

MEDIA RELEASE



TJHC addresses CRA National Assembly and the Church post Royal Commission

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The CEO of the Catholic Church's Truth Justice and Healing Council, Mr Francis Sullivan, addressed Catholic Religious Australia's (CRA) annual National Assembly this week taking about the future of the Church in Australia as the Royal Commission nears the end of its term.

Speaking with the leaders of the more than 180 congregations and religious institutes in Melbourne Mr Sullivan said the Church in Australia now faces the challenge of a post Royal Commission agenda.

"In December this year the Commission will deliver its final report to government," he said.

"In it the Commission will make a range of recommendations as to how institutions across Australia should respond to allegations of child sexual abuse and how these same institutions should operate to ensure children are safe.

"We can be very confident that a substantial part of this report will focus on the Catholic Church given that more than a third of all case studies and private sessions have involved the church in one way or another.

"If the Church does not respond to these recommendations fully and in a reasonable time frame then we will continue to attract the same criticism of arrogance and hubris as we have for many years," Mr Sullivan said

Mr Sullivan told the Assembly that it is vital the Church leadership establish an entity with similar independence to the Truth Justice and Healing Council to assist with the implementation of the Commission's recommendations.

"It should also have the capacity to monitor and report publically on where the Church is up to in implementing the reforms.

"The Royal Commission has been a watershed moment in the history of the Catholic Church in Australia.

"If we do not take seriously its recommendations and work hard to implement them then it will be yet another nail in the coffin of Catholicism in Australia," Mr Sullivan said.

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