



BISHOPS SET THE RECORD STRAIGHT ON ROYAL COMMISSION

The New Zealand Catholic Bishops are seeking to set the record straight in response to recent reporting that the Church is backing away from actively seeking inclusion in the Government's Inquiry.

The Bishops and representation from Catholic Religious orders wrote to Prime Minister Ardern, Minister Martin, and Sir Anand Satyanand in March this year. That letter explicitly sought the broadening of the draft Terms of Reference to include Church institutions and was made publicly available and reported in the media.

A further submission was then made as part of the formal consultation undertaken by the Commission. The Catholic submission advocated for the principles of equity of access and justice and argued for the terms of reference to be broadened in order to be "victim and survivor-focused" and "ensure lessons are learned for the future". The submission said it would be wrong if some were excluded from the process simply because their path of referral to an institution was different from someone else's.

The bishops have said that a response with victims of abuse by priests and religious is not however dependent upon the Commission and so where there are people whose circumstances place them outside of the final terms of reference, there will be a pastoral response.

Listening to individuals who have been harmed is critical in ensuring the Church's response will be thorough, effective and compassionate, and forms part of our experience for developing safeguarding for today and into the future.

ENDS

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Ko te Huinga Pihopa o te Hāhi Katorika o Aotearoa (NZCBC) te kāhui whakahaere o ngā mahi whakapono a-motu me ngā rōpū minita o te Hāhi Katorika. Otirā ngā rōpū mātauranga, tika me te pono, kaitohutohu Māori, whakapaoho whakawhiti whakaaro me te toro atu ki te iwi nui tonu, ritenga o te Hāhi, whakawhanaungatanga o ngā Hāhi, matatika koiora, whakawhanaungatanga o ngā whakapono, mahi minita ki ngā whareherehere me ngā hohiperā, oti atu.

The New Zealand Catholic Bishops Conference (NZCBC) is the assembly of the Catholic Bishops of New Zealand coordinating national activities and ministries of the Catholic Church. These include education social justice, Māori advisory, communications and engagement with the public, liturgy, ecumenism, bioethics, interfaith relations, pastoral work in prisons and hospitals, and more.