

MEDIA RELEASE

Royal Commission announces details of Towards Healing hearings in December



22 November 2013

The Royal Commission has announced details of its public hearing into the Catholic Church's child sexual abuse reparation scheme, *Towards Healing*.

The public hearings will start on 9 December in Sydney and will be the first of a number of public hearings to examine the application of *Towards Healing* in responding to victims and allegations of child sexual abuse against personnel of the Catholic Church.

The December public hearing into *Towards Healing* will focus on the experiences of four Queensland residents who participated in the process.

The accused at the time of the abuse were priests and brothers of the Archdiocese of Brisbane, Diocese of Lismore and the Marist Brothers.

Mr Sullivan said the Catholic Church, through the Truth Justice and Healing Council would fully cooperate with the Royal Commission.

"There have been many heinous, despicable crimes committed by people in the Church," Mr Sullivan said.

"As the community of believers who make up the Church, we were not responsible for the crimes and cover ups of the past, but we are now responsible for how we react to them.

"The testimony of victims will tear at the hearts of both Catholics and non-Catholics alike.

"We must all use the opportunity of the Royal Commission to examine our consciences, to take responsibility, to do better, to reform, to hear and heed the victims and address a scandal that has shadowed the Church and driven so many people from it for so long."

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

Read Royal Commission media statement here: <http://www.childabuseroyalcommission.gov.au/royal-commission-to-hold-public-hearing-into-towards-healing-starting-9-december/>

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

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