

MEDIA RELEASE

TJHC addresses Canberra Catholics



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In his final public appearance as CEO of the Truth Justice and Healing Council Francis Sullivan called on the Catholic community to support the Church leadership in its efforts to address the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

Speaking at a public forum in Canberra on Thursday evening, Mr Sullivan said many of the Royal Commission's recommendations relate to the future policies and administration of all institutions and it called on Church leaders to instigate a major review of diocesan structures and governance.

"Governance must reflect the identity, ethos and purpose of what it is to be Church, or things can and did go very badly wrong," he said.

"The Church must not fall into the trap of maintaining a rigid, defensive focus where its mission, as articulated by the Gospel, is undermined by expediency and self-preservation.

"The leadership of an organization, including the Catholic Church, shapes the assumptions, values, beliefs and norms of its culture. This in turn influences how individuals behave, particularly with vulnerable people.

"Most, if not all Church leaders, are now prepared to call the abuse crisis for what it is.

"But we will only know if anything has really been learnt when we see how the Church leadership responds to the Royal Commission's recommendations over the next couple of years.

"A well-resourced body, charged with an independent brief, must oversee the Church's implementation of the Royal Commission's recommendations, he said.

Read the speech [here](#).

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