

Statement from the Redemptorist communities of Australia, New Zealand and Samoa

Children are innocent and precious, and the fact that there have been instances of criminal sexual abuse of children by some members of our religious Congregation is a tragedy and a scandal.

To the victims of abuse we say:

You have been personally dishonoured, manipulated, abused and broken. Our communities acknowledge that there is no wound so severe as the abuse of your childhood, no sorrow like your sorrow into adult years, and no horror like the horror your families have known. We publicly recognise yours and your family's suffering. We deeply regret and as one apologise for the hurt heaped upon you all these years.

At the same time, we admire your courage in coming forward and are committed to working with you in the pursuit of justice and healing for yourselves and all children.

To fellow citizens - Australians, New Zealanders and Samoans we say:

In failing to stop the abuse of children that stemmed from our ranks we have let our countries down. We are sorry. We want to join you in restoring hope for a better world.

To fellow Christians we say:

We repent of a shocking exploitation of trust, and as a religious Congregation acknowledge our responsibility. Committed to the example of Jesus, we wish to restore all things in Christ by acknowledging failure and seeking healing of those who are vulnerable and who have been abused. As a religious Congregation we are firmly committed to proactive protocols for safe-guarding children in cooperation with the wider Church and each particular (arch)diocese in which we work, and also in cooperation with the civil authorities, federal and state.

To Professional Standards – Catholic Church in Australia we say:

As a religious Congregation we are firmly committed to proactive protocols for safe-guarding of children.

We encourage victims of child sexual abuse to take the matter to the police. If you feel that it would help you to have some extra support, you may wish to contact the Royal Commission Support Line on 1800 099 340. Assistance is also available through Relationships Australia on 1800 052 674.

Alternatively

- you can contact the Catholic Church's "Towards Healing" Office in your state: 1300 369 977 (NSW/ACT); 0418 736 890 (NT); 1800 337 928 (Qld); 1800 139 020 (SA); 1800 356 613 (Tas); 1800 816 030 (Vic); 1800 072 390 (WA).
- you can go to the National Committee for Professional Standards – Catholic Church in Australia
Website: <https://www.catholic.org.au/organisations-in-formal-liaison-with-the-acbc/national-committee-for-professional-standards>
- You can go to the Truth Justice and Healing Council of the Catholic Church
Website: <http://www.tjhcouncil.org.au/>

- The Redemptorist communities of Australia, New Zealand and Samoa