

Acknowledgement and recognition of victims/survivors

"If one member suffers, all suffer together with it" (1 Cor 12:26)

These words of Saint Paul forcefully echo in my heart as I acknowledge once more the suffering endured by many minors due to sexual abuse, the abuse of power and the abuse of conscience perpetrated by a significant number of clerics and consecrated persons. Crimes that inflict deep wounds of pain and powerlessness, primarily among the victims, but also in their family members and in the larger community of believers and nonbelievers alike. Looking back to the past, no effort to beg pardon and to seek to repair the harm done will ever be sufficient. Looking ahead to the future, no effort must be spared to create a culture able to prevent such situations from happening, but also to prevent the possibility of their being covered and perpetuated. The pain of the victims and their families is also our pain, and so it is urgent that we once more reaffirm our commitment to ensure the protection of minors and of vulnerable adults.

[Letter of his Holiness Pope Francis to the People of God, Liberia Editrice Vaticana, Vatican City, 20 August 2018](#)

On Monday 22 October 2018, The Prime Minister of Australia delivered the **[National Apology to Victims and Survivors of Institutional Child Sexual Abuse](#)** at Parliament House in Canberra. The Catholic Church in our country stands in solidarity in giving expression to words of acknowledgement, sorrow and apology to all victims and their loved ones.

The Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne acknowledges and accepts the pain and harm caused to the victims and survivors of abuse in the Catholic Church. We pay our respects to all victims and survivors who have come forward, so that we may learn to better protect children, young people and vulnerable persons. We also honour those who are prevented from coming forward by the enormity of the trauma they suffered as children, and those whose voices can longer be heard.

We dedicate our ongoing efforts to all the victims and survivors of sexual, physical, emotional and spiritual abuse and neglect.

Archbishop Peter A. Comensoli communicates his strong commitment to exercising his responsibilities with regard to child safety in his letter and affirms these efforts in relation to Jesus Christ.

This is the way of Jesus Christ. It must be my way. And I invite you to join with me in making it our common Gospel way.

[Letter to the Faithful from Archbishop Peter A Comsenoli, Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne, 21 August 2018](#)