

MEDIA RELEASE

TJHC welcomes clear instruction from Melbourne Archbishop on holding school Reconciliation in public



14 November 2016

Archbishop of Melbourne Denis Hart has written this week to all priests and Catholic School principals in the Archdioceses making it clear that the sacrament of reconciliation, when celebrated in schools, must be held in public.

In the letter Archbishop Hart says:

I am asking that you ensure the sacrament of Reconciliation in schools is celebrated in a church in an open setting in full view of all participants, who are supervised by staff.

The parish Priest and the schools staff responsible for the school's students should ensure that there is direct line of sight to the individual penitent.

Francis Sullivan, CEO of the Catholic Church's Truth Justice and Healing Council, said the open letter from Archbishop Hart is a strong and clear reminder of the importance of putting the safety of children first.

"The Archbishop's letter is yet another clear sign of the willingness for church leaders to get on the front foot to ensure all priests and others in their diocese know the importance of adhering to child safety policies and procedures," Mr Sullivan said.

"This timely reminder to principals and priests around school Reconciliation demonstrates the importance religious leaders are placing on continually monitoring and upgrading child protection across all church activities."

Read Archbishop Hart's letter [here](#)

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For more information on the Truth Justice and Healing Council go to: www.tjhcouncil.org.au

For more information on the Royal Commission go to:
<http://www.childabuseroyalcommission.gov.au/Pages/default.aspx>