

# MEDIA RELEASE

## Ballarat Royal Commission public hearing



5 May 2015

The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse has released details of its public hearing into Catholic Church authorities in Ballarat including hearing evidence from Catholic clergy convicted of child sexual offences.

The hearing will be held from Tuesday 19 May 2015 and is expected to last up to three weeks. A second hearing, also into abuse in Ballarat, will be held later in the year.

The hearing will look at abuse by clergy and brothers from the late 1960s to the late 1980s in Catholic Church institutions including:

- St Joseph's Home, Ballarat
- St Alipius Primary School, Ballarat East
- St Alipius Parish, Ballarat East
- St Patrick's College, Ballarat
- St Patrick's Christian Brothers Boys Primary School, Ballarat.

It will hear from residents, students and others about the nature of the abuse and its impact. The Commission will also hear from local residents and others about the impact of child sexual abuse on the community of Ballarat.

Mr Francis Sullivan, CEO of the Catholic Church's Truth Justice and Healing Council, said Church authorities in Ballarat have been fully cooperating with the Commission's requests for information and documents.

"The Ballarat hearing will be extremely difficult for the survivors who will give evidence and their families, for the community and for Catholics across the region.

"The Catholic Church in Ballarat has an infamous history of child sexual abuse within some of its schools and parishes.

"Some of the most notorious church offenders committed horrendous crimes in Ballarat. They destroyed many young lives and their legacy of pain and suffering is still felt very deeply across much of the community.

"It is now up to the local Catholic Church authorities to be open and transparent about the impact of the abuse, how the Church responded then and how it is responding now," Mr Sullivan said.

.../more

This month's Ballarat hearing will be the 12th involving the Catholic Church of the 28 Royal Commission public hearings held so far.

The public hearing will be streamed live to the public via webcast on the Royal Commission's website at [www.childabuseroyalcommission.gov.au](http://www.childabuseroyalcommission.gov.au)

Anyone wishing to be part of the hearing can contact the Commission through its website at <http://www.childabuseroyalcommission.gov.au/public-hearings>

**Media contact:** Michael Salmon 0417 495 018

The Truth Justice and Healing Council is coordinating the Catholic Church's engagement with the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

For more information on the Truth Justice and Healing Council go to: [www.tjhcouncil.org.au](http://www.tjhcouncil.org.au)

For more information on the Royal Commission go to:

<http://www.childabuseroyalcommission.gov.au/>