



# AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC BISHOPS CONFERENCE

## STATEMENT FROM ACBC PRESIDENT ARCHBISHOP MARK COLERIDGE

The Catholic Bishops of Australia welcome the Letter to the People of God that Pope Francis has written regarding sexual abuse in the Church. We share the Holy Father's determination to protect young people and vulnerable adults.

What Church leaders in Australia have said in the past is consistent with what the Pope has written now: "It is essential that we, as a Church, be able to acknowledge and condemn, with sorrow and shame, the atrocities perpetrated by consecrated persons, clerics, and all those entrusted with the mission of watching over and caring for those most vulnerable. Let us beg forgiveness for our own sins and the sins of others."

These are important words from Pope Francis, but words are not enough. Now is the time for action on many levels.

The Royal Commission has done much good for this country, especially in creating a safe place for survivors to be heard and believed. We again thank the survivors who have so courageously shared their stories. Next week, the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference and Catholic Religious Australia will publish our response to the Royal Commission's final report.

*August 21, 2018*