

# Media Release



## Marist Brothers' Province of Australia

### Statement from the Provincial of the Marist Brothers Australia

15 December 2017

"The Marist Brothers' Province of Australia welcomes the Final Report of the Royal Commission.

"The lasting legacy of the Commission will be the voice that it successfully gave the survivors of these terrible crimes.

"The Commissioners and their staff have been immersed in this for five years, with 8,000 private sessions, 57 public hearings and innumerable phone calls, messages and interviews.

"They are to be congratulated on their personal commitment to this crucial task and the compassion they have shown.

"We have cooperated fully in the important work of the Commission, which has found that the criminal abuse of children is not limited to one institution alone – tragically it has featured in many institutions in this country.

"The Marist Brothers openly acknowledged the terrible legacy of offending by our own brothers as well as lay people against children in our care.

"For that we are unreserved in our apology.

"Now that the Commissioners have concluded their intense labour, it is the responsibility of Institutions, Governments and the community to give effect to the Commission's recommendations and lessons learned.

"Certainly Marist Brothers Australia is committed to this, and in fact has been implementing change and improvement throughout the course of the Commission. However, we will be closely scrutinising the Commission's recommendations and based on them, will inevitably make further changes and reforms.

"We look forward to a genuinely national redress scheme, and hope for harmonisation of child protection laws across the nation. These are urgent matters. If they do not occur then the country has missed a golden opportunity to bring about essential change. All levels of Government and all Institutions need to work together for the protection of our greatest national asset – our children.

"The danger of course is complacency, and gradually allowing the lessons of the past and the Royal Commission to be forgotten.

“We know that young people are still vulnerable and are still being abused in Australia. Our Institutions might be safer now, but there is still work to be done across society. Vigilance is required, as is total commitment by everyone: individuals, families, communities, institutions, Governments and non-government agencies.

“We can only hope that this Royal Commission will be remembered for bringing about effective change, making Australia a safer place for children.

**Brother Peter Carroll fms, Provincial, Marist Brothers Australia**

**Ends**

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