

MEDIA RELEASE

TJHC meets with Parishes in Sydney's north and south



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Francis Sullivan, CEO of the Truth Justice and Healing Council this week visited two parishes in Sydney to talk about the Royal Commission and the Catholic Church's reform agenda.

At North Sydney's Our Lady of the Way Parish on Monday night more than 80 locals asked questions across many issues including Rome's position on the release of some documents to the Royal Commission.

Mr Sullivan told the group the issue with Vatican documents is still 'a work in progress'.

"I understand how the delay in Rome supplying some documents, despite more than 5,000 pages having already been delivered and agreement that more would be available, can easily be seen as the Church hiding behind protocol.

"While most of the material requested by the Commission is copies of documents still here in Australia, I'm hopeful the Commission will ultimately be satisfied with what will be produced.

"The more the Church can demonstrate it is open, transparent and not withholding any information, the better it will be for the Catholic community and the credibility of the Church."

In Sutherland, in Sydney's south, on Tuesday night a smaller group of locals in St Patrick's church heard an overview of the Church's development of new policies to protect young people in the future and to help it respond appropriately and justly to survivors.

Speaking after the meeting Mr Sullivan said that while it was a smaller group it was no less intense and the opinions and issues discussed were just as strongly held and felt.

"Among this small group, which was pretty forthright, it was very clear the Church, both its leadership and the lay people in senior positions, including myself, have a lot more work to do to help rebuild credibility and trust.

"More than at any other parish visits I've made over the past two years has the demand for action rather than words ever been stronger."

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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/>