



CATHOLIC ARCHDIOCESE
OF MELBOURNE

media release

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For immediate release

ARCHBISHOP HART WELCOMES VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO INQUIRY REPORT

The Catholic Archbishop of Melbourne, Denis Hart, today welcomed the release of the Victorian Government's Response to the Victorian Parliamentary Inquiry report into the Handling of Child Sexual Abuse.

"We welcome the Government's Response, and believe that the three themes of prevention, response and access to justice are important priorities in preventing further abuse and supporting victims. We are pleased that the Government has supported the recommendations made by the Inquiry, which we supported when its Report was issued last November.

"The minimum child safe standards, the reportable conduct scheme and the expansion of the Working with Children Check requirements are valuable reforms and we look forward to their implementation.

"We also support the legislative amendments that have created a new offence of grooming and those that are underway to require that allegations of child abuse be reported and to create a new offence of child endangerment."

Archbishop Hart said that the Inquiry has been an important opportunity for victims to be heard and for the Church to face the truth about the terrible abuse that occurred.

"I believe that this Inquiry, and the Government's response to it, will assist the healing of those who have been abused and the prevention of abuse in the future. We are committed to continuing our support for victims of abuse.

"As recognised by the Victorian Government, the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse is considering how best to provide access to justice and redress at a national level. We agree with the Victorian Government that some reforms relating to the protection of children may be more effective when there is national consistency. As such we are continuing to cooperate fully with the important work of the Royal Commission," Archbishop Hart said.

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