considering the position of Church and Government, in
13 Tongan culture can often the Church be considered higher than ministers of the
14 Government as the mouthpiece of God?

15 **A.** Yes, I think the thing that the ministers of the Church have is that they are the
16 representatives of God in our space and on earth. And so there's a weight that is given to
17 them. Now I don't know that I'm qualified to say what the higher and, you know, that
18 structure, but I do know that if you are a minister of the Church, you are given respect, you
19 are a dignitary and you do have rank. Because you are seen as a representative of God on
20 earth. That's huge, yeah.

21 **Q.** Okay, and now we're going to look at paragraph 57 of your statement please. And we're
22 going to talk about your experience in disclosing what happened to your family. Can you
23 please read paragraph 57.

24 **A.** As soon as I saw the messages I knew I was going to do something about it. There was no
25 doubt in my mind that I was going to the Police. It was the first thing that came into my
26 mind. However, I had to figure out a way to deal with this that would maintain the cultural
27 dignity of my niece and her father.

28 **Q.** And in paragraph 59 you've just touched on it a little bit earlier about the different kind of
29 hierarchy relationships. I'm just going to ask you Ms CU, if you can please explain the
30 Tongan cultural relationship between male and female cousins?

31 **A.** The vā between brother and sister, and when I say brother and sister, in Tonga there is no
32 word for cousins, so your male cousin - I'm female so my male cousins are my brothers, it's
33 the same word for brothers. My female cousins are my sisters, it's the same word, so we
34 don't differentiate between brother and sister, regardless of the relationship.

1 Now you can be my second cousin or third cousin in the Tongan language in the
2 way we speak, they are still my brother and they are still my sister. And the vā between
3 brother and sister is sacred and tapu, so there are rules around how you would behave and
4 how - what you are allowed to talk about, what you are allowed to do together. That is
5 intrinsic in Tongan culture and is called faka'apa'apa, it's called fehulufilufi e nofo, you
6 know, so if someone says that in a Tongan context we already know how to behave.

7 So that word carries a cultural significance because that word tells us that there are
8 brothers and sisters in the room and that there is a tapu existing and we cannot break that.
9 So people's behaviour start to change, so you will not speak thinking that's rude or crass or
10 sexual into the space because, you know, that there is a brother and a sister in the room.
11 And those rules are core in relationships for Pacific families, and to this day we still
12 practice those. Even with my children we have taught them how to behave around their
13 brothers and sisters to the point where brothers do not enter the sisters' bedrooms, the same
14 with the sisters, to the point where in public you will often see the girls are in one room and
15 the boys are in one room, it's not, you know, and that's a way that we just congregate
16 because it's just a practice that we have, we know, that, you know, so yeah, it's central to
17 Pacific families that vā between brother and sister.

18 **Q.** Okay, and that vā between brother and sister, how did that impact you being able to tell
19 your family, in particular your niece's father?

20 **A.** Look, it's been - it was one of the most difficult things that we had to manage when we saw
21 the images, because of my vā with my cousin, my niece's father, there was no way in our
22 cultural or whānau framework that I could just bring it up with him. And so we had to sit
23 down and work out how is it that we bring this to him. So I had to look at somebody that
24 would be neutral for him and neutral for me, where there was no tapu that we could breach,
25 and that's why I reached out to an uncle and asked him and told him about what we've
26 found, and we planned together how we would communicate the information to my cousin
27 and at the same time keep the dignity of our vā intact. Because the nature of the messages
28 was that, never mind that it's his daughter is this priest, but the nature of the images meant
29 that him and I could not communicate directly. And that was really difficult to navigate.

30 **Q.** Okay, and then you talk in paragraph 61, you outline here that you did talk to your uncle
31 about it and he didn't want you to go to the Police. How did your family want it dealt with?

32 **A.** I think what I've learned in this process is that what's acceptable is that you take your
33 complaint or your issue or your concern to the Church, or to the priest, or to the chaplain,
34 and you leave it with them to sort it out and then you come away. That's what I've learned,

1 and my uncle didn't want me to take it to the Police, you know, they were fine with me
 2 talking to the Tongan chaplain and talking to the diocese, but they wanted me just to leave
 3 it at that, you know, "Take your concern and leave it with them so that they can deal with it,
 4 they'll sort it out." And they were unsure about any of the other - the Police, the - any of
 5 the other agencies that I would have talked to.

6 **Q.** Okay. So can you read paragraph 62.

7 **A.** I told my uncle that reporting it to the Police was not negotiable for me. I told him that I
 8 would write to the diocese and the Tongan chaplaincy to let them know I had this
 9 information and what my intentions were. My mum thought I was crazy.

10 **Q.** And then in paragraphs 64 to 66 you talk about rumours starting and a fall-out in the
 11 family. Could you please take us through what happened, Ms CU?

12 **A.** When this all came out, you know, we're a really private family, and so we made a decision
 13 not to talk about it, you know, we didn't talk about it to anybody, we kind of just kept it
 14 really private within the small group that knew of it. What had happened was he had talked
 15 to his own family, you know, because they were questioning why - what was going on, you
 16 know, what was happening when the Police arrested him, and so he had a story that he told
 17 them.

18 **Q.** And so when you say "he", you're talking about the priest?

19 **A.** Yes, sorry, yes, the priest. So he told his family a story and that went around in the
 20 community, and that came back to my family. And then I was, if you like, summoned by
 21 the - by an aunty and if you remember what I said earlier, women have high rank in our
 22 Tongan family, and when my father's sister calls me, I go. And so it had come to her
 23 attention what was going on and there was a massive fall-out GRO-C

24 GRO-C

25 GRO-C. And so because of that there was a lot of accusations and a lot of -

26 **Q.** Take your time.

27 **A.** Yeah, there was a lot of anger from my own family towards me and what I was - what I had
 28 done, taking it to the Police. There was a lot of anger towards my niece because they saw
 29 her as being - I don't know how, another way to say it, it was like they saw her as like
 30 almost a temptress, like she was the reason why he did what he did. And in my effort to
 31 explain or to stand up for my niece, it was not good for me for my aunty and my family.

32 **Q.** So someone even called you from Tonga?

33 **A.** Yeah, from overseas, people rang from overseas to find out about - because they had heard

1 his story what the priest was telling his family and they didn't hear anything from us,
2 because we weren't talking about it. So when that came through, then we explained what
3 was going on and what I had done.

4 **Q.** And just looking at paragraph 65, there were family members that had sent through a
5 message that there should be a change in the family name, that's how far it went?

6 **A.** Yeah. So this side of my family are very staunch Catholics. Long, long history of
7 Catholicism in our family and there was a demand and, you know, my niece is named for
8 my aunty's daughter, and so to the point where when she was angry she said "Take the
9 name off, you will not carry my daughter's name." That is massive in the Tongan cultural
10 context, especially because it's the aunty who has said it. And to rename someone is to take
11 their identity away from them. And what it does is it, for me and the way I understand it,
12 what it does is it just continues to victimise the victim and I tried to explain the best I could
13 to families that actually she's the victim not this priest and the story that he's telling out
14 there, that everyone seems to be believing. And that my actions is not the problem, it was
15 his actions that was the problem.

16 **Q.** Okay, so just progressing through your statement, you mention further cultural barriers to
17 reporting. If you could take us through some of those please, Ms CU, page 11 starting at
18 paragraph 67.

19 **A.** Do you want me to talk to it or read it?

20 **Q.** Yeah, you can talk to it.

21 **A.** Yeah, you know, the fall-out that happened out of this was it's really hard to have a
22 different view from, you know, we're such a communal people, and we find our comfort
23 and our strength and our support from our families, the people that we love, the people that
24 are close to us. And so when you have a different view to the majority, it is isolating and it
25 can be really, you know, and I say here, I mean why would you do it, right? Why would
26 you come out, why would I do this and why would anyone challenge what is so set in
27 stone? Wouldn't you just go with the flow and be okay with just telling the diocese and
28 telling the chaplain or the priest and then move away? Because the impact and the fall-out
29 and the things that you have to sort of pick up afterwards, or, you know, it is that tatala e
30 pulonga, like, you know, you sort of reveal little bits and little bits, and when you do that
31 you reveal yourself. And I feel like I just couldn't let it go.

32 When people came forward to tell me about their own experiences with this priest,
33 or what they understood or what they knew about this priest, it made - I had a resolve that
34 I couldn't stay silent because so many people before me stayed silent. So many people that

1 had incidents with this particular priest didn't say anything, or that they took it to the
2 Church, or they took it to the priest and not enough was done. And so there's a silence from
3 other victims, but there's also the silence from the Church. What did they do when they
4 heard about the other things? What would they have done if I had just told them and
5 walked away? Because my experience tells me through this, tells me that they would have
6 just continued looking after themselves.

7 **Q.** Okay. So just in terms, to summarise the barriers you've outlined there, that was the -
8 we've looked at the relationships within the family, paternal aunty, maintaining the cultural
9 dignity of your niece's father, the vā?

10 **A.** Yeah.

11 **Q.** And the damaging of the family name is something you also raise. Is there anything you
12 wanted to expand on that?

13 **A.** Yeah, I'd like to say there's something there that I read that I said that my mother thought I
14 was crazy, right? My mum turned GRO-A and so in her mind when I explained this to her
15 in her world view what she does is that she apologises to people on my behalf because she
16 doesn't fully understand how this works. And she doesn't fully understand, or maybe she
17 doesn't want to believe that the Church she has served for so long has done harm. And so
18 what she does is that she will - if someone brings it up to her, or she is with family, like
19 I said, GRO-C if she meets up with family, she will say, "Oh
20 fakamolemole, you know, sorry for GRO-A, but don't worry about her, you know, that's
21 because she's been in New Zealand too long" or "Sorry about her because she's" - yeah. So,
22 you know, I just want to say that because everybody in my family is trying to work out how
23 this lands for them, and right now all the balls are up in the air and we don't know how that
24 will land at the minute.

25 **Q.** And so her apologising to other people for you coming forward and speaking out against
26 the Church, you mean when you're talking about the cultural barrier?

27 **A.** Yes.

28 **Q.** The shame that she -

29 **A.** Yeah.

30 **Q.** - is holding?

31 **A.** She wants to apologise for what's - the outcome, you know, the people they're angry, so
32 people are angry that I've come forward, people feel shame that I've come forward, people
33 feel like I've damaged the whānau name because I've come forward. People feel like I've

1 exposed something, you know, exposed faults because I've come forward, and in her
2 understanding she apologises for me. That breaks my heart. I can't tell you -

3 **Q.** Just take a moment, Ms CU, do you want to have a break?

4 **A.** No. You know, I've lived my life helping my parents, whether it was as a child during the
5 migration or as an adult, trying to keep them safe and helping them navigate the world and
6 making them proud of whatever achievements, whatever I've done in my life. So for her to
7 do that breaks my heart. It's not something that a daughter or a son or a child wants to give
8 their parent as a burden. It's the same with the situation with my niece and her family, the
9 heaviness that they carry, the pain that they carry.

10 And so I'm always thinking about what happens when I come forward and then
11 what happens when I don't. And neither is a - neither is a place - you know, like I said, all
12 the balls are up in the air at the minute. And I don't know how it's going to land, I don't
13 know how it's going to land for my children who knew this priest personally. I don't know
14 how it's going to land for my family.

15 **Q.** So in paragraph 71 you describe how people would blame your young niece for what the
16 priest had done, and Ms CU you'd like to deliver a clear message to those listening about
17 victim blaming. Could you please read paragraph 73 and expand if you'd like.

18 **A.** My niece was only 15 years old. Do I say his name? I can read -

19 **Q.** It's up to you.

20 **A.** My niece was only 15 years old and Sateki was a grown man that held a significant
21 powerful role. Nothing anyone can say to me makes what he did better or lessen it or
22 excuse it. It was and is wrong. My niece was a victim and continues to be a victim and this
23 is what motivates me above everything else to speak out about this.

24 **Q.** Is there anything further you want to add or keep going?

25 **A.** Just around the complexities of navigating this space to be able to come forward. It is not
26 easy and I can understand why people wouldn't do it. But like I said earlier, weighing up if
27 I don't - people before me didn't say anything and maybe had they did - had they said
28 something then, maybe I wouldn't be here today, maybe my niece would have been saved
29 this. So - yeah, I think that's all.

30 **Q.** And part of that is that the Church didn't do anything before this for those people who came
31 to you and told you -

32 **A.** Yes.

33 **Q.** - that they were aware of incidents?

34 **A.** Yeah, that there were incidents and there were other things. And so what I understand,

1 what I understand from the stories that have come forward and the people that have come to
2 me - and I believe them because they are Church leaders, you know, they are leaders in the
3 community, they are relatives of the young women; the Church at the time would just move
4 him from one parish to the next.

5 **Q.** We're coming to you contacting the diocese and this is paragraph 74. And we're just going
6 to bring up the first exhibit, which is 2003. We're going to look at the complaint to the
7 Auckland Catholic Diocese dated 10 January 2018 please. If you could read that out
8 please, Ms CU. This is what -

9 **A.** The yellow bit?

10 **Q.** This is what you wanted them to do?

11 **A.** "I urge you to stand him down from duties while an investigation is undertaken. Like
12 I said, I need to consider my professional judgment and next steps, ask you to consider the
13 faith journey and safety of students at Marist College and indeed any school that Father
14 Raas has ready access to."

15 **Q.** Right, so this is clear. Your thoughts were until the incident with your niece had been
16 thoroughly investigated, you wanted this priest stood down and nowhere near students, is
17 that right?

18 **A.** Yes, that's correct.

19 **Q.** Okay. Now we're going to bring up the next exhibit please, that's 2002. This is an e-mail
20 from Jane O'Carroll of the Auckland Catholic Diocese dated 11 January 2018 to NOPS, the
21 National Office of Professional Standards. So this is what's happening in the background.
22 If we could highlight one particular line in there. Could you read that out please, Ms CU?

23 **A.** "Knowing Ms CU she will follow up every avenue as she has listed, so we need to be
24 prepared."

25 **Q.** And in terms of the avenues you had listed, that was going to the Police?

26 **A.** Yes, that's right.

27 **Q.** And?

28 **A.** The Ministry of Education.

29 **Q.** Right. So do you know, did you know Jane O'Carroll?

30 **A.** At the time I was e-mailing I didn't know who Jane O'Carroll was. I had a meeting with the
31 Bishop after the court hearing and GRO-C came and met me or greeted me at the reception
32 area, and then I realised it was GRO-C of which was GRO-C at Marist College when I was
33 there.

- 1 **Q.** Right.
- 2 **A.** We knew - I remember her as GRO-C, not GRO-C. But, you know, going back now, at the
3 time we were e-mailing I didn't realise it was her.
- 4 **Q.** Right, and she didn't make herself known to you?
- 5 **A.** No, no.
- 6 **Q.** You can see from that e-mail that she says, "Knowing Ms CU she will follow-up every
7 avenue she's listed, so we need to be prepared."
- 8 **A.** Mmm.
- 9 **Q.** And what do you take that comment to mean?
- 10 **A.** When I first read that, I guess the surprise for me was there was no mention of my niece, of
11 what the Church were going to do for her, or to support her or to find out what happened
12 with her. The other thing is the same with the priest, like there's no mention about what
13 they were going to do about him, or what, you know, what their processes, what their, I
14 don't know, due diligence or whatever around him. Because I - because focusing it on me,
15 I didn't understand why she would think they had to prepare for me. This is like David and
16 Goliath, I mean like I didn't understand why it was, the focus was me and not my niece or
17 the priest. But, you know, I kind of look at it and I think oh well, that's what you think of
18 me then, okay. But I guess, you know, I haven't had anything to do with her since I left
19 school, so I'm not sure why she would think that.
- 20 **Q.** So in terms of her and that background that you all had with each other and your strength in
21 the Catholic Church, could it have been a possibility that she knew you weren't going to be
22 a pushover, that you were going to follow through with what you said you were going to
23 do?
- 24 **A.** Yeah, I think I was clear about what I was going to do. And I think my reaction is more
25 that there was no consideration of my niece or the priest and what they were going to do
26 about them. But they want to prepare for me.
- 27 **Q.** And just on that line about being prepared for you, so in cases where people come forward
28 who aren't like you, what's your concern about that, that they don't need to be as prepared?
- 29 **A.** Well, that I think is, what I talked about earlier was the expectation was I just take it to the
30 Church and then I leave it. That was the expectation from my uncle, from the families, they
31 wanted me to just let the Church know what happened, what my concern is and then let
32 them do their work, let them do what they need to do. And I think maybe this is what that
33 is, because like I said in my statement, I saw the criminality in the messages, I understood it

1 from a professional lens. So even then I'm standing there thinking there's my cultural lens,
2 there's my whānau lens and there's a professional lens, like how do you not go to the
3 Police?

4 **Q.** Yeah.

5 **A.** Yeah.

6 **Q.** Okay, and then there's a meeting with NOPS?

7 **A.** Yes.

8 **Q.** And we're just looking at paragraph 76. That section there.

9 **A.** Yes.

10 **Q.** Just looking at the two paragraphs down, could you please tell us about the first meeting
11 with NOPS?

12 **CHAIR:** Ms Sharkey, I think it might be a good idea, I think we know what NOPS is but it
13 sounds like a strange animal.

14 **MS SHARKEY:** I'll allow you to explain it.

15 **CHAIR:** Just explain for the purposes of the people listening what NOPS is, and I'm happy for
16 you just to explain it.

17 **MS SHARKEY:** Right, so it's the -

18 **CHAIR:** It's part of the Catholic Church isn't it.

19 **MS SHARKEY:** - part of the Catholic Church that you can go to to make allegations and
20 complaints of sexual abuse.

21 **CHAIR:** Thank you.

22 **QUESTIONING BY MS SHARKEY CONTINUED:** All right.

23 **A.** Sorry, what did you want me to do?

24 **Q.** Right, so we're just talking about that first meeting with NOPS.

25 **A.** Oh right, yes. So the reason I went to NOPS was because when I put in my complaint to
26 **GRO-C** she suggested I go to NOPS and she referred me on to NOPS. And so Ms Timms
27 from NOPS then we arranged a meeting to meet with her, and we did, my sister and I went
28 and met with her. And she explained to us that what they do is look at the professional
29 standards of the priest's ministry and the obligations that they have or the accountabilities
30 they have, I suppose to the doctrines of the Church, and that's what they investigate. When
31 we showed her the screenshots of the messaging she agreed that it was criminal and that it
32 should go to the Police.

33 **Q.** And so in paragraph 78 you outline what the process was going to be. So the first step after

1 that was for you to go to the Police?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. And then there would be an investigation by NOPS into the priest's behaviour?

4 A. Yes, after the Police investigation.

5 Q. And just a comment you made before, Ms CU, that going up against the Church felt like
6 going up against Goliath. Can you just elaborate on that, the magnitude, the significance of
7 that for you against the backdrop of everything we've just spoken about this morning?

8 A. I think, you know, when you are a member of the Catholic Church, this is my own personal
9 observation, you are at the level of your local parish, you know, so you build this family
10 around you and this community around you and so all you ever really see is your local
11 parish. And then, you know, there's a Tongan chaplaincy and you can join in with the
12 Tongans across the city and do some amazing things with them, and celebrate, and worship
13 with them. But I think at that level, that's where you have your connection with the
14 Church.

15 When I entered into this I realised that we, parish or family or community, were a
16 small part of a massive organisation. I mean I always knew that the Church was big,
17 I always knew it was international, I always understood that, but I never really experienced
18 at that level. My level of experience is very local. And so when I entered into this
19 I realised that it wasn't my local priest I was talking to, it was NOPS that is connected to
20 when she explained it to us they were connected directly to the Vatican, you know, so it
21 wasn't just our local priest I was talking to, it was the Bishop of Auckland. So it took me
22 out of my little local space into now the diocese space, and now this other space.

23 And I say that also because I backtracked and realised my contribution to the
24 Catholic Church was maybe not directly my contribution, but what I do in my faith and
25 how I practice my faith, they too can use, and have used, to not look after me or not look
26 after my niece. So what I mean there, can I talk about the lawyer stuff or is that for later?

27 Q. That's coming.

28 A. Okay. Yeah, so I'll come back to that.

29 Q. We'll get there eventually.

30 A. Yeah. So the Goliath thing, the expanse and the bigness of the Church just became that
31 much bigger when we were trying to work through things, yeah.

32 Q. Okay. And so when you leave NOPS straight after that meeting you go to the Police and
33 file a complaint?

34 A. Yes.

- 1 **Q.** Okay, so can we bring up 2004 exhibit. This is a notification of complaint against the
2 priest, a letter from NOPS to Bishop Patrick Dunn dated 16 January 2018. Can you please
3 just read out that paragraph.
- 4 **A.** "Our advice is that you immediately remove Father Sateki from all active ministry pending
5 the completion of the criminal process and any subsequent investigation by NOPS and that
6 for this period Father Sateki does not reside in the presbytery in Mt Albert parish."
- 7 **Q.** And just a question on that, Ms CU, is that what you would have expected?
- 8 **A.** Yes.
- 9 **Q.** That's what you would have wanted?
- 10 **A.** Yes, that is.
- 11 **Q.** Okay, so can we bring up the next exhibit please, 2005, and this is a file note from the
12 Professional Standards Officer. First we're looking at a telephone call to the Detective
13 Sergeant, starting at "I told him" - right, no sorry, that's correct. He says that it's a matter of
14 when and not if charges will be made against the priest. Then the next paragraph, if we
15 could please highlight that. If you could read that please, Ms CU.
- 16 **A.** "I told him that when I informed Bishop Pat of the nature of the behaviour he had removed
17 Father Sateki from all active ministry and required him to move out from the presbytery at
18 Mt Albert. This would mean that he would not be permitted to say Mass or carry out other
19 priestly functions. I confirmed that he did not have any official position at the school."
- 20 **Q.** Right, so seeing those two documents we've just gone through, it's the letter from NOPS to
21 the Bishop, 16 January that was the last one we just went through, and then the telephone
22 call from NOPS to the Detective Sergeant, it's the understanding that Father Sateki would
23 be removed from all active ministry. Right, okay. So could we highlight the next
24 paragraph in that file note. Could you please read that out, it's a telephone call to Bishop
25 Pat from the Professional Standards Officer.
- 26 **A.** "I informed Bishop Pat of the above. I asked him what living arrangements had been made
27 for Father Sateki. He said that Father Sateki planned to move from the Mt Albert
28 presbytery and would stay at the presbytery with Monsignor Bernard Kiely in Balmoral.
29 I questioned this decision but Bishop Pat said it would provide companionship for Father
30 Sateki at this time. He said he had made arrangements for a Tongan priest to move to
31 Mt Albert and that Father Sateki would say Mass at Mt Albert on Saturday night. I said
32 that Father Sateki must not be permitted to say Mass on Saturday under any circumstance
33 and Bishop Pat must take alternative - must make alternative arrangements. Bishop Pat
34 said he would have difficulty finding someone to say Mass, but I insisted that Father Sateki

- 1 be removed from all active ministry with immediate effect."
- 2 **Q.** So Ms CU, you've seen this document before, seen that NOPS clearly told Bishop Patrick
3 Dunn to do something in accordance with their directive. What is your response to seeing
4 that, that wasn't the view of Bishop Patrick Dunn at that time?
- 5 **A.** I guess when I first saw it, and still now, I question who has the power or the authority
6 actually to make that decision. Because NOPS has obviously given a recommendation, or
7 have provided advice to the Bishop. But it seems the Bishop can say that he continue
8 saying Mass or he can continue in ministry. So I'm not - from that I'm not sure about their
9 roles, because what I asked for in the complaint was that he be removed until an
10 investigation happens. What the Police obviously think is happening is that he's removed
11 while they're investigating. What NOPS is saying is to remove him while this is happening,
12 but the Bishop seems to be able to make that decision that he continues to say Mass. So I'm
13 unclear as to what their process is, what their - what roles they have and what authorities
14 they have, you know.
- 15 **Q.** So in seeing that document you are afforded little confidence that NOPS are able to fulfil
16 any kind of meaningful role?
- 17 **A.** Yeah. So that's exactly right, I don't know, like I don't know what their process is, you
18 know, and I had met with the Bishop and asked the same thing, I just - I'm not - I don't
19 understand what their process is to keep people safe or their parishioners safe or their
20 members safe and especially young children, young members safe. So from those
21 documents it seems to me that the Bishop continues to call the shots if he wanted to. I can't
22 see anything else that - yeah, because it seems like everyone's recommendations or
23 considerations is the same, remove him while the investigation is happening.
- 24 **Q.** Okay, and in terms of what was said in that highlighted paragraph, Bishop Pat saying it
25 would provide companionship for Father Sateki at this time, whereas you're saying that you
26 wanted him stood down in order to keep other students safe?
- 27 **A.** Mmm.
- 28 **Q.** What is your concern with that way of thinking?
- 29 **A.** Well, I guess my concern is our experience through this, is that it's nice that he's
30 considering companionship for this priest, but at no time did the Church ever reach out to
31 my niece or to my family to provide any sense of well-being or anything. So it kind of tells
32 me a story that they are wanting to support him and they're wanting to put in measures,
33 whether it's companionship, whether it's moving to another presbytery, whether it's
34 bringing on another Tongan priest, that there's a lot of support for him.

- 1 **Q.** Right. Okay, so then also highlighted in that paragraph was the plan to move the priest
2 from the Mt Albert presbytery to the Balmoral presbytery, and you had concerns about that,
3 didn't you?
- 4 **A.** I did.
- 5 **Q.** Yeah, and why was that?
- 6 **A.** Well, because Balmoral is also, like the presbytery's located on a school site as well and my
7 thing was around access to young people. So that's why I had recommended that he has no
8 access to the two schools at the Mt Albert presbytery. And again for Balmoral, same
9 reason.
- 10 **Q.** Okay, and just at the bottom of that file note, if we can bring that up again, so this is a
11 telephone call from that Professional Standards Officer to the Complaints Assessment
12 Committee. Can you just read that out?
- 13 **A.** "To inform her of today's events, she agreed that Balmoral presbytery was not an
14 appropriate place for him to stay, but any bail conditions would stipulate his place of
15 residence."
- 16 **Q.** Right, so there's another person who agrees that Balmoral presbytery was not an
17 appropriate place. What is your views on that, Ms CU?
- 18 **A.** I agree. You know, my views is that the reason - the main reason for Mt Albert presbytery
19 was access to children because it's on a school site, there are two schools right next door.
20 The same with the Balmoral one. And my view on the NOPS communication is they seem
21 to be trying to make the best - give the best advice, but I don't know, again, whether their
22 advice holds any authority or power over the decision that's made.
- 23 **Q.** And in your view, where should they have put this priest, where should he have gone?
- 24 **A.** You know, they're a big organisation, they're a massive Church, surely they would have
25 some kind of - I can't think that this is the only priest that's in this situation, so I would
26 think that they would have some kind of due diligence to either support or help or take their
27 people away until such things happen. What it also speaks to me is the - from what I've
28 heard from other people and other community leaders is this approach of moving them to
29 different parishes, you know, a situation here so they'll move him there, a situation there
30 and they'll move him to another parish, and so I don't think that's acceptable. And again,
31 the main reason why I wanted him away from Mt Albert was the access to children, ready
32 access to children. So I don't know whether, you know, I read this before, but going
33 through it again now, I don't know that NOPS has very much authority, but surely the
34 Church has some way of working with their priests, working through this kind of stuff with

- 1 their priests, because at the minute I can't see it and I don't know it.
- 2 **Q.** Right, because it would be a non-negotiable for you that where allegations are made such as
3 yours that the Church would fully endorse standing that priest down and not letting them
4 anywhere near children?
- 5 **A.** Yes, absolutely.
- 6 **Q.** So then in order to make sure that this priest doesn't go near children, can we look at
7 paragraphs 112 to 115, that's page 18, and you contacting the Ministry of Education. And
8 could you please just take us through those paragraphs. What is it that you - the lengths
9 you go to to ensure that he doesn't go near children?
- 10 **A.** So when I heard that he was moved to the Balmoral presbytery I contacted the Ministry of
11 Education because, again, it was on a school site and to request that they check the bail
12 conditions for him, and subsequently he was shifted from there. I don't know where he
13 went but he was shifted from Balmoral.
- 14 **Q.** And that was because of what you did, or the Ministry of Education?
- 15 **A.** Yeah, because I'd made another complaint.
- 16 **Q.** So in your view it wasn't the diocese, it wasn't the Church who was being proactive and
17 protective, you had to go that extra mile to achieve the outcome you considered necessary?
- 18 **A.** Mmm, well it was the diocese that moved him from Mt Albert to Balmoral and I don't think
19 they had considered that both sites were right in next door to schools. I don't think they had
20 considered my main concern around access to young people. Because by this time what I
21 had heard from many people was that the incidents in the past were around young people.
- 22 **Q.** And just moving on to the meeting that you have with the Tongan chaplaincy and the
23 previous incidents you refer to in your statement. Now, Ms CU, I know there are details
24 that are in here that you don't wish to go into too much detail about in this public hearing in
25 order to protect your niece, but if you can describe your meeting with the Auckland Tongan
26 chaplain and advice received about the priest's previous incidents to the extent you are able
27 to please, and the references are beginning 96, paragraph 96 to 111 and just share what you
28 would like to share with us. You've briefly touched on it, your evidence before.
- 29 **A.** Yeah. You know, I have a lot of respect for the chaplain for the Tongan chaplain, and so
30 when he asked to meet with me I readily met with him, explained the situation. He had
31 already spoken with Sateki earlier, so he knew from his - he knew the, well, the story from
32 Sateki's side. And I appreciated that he, you know, he reached out to talk about this. He
33 also shared some things and it wasn't anything that I hadn't already heard, GRO-C

1 [REDACTED] GRO-C

2 [REDACTED] GRO-C

3 [REDACTED] GRO-C

4 He had asked me to consider meeting with other people in the Church and I declined
5 because meeting with him was enough for me. I didn't want others to come into the
6 conversation and try and convince me otherwise, you know, try to put forward their views
7 to stop me from what I had already gone down, you know, we'd already gone to the Police,
8 we'd already gone to the diocese, we were already on a pathway to finding some kind of
9 justice, if you like.

10 So I declined that and I haven't met with anyone since. But what I did get out of
11 that meeting was what I have referred to in my statement earlier, was had people spoken up
12 back then, maybe we would have not had to go through what we're going through now.
13 And I fully understand the difficulty of trying to come forward and the acceptance that you
14 just let the Church know and then you walk away. You know, and so in keeping my own
15 sort of realm and my own sort of space safe, I have not made any further contact with the
16 chaplaincy. Like I said, I did appreciate that meeting with him at that time.

17 **Q.** And just having a look at paragraphs 104 onwards, is there anything else you would like to
18 add or expand on in relation to information you had received about previous incidents and
19 moving around? Just take your time, Ms CU. Just take your time, Ms CU.

20 **A.** Yeah, I guess this goes straight to that, you know, when you asked me about what am my
21 expectations from the Church when things like this happen, and what came out about, from
22 a lot of the leaders of the Tongan chaplaincy and the Tongan community and the examples
23 they gave me, and families of young women, you know, who came forward to tell me
24 things, what I - I guess what I want to say is there is a responsibility of the Church here to
25 do something when we bring forward concerns and complaints of this nature, of any nature
26 really, but particularly of this nature, that they do something about it, they have a
27 responsibility and accountability back to us.

28 [REDACTED] GRO-C

29 [REDACTED] GRO-C

30 [REDACTED] GRO-C

31 [REDACTED] GRO-C

32 [REDACTED] GRO-C

33 [REDACTED] GRO-C

1 GRO-C

2 GRO-C

3 **Q.** Okay. And can you just read out paragraph 103.

4 **A.** "After my meeting with Father Line, the Church never contacted me at all. I had no contact
5 from the diocese or from NOPS, the Church never reached out to my niece to offer any
6 support or counselling or to see how she was doing. When she went back to Tonga, that
7 was it."

8 **Q.** We're just about to move on to another fairly decent topic.

9 **CHAIR:** Yes, so I think take the lunch break at this point.

10 **MS SHARKEY:** Yes please.

11 **CHAIR:** What time do you think we should return? It's 20 to 1 now. 2 o'clock, is that all right?

12 All right, so we will end the session, the morning session and we'll come back at 2 o'clock
13 to resume the evidence of Ms CU.

14 **Lunch adjournment from 12.39 pm to 2.02 pm**

15 **CHAIR:** Welcome back everybody. Ms Sharkey, over to you.

16 **QUESTIONING BY MS SHARKEY CONTINUED:** Ms CU, we had ended the last session

17 talking about your meeting with the Tongan chaplaincy and GRO-C

18 GRO-C. Now we're just going to look at the criminal process, okay.

19 **A.** Thank you.

20 **Q.** So the priest in question was charged and plead guilty to a lesser charge?

21 **A.** Yes.

22 **Q.** And he was legally represented?

23 **A.** Yes, that's right.

24 **Q.** And if we could just look at paragraph 86 of your statement. What kind of lawyer
25 represented the priest in those criminal proceedings?

26 **A.** A Queen's Counsel.

27 **Q.** A Queen's Counsel. And what did the use of a Queen's Counsel to represent this priest say
28 to you? Take your time.

29 **A.** I think the answer to that question has quite a few layers for me, so if it's okay I'll just go
30 through one by one how I think and what I feel about the QC. One of the reasons why I do
31 not have anymore connections or have not been to Mass or do not - given up all of the
32 leadership roles is because I have not been able to align what happened during this - during
33 the court proceedings. So one of the things is, I don't know when the Church began to

1 tolerate or began to say it's okay, or when they started moving to - because I believe that
2 funding or paying for the QC to defend the priest speaks volumes to me around when did
3 they tolerate the difference on Sunday in preaching the gospel, the values of Christ, what is
4 good and what is bad, what is right and what is wrong. When did they think it was okay to
5 defend the perpetrator against the victim? And a QC to me shows me that they thought it
6 was okay. That they took the side of the priest over my niece.

7 **Q.** Ms CU, following on from that, could you please read paragraph 124 of your statement?

8 **A.** 124?

9 **Q.** 124.

10 **A.** It was also a kick in the guts knowing that the Church paid for a QC to defend a guilty guy
11 who committed the crime. I understand that the Church would want to protect its
12 reputation, but it is shocking to me that it is willing to protect its reputation.

13 **Q.** Okay. And then we're just looking at the sentencing part of your statement, that's starting at
14 paragraph 116. You talk about the court and sentencing process making you feel like the
15 priest was the victim. So starting at paragraphs 116, can you take us through in your own
16 time what made you feel this way.

17 **A.** I, you know, we went through back and forth with this process for a year.

18 **Q.** Through the legal process?

19 **A.** Yes, for a year and when the charge was made, the Crown, the QC, I understand, wanted to
20 work to or negotiated to reduce the charge. The Police at the time did not reduce it. They
21 also wanted to re-classify some of the information in the evidence that was there. And so
22 the judge towards the end of the year said that there would be a trial date, to set a trial date
23 and we would go to trial because the priest continued to plead not guilty. So from my
24 understanding, and I don't have a legal background and I don't really understand all of this,
25 but this is my experience and what I, as a lay person, could figure out, that when we went
26 from the Police to the Crown Prosecutor's office, the QC then was able to reduce the charge
27 at that point. And he then pleaded guilty to that lesser charge. And so I still question the
28 fact around at what point does the sin or the wrong or the harm become lesser, when you
29 are a faith-based organisation that's charged with looking after us.

30 So I don't understand how all of a sudden after a whole year of not guilty he then
31 pleads guilty. And then we go through the sentencing, and before that I get a call from
32 somebody, I don't remember, requesting if it would be - if we would be open to a
33 restorative justice meeting with him. I ring my family, they decline, they are now dealing
34 with a whole lot of trauma that's happening in their home and they don't want anything to

1 do with this. So I then return the call and say no, we will not enter into any restorative
2 justice, but I would like to talk to the Church. I didn't want to talk to him, but I did want to
3 talk to the Church. And she said she would come back and that never happened either.

4 At the sentencing, so again, I don't have a legal background, but what I could
5 understand was the Crown Prosecutor accepted the guilty plea and there was nothing else
6 except accepting it, correct me if I'm wrong. But the QC put together a character profile of
7 the priest and the judge congrat - you know, I can't remember exactly the words but it was
8 kind of around the lines of "You have been a good leader, you have done many good deeds,
9 there has been a mistake, blah blah and you've reached out to the family" and while we
10 didn't enter into restorative justice, he was commended for reaching out to enter into
11 restorative justice. So I sat there and I was thinking unbelievable that in our protection of
12 ourselves and our niece and trying to work out what we needed to do as a family, by
13 declining it, it came back at sentencing like we weren't open to him. Yeah, it was like - it's
14 like I felt like we were being victimised again but this time in the courtroom.

15 **Q.** Right, and so just looking back a little bit, the fact that a QC was paid for who worked to
16 reduce the charge said to you that they were minimising the harm or the crime that was
17 done towards your niece?

18 **A.** It says a lot of things to me, so one of them is that - but one of them is also, you know,
19 where you put your money is where you put your value, right? And I feel like that the QCs
20 and the Church's money was put into their reputation and their name, and into this priest.
21 None of it came our way. I mean not that I want money or not that I want, but there was no
22 well-being that came our way, and yet we've been dedicated Catholics for generations. So
23 it tells me that what's preached on Sunday doesn't necessarily mean a lot when we're in a
24 situation like this.

25 **Q.** And you were saying before about the judge's comments at that sentencing hearing, and if
26 you could please read out paragraph 118.

27 **A.** "At the sentencing hearing, you could see that the QC had done his work. There was a
28 whole conversation about Sateki's service, his leadership, how he was bettering himself and
29 his education, and how he was a stand-up citizen. The judge talked about his good
30 character, how unfortunate it was that this had happened, that he had recognised his mistake
31 and his failure. The judge said that Sateki reached out to the family through the court's
32 restorative justice process and that although they had denied the opportunity, he had made
33 an effort and took positive steps. It felt like he was the victim.

34 **Q.** Right, and Ms CU, as we've discussed and looked at media articles in relation to this, the

- 1 priest had gone on public record to the media calling what he did a silly mistake?
- 2 A. Yeah.
- 3 Q. But we all make mistakes and saying he pleaded guilty to get it out of the way, I didn't want
4 to hang on and waste time. When you compare that to the reaching out for a restorative
5 justice process, what is your response to that?
- 6 A. It makes a farce of it, but also that's on top of when I turned up to the sentencing hearing,
7 and remember Catholic priests don't have partners, they don't have families and part of their
8 vows is they are celibate and they commit their time solely to the parishioners and to the
9 Church, so when I turned up to the sentencing hearing the mother of his son was there.
- 10 Q. The mother of?
- 11 A. His son was there.
- 12 Q. The priest's son?
- 13 A. The priest's son was there, the judge is not to know that, I don't know if the QC knew that,
14 but I knew that, the community, the Tongan community know that he has a son with this
15 woman, young woman. So his comments on social media was just another punch in the
16 guts really, you know, none of this makes sense in my mind because there was no justice.
17 There was none for us.
- 18 Q. And just to outline how it was for you, who did you go with to the sentencing hearing, what
19 support did you have?
- 20 A. You know, the tatala e pulonga in this space feels safe. When you're out there on your own
21 and there's no format or no process, there's very few people you can trust because you don't
22 know how your story is received and you don't know how people will react. I took
23 GRO-B with me to the sentencing because I had no-one else, I couldn't take my mother, too
24 much for her, my husband was in Tonga on the date of the sentencing and she was part of
25 the beginning, it was her phone, so she and I went together and we sat there the two of us
26 and listened to the proceedings.
- 27 I think in the search to find some kind of resolution, when I asked her if she would
28 be - if she would come, she agreed, because I think she in herself is going through her own
29 search. And we both came away disappointed, we both came away feeling really gutted. I
30 think that's the only word I can explain, because it was so hollow, we came out there - out
31 of that courtroom empty, mmm.
- 32 Q. Thank you. So then there's a period of time that passes before the name of this particular
33 priest is made public?

1 A. Right.

2 **Q.** And now we're moving forward to paragraph 129 of your statement when you contact the
3 diocese again. So right up until this time, this is 2 February 2020, you had heard from
4 no-one?

5 A. No, I had not heard from anybody.

6 **Q.** And you mention the media contacting you and then what happens, what happens?

7 A. So when the name suppression was lifted, Stuff did a story and it became public and then it
8 made its rounds in the Tongan social media circle spaces. And I started to panic, because
9 some of the public commentary, and, you know, when you're behind a keyboard, some of
10 the commentary that you would not normally say to someone when you're looking at them
11 face-to-face. And so some of the commentary was vicious is what I'd call it. And some
12 were really supportive of him, you know, "You've made a mistake, everybody makes
13 mistakes", that kind of thing. "You're a good man", da da da. But the vicious statements
14 were around - were geared towards my niece. They didn't know the story, they only knew
15 what was printed in the Stuff article.

16 And so there were comments around "Where are her family? Who is she? How
17 dare she. She's the reason that he has", you know, and I'd like to say it in Tongan because it
18 was written in Tongan, so words like ne sio ki fe 'ene fa'e, ka e ha'u 'o fai e fa'ahinga
19 to'onga ko'eni ki he Patele, things like ko e ki'I ta'ahine, fanga ki'I tamaiki 'oku nau sakiki
20 holoand that kind of - but real nasty words that she will see because it's on social media,
21 that my family will see because it's in social media. And while the general public don't
22 know who we are, my family will see it, which adds to the pain and adds to the shame and
23 adds to the trauma for my niece and her family. So I started to panic about this social
24 media, when Tongan media were trying to look out, you know, people were contacting me
25 because media wanted to talk to me, that's when you wrote this to the diocese.

26 **Q.** And then what happens?

27 A. I got invited to meet with the Bishop and so I do, I go and meet with the Bishop.

28 **Q.** And so you had contacted the diocese, and just looking at paragraph 129, you let them
29 know that you guys were struggling with this?

30 A. Yes, struggling with the - yes.

31 **Q.** And with all the news articles that were coming out in the public, what is the question you
32 ask the diocese, what is that question you ask them at the end of paragraph 129?

33 A. I asked them "Can you tell me where to from here" and told them that journalists were
34 seeking our side of the story.

- 1 **Q.** So you tell them that the media are now involved and then two days later what happens?
- 2 **A.** I received an e-mail from the diocese and an invitation to meet with the Bishop.
- 3 **Q.** Then carrying on to paragraph 131 you go to meet with Bishop Dunn?
- 4 **A.** Yes.
- 5 **Q.** And can you please talk us through your meeting with the Bishop.
- 6 **A.** So I turn up to New Street and **GRO-C** is there to greet me and, you know, that's when
7 I realised **GRO-C** and **GRO-C**. So then I feel okay that she's there, because I know her, but
8 then I feel a little, you know, when you meet your old principals and you feel like a school
9 kid again, I kind of felt like that a bit, you know, I was like, you know, she's my - she was
10 **GRO-C**. So we go into the meeting room and she stays in there with - into his office and
11 she stays in there with us, and the Bishop thanks me for meeting with him and continues to
12 ask me about what's happening with the media and social media.
- 13 **Q.** And so you asked Bishop if he was aware of all these incidents involving the priest that you
14 had heard about?
- 15 **A.** Yeah. Yeah, I did, I asked him if he knew about - so I told him about all the things that I
16 had heard and that people had told me and I asked him whether he knew, and he told me
17 that he - oh and I asked him specifically about his son, and he told me that he had heard that
18 and he had asked him and he denied it and then that was it.
- 19 **Q.** Right, so you had asked him if he knew whether this - the priest -
- 20 **A.** Yes.
- 21 **Q.** - had a child, had a son, and Bishop's response was he had heard that?
- 22 **A.** He had heard it and he had asked him about it, and the priest or Sateki denied it and that
23 was all that was done, from my understanding. And that's all he shared at the meeting, so I
24 don't know whether anything else was done.
- 25 **Q.** And just looking at paragraph 134, could you please read that out?
- 26 **A.** The Bishop asked me what news outlet had contacted me. He warned me about being
27 careful with news outlets. I felt like he was trying to persuade me not to engage with them.
28 I told the Bishop that there was an attack on our family on social media because people had
29 come out to support Sateki.
- 30 **Q.** And in the following paragraph you say you didn't feel safe to ask questions that you really
31 wanted to ask?
- 32 **A.** I don't know that I was going to get honest answers after he said that he had asked Sateki,
33 he declined it and then there was nothing else. I also didn't feel like, yeah, I don't think -

1 I didn't feel like he would be honest with me, and so I didn't feel like I needed to - wanted
2 to ask anymore questions. And also the way he was so interested in a particular thing,
3 whether it was - and it was about the media. There was no assurance, so I think that's what
4 I talk about being safe, there was no confidence in me that this conversation would go
5 anywhere else. So I didn't ask anymore questions, I just wanted to get out of there.

6 **Q.** You say you thought that it was a waste of time, paragraph 136, and you came out of it
7 thinking it was really more for them than anything else?

8 **A.** Like I said, there was nothing in it for me. And yes, at the time I did come out of there
9 feeling like it was a waste of time. There was no reason for that meeting, there was no way
10 forward.

11 **Q.** And that the motive behind it, behind you hearing two days later that the Bishop wants to
12 meet with you -

13 **A.** Yes.

14 **Q.** - was to persuade you not to talk?

15 **A.** I think it was about the media stuff more than - because since then there was no other - they
16 never reached out, you know, there's nothing, no well-being check, no nothing, you know.

17 **Q.** So that's the end of the contact from the -

18 **A.** Yes, I've not had any other contact with the diocese.

19 **Q.** Okay. And just reflecting, moving forward in your statement, the reflection on Catholic
20 Church complaints process and prosecution, I'm going to ask if you can read a couple of
21 paragraphs, Ms CU, if you could please read paragraph 137.

22 **A.** 137?

23 **Q.** Yeah.

24 **A.** I think my background, education and experience helped me go through the complaints
25 process after the incident. It helped me understand the Police process around care and
26 protection. It also helped me understand the diocese and the chaplaincy, and the way they
27 work. It was a matter of methodically stepping my way through each process. It also
28 helped me to have a critical mind and come to some conclusions myself in my own way.

29 **Q.** And then paragraph 139 please.

30 **A.** If I didn't have that education and experience, I think I would have been scared and afraid
31 about going through all the processes. I think it would have been very confusing and I may
32 have got lost in the process. I don't think I would have understood what was happening and
33 may not have asked the right questions. It gave me the confidence to ask questions or seek
34 clarification when I was unclear about anything. That really helped me go through the

1 process, keep sane and continue with it. However, it was long, sad and hurtful process.
2 I felt that it was unfair and unjust right to the very end.

3 **Q.** And paragraphs 141 and 142 please.

4 **A.** As I said earlier, justice delayed is justice denied. Throughout the process I felt that we had
5 lost sight of what we were there for. We were not there for what happened to my niece.
6 Instead, we were there to protect this guy or make up some story to make what he did okay.

7 I felt that although we were all supposed to be going through this together, the
8 diocese took a step back, watched the show and funded the show. It felt like we were all
9 the players, Sateki, me, my niece, my family, the lawyers, and the Police, and we were all
10 on stage. The diocese just sat back and watched, but made sure that they were funding the
11 show to run the way they wanted it. The QC that the diocese paid for had that much
12 influence. There was no way Sateki could afford that QC on his own.

13 **Q.** And then just finally paragraphs 143 and 144.

14 **A.** The Church lost sight of what was the actual sin. I feel the Church failed in its duty of care
15 in every shape and form to help my niece, me and our families restore and recover. Rather,
16 we were all left to just do it on our own and in our own way.

17 The Church knew exactly what they were doing. I feel that the diocese has sinned
18 against my niece, sinned against her family and sinned against the parishioners that have
19 been part of their Church for all their lives. The Church backed the devil on this one. I
20 think that the Church has a lot to answer for.

21 **Q.** Thank you, Ms CU. And - do you need a bit of time?

22 **A.** No, I'm okay.

23 **Q.** So now we're just looking at the impacts. This is the next section of your statement and
24 you outline six particular categories in relation to the impacts on you, your wider
25 community, your involvement with the Church and about the vā. And I'm just asking
26 whether you could please take us through the impacts that this had on you and others. Take
27 your time.

28 **A.** I think it's important to - in telling my story I think it's important that I don't put words into
29 my niece's space because that's her story to tell and if she's ever ready and when she's ready
30 that she will do that. And so I won't go into the impacts I think that I know has happened to
31 her. But I will go into the impacts that has happened among our family. And because I
32 don't speak about my niece's impact it doesn't mean there isn't any, it just means I won't
33 speak to it.

34 **Q.** And there's also perhaps other reasons why you're not able to go into that?

1 A. Yes, that's right. So with our family, I talked a little bit about it earlier around how in the
2 migration journey to Aotearoa the Churches became our villages and that is where we
3 congregate as a community of believers, but also where we practice our cultural protocols,
4 routines. And we find strength in each other in those spaces. So the impact for my family
5 is that we have moved away from the Church which has then meant we've moved away
6 from our community.

7 I didn't understand at the time that I came forward that how much impact this
8 would have on us and I'm talking about my husband and our GRO-B children. Watching
9 them try to come to terms from what was all their lives, all my life and all my husband's
10 life, ritual, Sunday Mass, Easter, Christmas, new year celebrations, the connection, the
11 choir, the youth performances, all of that kind of stuff, watching us move away from that
12 and trying to figure out who we are as Tongan, who we are as Pacific people in Aotearoa,
13 who we are as a family of faith without a Church or without a community, I don't know
14 what word to describe it.

15 It's - it is - it is probably one of the hardest things we've ever been through as a
16 family. And I didn't understand that when I took up the support for my niece. And
17 I didn't - and I have come to understand how humans and how as a people we congregate
18 around our communities and our family, our turangawaewae, how important that is for us,
19 where the ahi ka is and I believe my ahi ka was in that Church. And I've taken my family
20 away from her. And we've not worked out how that's going to play out yet. So that's the
21 impact on my family.

22 **Q.** And did it cause perhaps your children or some of your children to question having known
23 the priest, all that he stood for?

24 A. As a family we have questioned everything because this priest was in their lives, he was a
25 priest that was active in the school, you know, he's a Tongan priest that they know of. Also
26 the GRO-C yes,
27 there's a lot of doubt, yes, there's a lot of challenge, yes, there's a lot of confusion for them.
28 They are seeking ways because I know that their faith, you know, we brought them up
29 through all the sacraments, as parents, as Catholic parents, when we got married we took
30 vows that we would bring up our children Catholic. So all the sacraments that as parents,
31 as Catholic parents prepare their children for, we've done that.

32 The next lot of sacraments are theirs to make decisions, marriage, you know,
33 they're their decisions. And so that's all they've known for their young lives, and the

1 routine that was their life has now been taken away. So they are searching, they are in a
 2 place of confusion, rightly so because we are, I am, and I - and I feel responsible for the
 3 shift in my family, because I was the one that wanted to do this and they - my husband
 4 supports me, my kids support me, but actually none of us realised the impact it would have
 5 on us as a whānau.

6 And like I said, the layers of this revealing, every time I unpeel something away
 7 and reveal something, I reveal something about myself and every decision I make has an
 8 impact on my children and my husband. And I feel responsible for that. But as I keep
 9 saying, finding my voice in the silence means maybe it will stop and maybe it won't happen
 10 to someone else because it happened to us because other people couldn't find their voice, or
 11 the Church couldn't respond in their - in a way that was responsible or took accountability
 12 for their behaviour, or their people's behaviour.

13 **Q.** Thank you Ms CU. So you had mentioned just very generally one of your children being
 14 questioned about - by another student about whether -

15 **A.** Yes, yes absolutely. So, you know, lots of things has happened but that one was tough.
 16 That one to go through was really tough. So the community had heard rumours, you know,
 17 like I said, there were things happening in the community. GRO-B and she
 18 GRO-B and said that one of the Tongan students at school had confronted her
 19 and asked her if she was the one that was messaging with the priest and if she was the one
 20 that was sending stuff to the priest. She was able to correct it, but she didn't know whether
 21 they believed her.

22 And so when she came home to tell me she was very upset. And remember, this
 23 priest was a very active part of their school. So all the students knew this priest. I rang the
 24 principal at the time, I asked to meet with her. I told her about what was happening with
 25 this priest, she didn't know. I asked her to ring the diocese and get more information. But
 26 why I wanted to meet with her was that - so that we could put a plan in place for GRO-B
 27 should anything happen like that or at the school she had a safe place to go to, she had
 28 somewhere to escape to if she needed it. And so we put a plan in place with a teacher that
 29 she trusted, and nothing happened after that, but those are the things that have - lots of
 30 things like that have happened that we've had to manage ourselves and put things in place
 31 ourselves. But that one was a tough one, mmm.

32 **Q.** If you could just turn to paragraph 166 where this is something you would like to share, so
 33 if you could take us through that paragraph please, Ms CU.

1 A. You know, this talks to something that I often try and look at something and then take back
2 what I can control, you know, so what is it that I can do that can make a difference or that I
3 can feel like I've got some sense of control. And this is one of those things. You know,
4 around - so if you remember my kōrero around the QC and my - how I thought about the
5 Catholic Church paying for this QC to defend the perpetrator against the victim, that has a
6 massive impact on me.

7 **Q.** Right.

8 A. And so with the Catholic schooling system, I don't want to give them anymore money, I
9 don't want to give the Church anymore money. I will pay the subject fees and the
10 attendance fees, but after years and generations of alofa and kātoanga 'ofa and taking from
11 poor pockets to this deep pocket group, I don't want to do it anymore and, you know, like
12 I said, this is something that I can control. And it's small because I'm under no illusion how
13 big this is and how small I am. But this kind of action is something that I can say no more,
14 no more from me, no more from my family. I'll pay the dues, but I'm not going to give
15 anymore money to that Church, because if I could afford it, Tania, I would have paid a QC
16 for my niece, so that the playing field was even and level. But I couldn't afford it and she
17 couldn't afford it. So we were victims in that whole process. And I refuse to koha anymore
18 to this Church.

19 **Q.** Thank you Ms CU. Now another impact you talk about is the Tongan community and
20 we've gone through some of those impacts already. But just looking at paragraph 170, if
21 you'd like to speak to that.

22 A. Can I read it?

23 **Q.** Sure. Definitely.

24 A. In Tongan culture you become almost cursed for going up against the Church. If you go up
25 against the Church and do something against what everyone believes in, anything that goes
26 wrong that happens later in your life or any problems that may arise are considered to be a
27 result of you speaking up against the Church. There is a very powerful sense of being
28 observed and judged by the Tongan community. Some of these things come back to me
29 and I feel hurt about it. I know some of it goes back to my mum and that is very hurtful for
30 her.

31 Today my opening address, a lot of my Tongan talanoa was seeking some kind of
32 understanding from my own family and to the community because I know what this means.
33 And the vā that I talked about, I know there's going to be some broken vā, some damaged
34 vā. And so when I talk about that, it cuts right to my heart, to my relationships and the only

1 way I can explain it is that all the balls are up in the air and one by one they might land and
 2 then we can build. But right now, right now going against not just the Church but standing
 3 alone, facing my family, facing my community, that's going to be a hard journey to return
 4 to and a hard journey to repair.

5 **Q.** Thank you Ms CU. There's two more parts left to those impacts and the next one is your
 6 wider family at paragraph 173 to 175.

7 **A.** Yeah, so you know, I think I've spoken to it earlier, mentioned it, the fall out in my family
 8 and I think the wider family feels fakamā, you know, they feel that because of taking it
 9 further the family have been exposed. So a family member has told me that I should never
 10 have done this, that I should have taken it to a meeting or taken it to a consensus. And it
 11 could have been something that we would have been able as a family to sort out directly
 12 with the priest or with the Church.

13 **Q.** But because you note that some of your own family have sided -

14 **A.** Yeah.

15 **Q.** - with the priest?

16 **A.** Yes, they have. And so, you know, making this decision again means that I'm the different
 17 one, you know, that I'm the minority. And, you know, in saying that I do also have support
 18 from family, so you know, I'm not alone in this journey, I do have a lot of family that
 19 support me. But the majority and the wider thinking and the wider traditions of our family
 20 believe that I should not have done this. And it is about keeping the mana and the pride of
 21 our family name, because this family, like I said, have a long history with the Catholic
 22 Church, they are proud of our Catholic tradition, it is part of everything we do and so by
 23 doing this I exposed not just things that are happening in the family, but also against the
 24 Church that we love, that this family love, yeah.

25 **Q.** Okay, and finally we're talking about the tending to the vā, and you've gone through a lot of
 26 the vā already. I just wondered if you could speak to paragraph 181.

27 **A.** Yeah, in my opening address I talk about seeking to be free and that my stride is no longer
 28 heavy. And the theme of the tatala e pulonga is really why I'm here because I just need to
 29 get to a place. And this talks about a time when I was really free to go in and out of spaces
 30 of my family and of my community and my Church and that I had enough relationships and
 31 vā that we have done some amazing things together, my family, my Church and my
 32 community. And so from this process, that's been taken away. I don't have that freedom
 33 anymore. And I don't know that I'll ever get back to that, maybe I'm seeking a new type of
 34 freedom. I don't know, maybe I'll become a Buddhist, I don't know. But what I mean in

1 here is I'm really cautious as to who I talk to, who I share with. I'm sensitive to what I hear,
2 ultra supersensitive to what people are saying about my family. Because there's a part of
3 me where I go into defence mode, I go into protection mode and what people don't see is
4 I break down.

5 It gets really tough because these are people I lived my life with, they're not
6 strangers to me. But in this process we've parted ways, so I don't have that freedom
7 anymore. And I feel like I don't think I hold - my mana has been impacted as well, and so
8 what was any good, any achievement, any thing this I've done in my past potentially has
9 been tarnished. And like, you know, I say why would people come forward? It's such a
10 tough thing to do, and now that I've experienced it, don't get me wrong I would always have
11 come forward, it's just so tough to go through what happens around you when you do come
12 forward.

13 **Q.** And on that about you always were going to come forward, and a big reason why is
14 outlined in paragraph 185, if you could please read that?

15 **A.** If I did not come forward and Sateki was still a practising priest, I would have felt guilty
16 that I didn't say something. I would have felt horrible that it has happened to another young
17 girl, sick to my stomach that he remains a public predator, that I knew about it and did
18 nothing. I had to report the abuse, I had to be careful of how I did it so that the dignity or
19 vā was still approachable and that I didn't completely destroy it because that would be
20 painful for me.

21 **Q.** Thank you Ms CU. Just coming towards the end of your session here today, there's some
22 questions that you wanted to ask, so I'll ask you to read out paragraph 197.

23 **A.** 197?

24 **Q.** 197.

25 **A.** There is a lot of work to do in this space and the Church needs courage to reflect on and
26 own its wrongdoings and change its behaviour. In this case, what is sin? What is harm?
27 Who is sinning? And who is harmful? What is the QC's role? What is he there to do or
28 defend? Who is or are the victims? Where is the good shepherd? These are all questions
29 for the Church and its leaders.

30 **Q.** Then there were some questions you would have wanted Bishop to answer if you had felt
31 that during that meeting with him you could, so if you could please turn to paragraphs 199
32 and 200.

33 **A.** 199?

34 **Q.** And 200, yes.

- 1 A. We spent a whole year playing legal jigsaw with the Church via the QC condoning the
2 efforts to lessen the charge. The Church put in its resources and efforts to pay a QC to get
3 him off, but did the Church see his sin? Did the Church see the innocence of a 15-year-old
4 girl? How can one part of your Church be saying this is criminal, go to the Police, and then
5 another part of your Church is paying for the QC to get him off?
- 6 **Q.** And then just the end of paragraph 198.
- 7 A. 198?
- 8 **Q.** Yes, 198. "The questions I would have asked were", these are further questions, halfway
9 down the paragraph of 198. This is in relation to the priest.
- 10 A. The questions I would have asked were: Why did the Church support him? Why did the
11 Church defend him when they knew he was guilty? They knew very well and had the
12 evidence in front of them. He was guilty of the whole charge, not the lesser charge. The
13 Church should have let him do his time. But instead, they kept supporting him and paying
14 for a QC.
- 15 **Q.** Thank you Ms CU. Then please could you turn to paragraph 206, you talk about the
16 change needed to the Catholic Church redress process and systems. And the need for the
17 Church to release power. If you could please expand on that a bit further?
- 18 A. 206?
- 19 **Q.** 206, so to adequately address the harm caused to victims of abuse.
- 20 A. I'll read it so that it helps me think. To adequately address the harm caused to victims of
21 abuse the Church needs to release power so that any reconciliation is co-designed
22 independently with the victim's family. Any redress process should not be led by the
23 Church as they will try and control it. I think redress needs to be meaningful for the victim
24 and to be meaningful for the victim, the Church has to commit to doing some change, to
25 making change, because what they have done in this instance continued to victimise my
26 niece and her family. I don't know how all of the things, you know, around the restorative
27 justice, whatever programmes there are, I don't know how well they run, I don't know
28 enough information or any evaluation around how victims feel out of those things. So
29 because there was such a void for us in any attempt to address any support or any
30 well-being or anything like that, I have lost faith in what they can do, hence why I think it
31 needs to be independent, and it needs to be meaningful for the victim. And I don't know in
32 my experience of this whether that's - no, I do know. I know that's not the first thing that
33 the Catholic Church is considering, because I think what they consider first is their
34 reputation. I think that's what - this is how this all played out. So had they thought about

1 my niece and her family first, maybe some of their deep pockets would have supported
2 them.

3 **Q.** And in paragraph 208 you make another observation or recommendation?

4 **A.** Mmm. You know, I think this is human - I know that Church and faith things there's a
5 spiritual element to it, right, I get that, but I don't know in this day and age, and I don't even
6 know whether it was good previously, about the - about this - about the - I don't even know
7 how to explain it, you know, about priests not being able to have partners or families. So
8 what I'm hearing from a lot of the stuff that's in the news and what I've experienced and
9 what I've read, surely there should be some review of that. I don't know how that works,
10 I know it needs to go to the Vatican, I know there's a whole process around things like that,
11 I know that everything that the Catholic Church is tied back to some kind of doctrine or
12 some kind of belief from the bible. But surely, maybe priests should be able to marry and
13 have families. Maybe there's a thing there that they really need to look at. Yeah, that's kind
14 of my thoughts on that, and that's more of a, really?

15 **Q.** That's okay, we're sharing your experience and your thoughts.

16 **A.** Yeah.

17 **Q.** And just finally before I ask for any closing remarks and questions from the
18 Commissioners, you end your statement talking about culture and family. Could you take
19 us through your thoughts on culture and family as it relates to recommendations for our
20 communities listening. Take your time Ms CU.

21 **A.** I think we are a people that have - when I say a people, I think Pacific peoples, we have a
22 tradition of living through and working through hardship to come out on the other end with
23 a way forward. And this is known in our history, in our navigation history, it's known in
24 our migration history, it's known in how we manage our lives and our families. And so
25 every critical thought I have is tinged with hope, because I have hope that we can get
26 through this. And so while I talk about my family and I talk about what's happening with
27 us and our - with my family and the community, I have hope that there's a way forward,
28 because I can't completely let go of a whole lifetime, not just my lifetime, but my parents,
29 my grandparents and all of those that have gone before me. What that looks like I don't
30 know.

31 And so I am hopeful for that, that there will be a return. What it looks like I'm not
32 sure. Also with the culture, we all sit on a continuum on that. There is no one culture now,
33 Tongan culture that is right for all Tongans. You will have had an experience of your
34 Tongan culture, I will have had an experience of mine. Our families and whānau in Tonga

1 experience Tongan culture the way they do. And so always trying to find a way or a way
2 forward will be difficult. And I wonder whether there's a space here and a time here where
3 we as a people start recognising that we don't all have to be the same, that we don't all have
4 to - if you're Tongan you're like this, or if you're Samoan this is what you do.

5 And I don't know - again, this is just my thinking, but one of the things that has
6 been really difficult for me going through this is - when I say journey alone I'm not entirely
7 alone, but a lot of this is happening in my head, a lot of it is happening in how I'm trying to
8 process and apply different lenses, whether it's professional lens, mother's lens, a daughter's
9 lens, you know, so I'm doing all of this jigsaw puzzle thing trying to understand my next
10 steps.

11 And so if we keep continuing just to follow the norm and not taking part of
12 controlling or making decisions for yourself and your families because the outcome is too
13 hard, I think that's worse for our communities than what I'm - I mean - what I'm doing, do
14 I make sense?

15 **Q.** Yes, you make perfect sense.

16 **A.** So stepping out to do something different is not always necessarily bad. It's tough, it won't
17 be understood by everybody, but it's not necessarily bad. And I think there's a sense in me
18 that I've come to believe that Churches, whether it's the Catholic Church or maybe any
19 Church or any group, they depend on a group of people moving together as one believing,
20 you know, believing in the kaupapa, believing in what's been given to them. And anyone
21 that sort of steps out becomes isolated. There seems to be no space for a wider and open
22 conversation. It kind of all has to look like this.

23 And that's why I preface my last comment around I do - every comment I make I
24 have a - I have hope that we will get through this and that we will be able to determine and
25 be self determining and that we don't always just follow what's been told to us and preached
26 to us. And I know, I know a lot of it is tui fakatukufakaholo 'a Tonga I get that, I
27 understand that. Yeah.

28 **Q.** And a big message in your paragraph 210 about prioritising the victim and not protecting
29 the perpetrator.

30 **A.** Yeah.

31 **Q.** Right.

32 **A.** And that speaks a little bit about to what I've just said. To save face it's - it works out that
33 you want to protect the vā with the Church and the priest more so and then deal with the
34 whānau later. So if there was a shift that we look after our whānau, that we look after our -

1 the victim, that we see to the needs of that person and the vā with that person, if that could
2 be a change and not necessarily jump into try and protect the Church or the priest, that
3 would be my challenge and my call to our community.

4 **Q.** Malo 'aupito Ms CU. Ms CU is open to questions from the Commissioners. Do you wish
5 to make any closing remarks now or would you like to answer the questions?

6 **A.** We'll do some questions, yeah.

7 **CHAIR:** I hope you're going to be relieved but we've agreed we don't need to ask you any
8 questions, it's not we don't want to but we don't need to because we have here - I've been
9 contradicted by my colleague.

10 **COMMISSIONER ERUETI:** Kia ora Chair. Thank you for the opportunity. I did want to - first
11 of all I want to acknowledge your determination and also your optimism, because you have
12 to have hope for change.

13 **A.** Yeah. Malo.

14 **Q.** So ngā mihi nui ki a koe whaea.

15 **A.** Kia ora.

16 **Q.** I did want to ask about NOPS, the National Office of Professional Standards when you first
17 went there and -

18 **A.** Yes.

19 **Q.** - and she said prosecute -

20 **A.** Mmm.

21 **Q.** - that avenue. About whether - are you able to talk about what has happened in that space
22 in addition to the prosecution?

23 **A.** I've not heard back from that office from NOPS. What I understood from that meeting was
24 that after the Police investigation and after whatever court proceedings, that they would
25 pick up their investigation. But I don't know, I've not heard back from them.

26 **Q.** I saw from your statement that you hadn't been told by NOPS about the Path to Healing and
27 about a process that's parallel to the criminal prosecution process, there's no information
28 about that given to you?

29 **A.** No, I don't have any information.

30 **Q.** Yeah. The ideal is that that process would hopefully move beyond the focus on him to a
31 focus on the systems -

32 **A.** Yes.

33 **Q.** - that allowed him to operate in that way?

34 **A.** Yes.

- 1 **Q.** And in that way give you a sense of there's some accountability and justice for the overall
2 systemic issues that allowed this to happen?
- 3 **A.** Mmm.
- 4 **Q.** That's the ideal anyway.
- 5 **A.** Yes, absolutely. I think the incident, the situation has happened. One of the things I'm
6 seeking here is what the Church's response is, or the system's response around what
7 happens when things like this happen, what is it that they do, whether it's for their people,
8 the priests or the clergy, or whether it's for the victims. You know, we are parishioners,
9 we're not random people that got, you know, that fell into this, we are Catholics. And so
10 that is one of the things I'm looking for out of this is what are the system changes, because
11 there was nowhere in the process that we went through that I could identify that. And when
12 I asked the Bishop and he said that he did ask the priest and he denied it, that seemed like
13 all that was done.
- 14 **Q.** Yeah.
- 15 **A.** So yes, there is systems, yeah.
- 16 **Q.** It seems, because we've inquired into the redress schemes offered by the different faiths,
17 including the Catholic Church, and there are a lot of actors involved, there's the
18 congregational order which seems to be the Marist here, there's the dioceses and then
19 there's the parishes and the priests. But here it seems that there are additional actors which
20 seem to complicate matters even -
- 21 **A.** Yes.
- 22 **Q.** - further for you, yeah.
- 23 **A.** Yeah.
- 24 **Q.** With the Tongan Niue diocese.
- 25 **A.** Yes.
- 26 **Q.** With the Tonga chaplaincy, these other offices, the 26 parishes in Auckland which seem to
27 - to try and navigate your way through this it seems even more difficult in addition to all the
28 cultural barriers that you and your whānau face.
- 29 **A.** Yeah. I do think when this came about, that was one of the things that my family wanted
30 me to do was just take it to the Tongan chaplaincy. And with the Tongan chaplaincy we'll
31 work out a way forward. So what I - so the complication, I guess, with this priest was he
32 was part of the Tongan Niue Diocese and the Tongan chaplaincy in Auckland remains
33 under the Tongan Niue Diocese, so they are an outreach arm, so they support the Tongan
34 community across Auckland, and I think other parts of the country.

1 They say Tongan Mass once a month, they go around to the different parishes
 2 once a month so that the Tongan community can have a Tongan Mass. So those are the
 3 services that they provide here in Auckland. And he came here under the Tongan Niue
 4 Diocese. After his term, what I understand was that he then started working for the
 5 Auckland Diocese, he didn't return to the Tongan Niue Diocese, he stayed here under the
 6 Auckland Diocese. And hence was at St Mary's at the time of this incident, yeah. It's
 7 complicated, you know, when you get to the orders, I - you know, they're all in different
 8 orders, but when you're going to do a complaint that's kind of what I took, I just took it to
 9 the Auckland Diocese, because - but my family wanted to keep it with the Tongan Diocese,
 10 but he no longer worked for them, he was working for Auckland.

11 **Q.** Nga mihi, it's so enlightening and informative for our redress work and our report, so ngā
 12 mihi nui ki a koe, ki a kōrua, thank you so much.

13 **A.** Kia ora.

14 **COMMISSIONER STEENSON:** I do have a question if you'll allow me, thank you. It was just
 15 around the question of being believed and the difficulty with the community, and I guess
 16 my question is around the - without having the evidence that was very irrefutable that you
 17 saw, given the kind of deep indoctrination of the Church, how would that have been
 18 overcome by a young person if that evidence had not been there, and then for yourself how
 19 do you see that might be overcome as you then navigated your way through being believed
 20 or not believed by the wider community?

21 **A.** You know, being believed almost became secondary to action, because the people around
 22 me believed that it happened but they - I don't know how to explain it, it was like it was
 23 almost okay, he's only human. And so you know, when I was talking earlier about how we
 24 connect to the Church is very local, so what we do is just what we see in our local
 25 community. When we went through this and realised there was just layer upon layer upon
 26 layer, the community itself kind of worked out that he's done something wrong, they knew
 27 that he had done something wrong before, so it fit the kind of pattern that they already
 28 understood, so they believed that something happened, but what they didn't - what I found
 29 was this lack of action, lack of movement to do something about it. So there's that bit.

30 The bit around the young woman, the young girl, I can't explain anymore how
 31 much trauma she's going through. But also that she believed that she was wrong and that
 32 she caused the sin. And that's condoned by some of those social media comments, that's
 33 condoned by some of the family's comments and so for her to be believed it's massive, you
 34 know, or that her innocence and, that, you know, I always remind people she was only 15.

- 1 Only 15, you know. Yeah.
- 2 **Q.** Still a child.
- 3 **A.** Yeah, still a child, very much.
- 4 **Q.** Tēnā koe, thank you for unpacking the real subtle complexities of the Tongan culture and
5 the very real impacts and being able to break the silence. Nga mihi nui ki a koe.
- 6 **A.** Kia ora.
- 7 **CHAIR:** I have no questions, but I'm going to leave it to Ali'imua Sandra to address you.
8 Thank you from me.
- 9 **COMMISSIONER ALOFIVAE:** Ms CU, where do we start? Your talanoa this afternoon and
10 beginning from this morning really demonstrates for us that your faith is courageous as it is
11 intelligent. You're a mother, a daughter, a grandmother, a niece and often in situations like
12 this it falls to the women, not always, but often it does, to do the hard work.
- 13 **A.** Malo.
- 14 **Q.** And so we want to salute you, because you did it at an extraordinary cost. When we talk
15 about culture, sometimes those who aren't Tongan or who struggle with their culture.
- 16 **A.** Yes.
- 17 **Q.** And maybe even Palagi who may not even have a real appreciation for Pacific culture, don't
18 always understand the intricacies and the different layers, so they call it complex and they
19 say "Oh why don't you just speak up, what's wrong with you?" Da, da-da, da-da. Wouldn't
20 it be so easy if we felt that we could. But the way you've outlined it for us today in the
21 talanoa, it's really brought us a great measure of different lenses that the Commission is
22 required and should look through.
- 23 **A.** Malo.
- 24 **Q.** And so I hope today in terms of the tatala e pulonga that for you it's brought a sense of
25 peace, you know. In every generation there are forerunners and you're one of them, you're
26 one of them and you challenge the community in which you say if we could just shift the vā
27 from prioritising the Church, which is really an institution made up of people and rules.
- 28 **A.** Mmm.
- 29 **Q.** To actually prioritising the families, who are the same person in the Church and the rules.
30 But the cultural attitudinal influential shift that you're calling for, I want to say to you that
31 there are many that would stand in support of you and say that that shift is long overdue.
- 32 **A.** Malo.
- 33 **Q.** And so we're very grateful that the Church is here to hear directly from Pasifika, to be able
34 to understand the intricacies and the challenges that we often have, and they're not new.

1 We often say one doesn't equal one, meaning you are one story, you are one person, but the
 2 multiplication factor really brings home the point of why it's so difficult for Pasifika, for
 3 Pacific to come forward. We've heard it from our survivor advocates and we salute the
 4 courage of all of our Catholic survivors, some are in the room today, and our advocates
 5 who know this and stand strongly in support of you.

6 A. Thank you.

7 **Q.** The purpose of the talanoa, of course, is to create the safe spaces, so we are very, very
 8 grateful to you, to your husband, to your children, to your family for coming forward, for
 9 lifting this cloud, for allowing us to have this open talanoa with you. And we know that the
 10 vā between you and your family and all of the other bridges that will need to be rebuilt, we
 11 just pray for the grace and the favour and the mercy in all of those relationships. That you
 12 will be blessed with the words to know what to do and that actually your action today will
 13 stand very tall and very proud for transformative change, because that's what's required,
 14 both with our Pacific communities and the Churches not just the Catholics, although the
 15 Catholics is the, you know, the faith that's been discussed this morning, but that's what's
 16 required is the courage of many, many more of our people to come up to step forward. So
 17 thank you for honouring us at the Commission with your talanoa.

18 A. Fa'afetai lava.

19 **CHAIR:** Thank you so much. Ms Sharkey or, sorry, Mr Pohiva.

20 [Tongan song]

21 **Adjournment from 3.26 pm to 3.53 pm**

22 **CHAIR:** Thank you Ms Sharkey.

23 **MS SHARKEY:** Thank you Madam Chair. We have William Wilson and I also just wish to
 24 acknowledge his family who are all here present to support William this afternoon.

25 **CHAIR:** Thank you, they're all very welcome. I'll ask Mr Erueti to administer the affirmation.

26 **WILLIAM ALEXANDER MARSHALL WILSON**

27 **COMMISSIONER ERUETI:** Tēnā koe William.

28 A. Kia ora.

29 **Q.** Tēnā koe, ngā mihi nui ki a koe me to whānau, nau mai haere mai. So before I start I'm just
 30 going to start with the affirmation. Do you solemnly, sincerely and truly declare and affirm
 31 that the evidence you will give before this Commission will be the truth, the whole truth
 32 and nothing but the truth?

33 A. I do.

34 **Q.** Kia ora.