



ANGLICAN DIOCESE  
OF TASMANIA

THE RIGHT REVEREND  
DR RICHARD CONDIE  
BISHOP OF TASMANIA

14 February, 2017

My Dear Brothers and Sisters,

On Monday the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse released their report of Case Study 36 – *The response of the Church of England Boy's Society and the Anglican Dioceses of Tasmania, Adelaide, Brisbane and Sydney to allegations of child sexual abuse.*

The Report details the findings of the Royal Commission on the activities of CEBS in Tasmania and other places. It reminds us once again of the terrible sin of sexual abuse, and the ongoing damage it causes in people's lives. I am aware that many in this Diocese and beyond have been, and continue to be, affected by it. The survivors continue to suffer a great deal and need to be regularly in our prayers for healing and wholeness. The insidious nature of the abuse also means that the trauma is felt by many others related directly and indirectly to it.

The Royal Commission's Report raised some serious failures of the Diocese of Tasmania in handling these matters in the past. It is critical of the way in which the former Bishop of Tasmania, The Right Revd Philip Newell AO acted in response to complaints of sexual abuse in the 1980's and 1990's. In light of this, I have initiated a process of Church discipline under our Ministry and Tribunal Ordinance in relation to Bishop Newell.

Bishop Newell (who resigned his Licence early last year) had the respect of many in the Diocese during his time in office. However, given the serious nature of the findings in the Royal Commission report I have felt compelled to act in the matter.

The discipline process involves an investigative period, where evidence will be examined and Bishop Newell will have an opportunity to put his defence. If the formal investigation recommends that charges be laid, the Church's disciplinary tribunal will be convened to hear the matter and, if the charges are made out, to make recommendations to me regarding actions I could take.

Many changes have taken place in our processes with regard to these matters in recent years. I want to assure you that our processes for responding to and caring for survivors have been improved. Our screening, selection and training of clergy and church workers for

Safe Church Communities are well developed. We continue to invite anyone with information about past or present misconduct of a church worker to contact our Director of Professional Standards (tel: 1800 017 286) or the Tasmania Police.

Please take some time to pray for survivors of sexual abuse, and especially for those for whom the release of this report is especially difficult. Please take time to join me in prayers of corporate repentance for our sins of the past. Please continue to pray for the Royal Commission as it goes about its work. Please pray for Bishop Newell and his family at this difficult time. Please pray for justice to be done, and wisdom and grace for all involved. Here is a prayer for the Royal Commission developed by the Centre for Public Christianity. You may wish to use it on Sunday.

*Almighty God,  
Lord of truth and grace  
hear our prayers for the Royal Commission into  
Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.*

*Grant the Commissioners wisdom and strength,  
the patience to weigh testimony,  
insight to pose questions,  
and success in all their deliberations  
for the health of our nation.*

*Above all, most merciful Father.  
grant to the victims of abuse  
the courage to tell their stories,  
strength to endure pain,  
and healing for their wounds.  
In their sorrow, give them your peace.*

*And refine your people, Sovereign Lord  
by the light of your truth expose in full  
the darkness in our institutions.  
Inspire remorse and establish justice.  
Forgive us.  
By your Spirit renew us,  
for the good of all,  
and the glory of your name;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord,  
Amen.*

Warm wishes in Christ



The Right Reverend Dr Richard Condie  
Bishop of Tasmania