



The Right Reverend Trevor Edwards
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Pastoral Letter to be read on Sunday 16th September 2018

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

Diocesan Involvement in the National Redress Scheme

I am writing to inform you that the unanimous in principle decision by the Bishop in Council in August to join the National Redress Scheme has now been endorsed by our Synod. It has given permission for the necessary legislative steps to now be taken to join the company established by our General Synod to provide one easy access point for survivors of child sexual abuse perpetrated by Anglican Church institutions. It is hoped that in time all Anglican Dioceses will be involved in this scheme via this means.

The Federal Government's National Redress Scheme was developed in response to the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. The Scheme commenced on 1 July 2018 and will run for 10 years. It is designed especially for those survivors who do not wish to approach the institution where they were abused to apply for redress. It provides three elements for these people –

- Monetary payment of up to \$150,000;
- Access to counselling and psychological care; and
- A direct personal response from the institution(s) responsible for the abuse for any applicants who want it.

It is crucial to stress that redress is not compensation, but rather addresses the harm and hurt experienced by survivors of institutional child sexual abuse. It provides acknowledgement and support to help them move forward in a way that is right for them. It is based on the belief that institutions must take practical responsibility for the sexual abuse of children in their care

The Scheme is limited to child sexual abuse prior to 30 June 2018. This limitation means that our Diocese will continue to operate its own *Towards Restoration - Pastoral Care and Assistance Scheme*, through which we will continue to receive applications for settlements related to abuse by church workers in the Diocese.

I would like to publicly acknowledge the courage of many survivors who have come forward to the Diocese to hold us to account for our past failures to protect them and other children. I would also ask that we all continue to pray for those who have suffered this evil at the hands of those who were meant to be representing God's love and our care.

If you, or anyone you know, has experienced any type of abuse perpetrated by a church worker, I would encourage you to call our Safe Ministry Helpline 1800 070 5111 to discuss options for support which now include an application to the National Redress Scheme for those who have experienced child sexual abuse,

Prayerfully yours

Aileen Stewart

11 September 2018