

Catholic Leadership Must Apologise

We, the undersigned, members of Women's Wisdom in the Church (WWITCH), submit our response to the Synodal call of the Church in relation to the Australian Catholic Church's role in, and response to, the Royal Commission into Institutional Sexual Abuse.

We call for a complete apology from the Australian Catholic Bishops' Conference and the National Council for Catholic Religious Australia wherein they take full responsibility for past acts of systematic concealment of the crimes and sins of the sexual abuse of children and other vulnerable individuals.

This apology must build upon the Commitment Statement made to the Royal Commission in September 2013 and must be in the active not passive voice. The whole Australian Catholic Church is sorry that these things happened; however, only a full disclosure with a clear intention to repent can pave the way to healing and lead to renewal.

We call also for the immediate release of the final Statement of the Truth, Justice and Healing Council to all Australian Catholics.

Finally the initiatives, taken and to be taken, by the Bishops' Conference, in response to the sexual abuse crisis, must be governed by completely *independent* structures and protocols. The current practices expressed in the Catholic Professional Standards Ltd and the Implementation Advisory Group remain subject to final decision-making by the bishops which must be seen as a conflict of interest.

We are the Domestic Church, cradle Catholics, educated women, mothers and teachers of the current and future generations, responsible for their education in the faith. We are committed to the church and passionate that it reflects its gospel integrity.

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July 22, 2018. The feast of Mary Magdalene, the Apostle to the Apostles.