

MEDIA RELEASE

Royal Commission hearings into Catholic Church's Towards Healing process start on Monday



7 December 2013

The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse will begin hearings into the Catholic Church's victim's reparation and pastoral response scheme, *Towards Healing*, from next Monday (December 9, 2013).

The public hearing will focus on the experiences of four Queensland residents who were abused by priests in the Archdiocese of Brisbane and the Diocese of Lismore and by Marist Brothers in two Queensland schools.

The abuse took place in the late 1960s, 1970s and early 1980s.

CEO of the Catholic Church's Truth Justice and Healing Council, Francis Sullivan, said the start of the hearings would be a difficult day for both victims and the Catholic community.

"These are important days of reckoning for the Church. Our shame needs to be transformative for the good of victims and the integrity of Catholics," Mr Sullivan said.

"Over the coming two weeks the Church's *Towards Healing* process and the way it has been administered will come under forensic scrutiny.

"The stories of abuse within the Church will be told and the way in which victims were treated will be revealed.

"These stories must be heard by the Catholic Church if we are going to put in place consistent, effective ways of helping victims deal with the trauma of child sexual abuse."

Francis Sullivan is available for comment ahead of the start of the Commission hearings

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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

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

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