



**MEDIA RELEASE – For Immediate Release – Tuesday 02 September 2014**

## **CATHOLIC ARCHBISHOP WELCOMES EXTENSION TO ROYAL COMMISSION'S INVALUABLE WORK**

On hearing the news that the Federal Government has agreed to provide additional funding and to extend the reporting time for the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, the Most Reverend Timothy Costelloe, Catholic Archbishop of Perth, said:

“I welcome the decision taken by the Coalition to extend the reporting date of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse to December 15, 2017.

“So many courageous women and men have begun to find a voice through the invaluable work of the Commission and we owe them much admiration and gratitude. I am aware, however, that there are still many other stories which as yet are unheard and will need to be told.

“As I have done before, I urge anyone wishing to make a complaint or allegation of child sexual abuse against a Catholic priest, religious or lay worker, to take the matter directly to the police who are in the best position to investigate fully and objectively any allegations of criminal behaviour.

“The Catholic Church’s Professional Standards Office here in Western Australia will also assist anyone to contact the appropriate police department should they need or require such assistance. The Director of the Professional Standards Office can be contacted on 1800 072 390 or 08 9422 7904.

“Child sexual abuse is a serious crime and a gross betrayal of trust which goes against everything the Catholic Church stands for. I wish to repeat again that the Archdiocese of Perth remains committed to confronting with openness and honesty the failures of the past. We will seek to provide whatever assistance, healing and hope we can to those who have suffered so badly because of the actions of some priests, religious and lay Church workers and to ensure that no-one need suffer again.

“I sincerely hope that this timely extension will enable the Royal Commission to complete as comprehensive an enquiry as possible into the scourge of abuse that has destroyed the lives of so many people.

“We may not be able to change the past, but we must all continue to make every effort possible to change the future.”

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