



STATEMENT 22 October 2018

Statement from the Catholic Diocese of Broken Bay on the National Apology from the Prime Minister of Australia

Today's National Apology by Prime Minister, the Hon Scott Morrison MP, to the victims and survivors of institutional child sexual abuse, and to their families and loved ones, has recognised the many individual voices of pain shared with the recent Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, and the countless unheard voices, as a trauma of national scope. It has acknowledged our failure to protect children, a failure that has made our society and our institutions less than what they need to be – places of safety, encouragement and openness.

The Apology, arising from the depths of such damaging experiences, has honoured voices of pain with national acknowledgement. Today, we especially remember those who are no longer with us but whose courage broke the silence around sexual abuse, and those who have dedicated their lives to support and assist others who have struggled for recognition and justice over many decades. We too must now model their courage and be voices of resolve for change.

The Catholic Diocese of Broken Bay joins the Prime Minister in its own apology to those who have been hurt by the crimes of members of the Church, and by attitudes and structures that have further damaged them. It restates its commitment to learn from the stories of pain, to renew its commitment to the life of the Gospel, and to the safeguarding of all, especially of children and vulnerable adults.

May we not forget the memories of pain that so many bear so that those voices always impel us to the pathway of conversion and change. May lone voices now find themselves part of a national chorus to protect the rights of our children and the future of our society.

For further information regarding **Safeguarding in the Catholic Diocese of Broken Bay** please visit: <https://www.bbcatholic.org.au/our-faith/safeguarding>

For anyone who has suffered abuse and is seeking counselling, support or advice, please contact:

Lifeline - 24-hour crisis support on 13 11 14

Relationships Australia NSW - family, relationship and specialised counselling on 1800 052 674 or 1300 364 277

Knowmore – independent service providing legal advice and information on options about compensation, redress and other legal issues relating to institutional child sexual abuse 1800 605 762

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