



## **MESSAGE FROM ARCHBISHOP MARK COLERIDGE**

### **RE: ROYAL COMMISSION'S FINAL HEARINGS INTO THE CATHOLIC CHURCH**

Dear sisters and brothers,

We have come to the end of the first week of the Royal Commission's final hearing into the Catholic Church. It was always going to be difficult, but it turned out to be more difficult than anyone expected. That was largely because of the truly shocking data presented on the first day. I knew what was coming but still found it shocking as I sat in the hearing room listening to the statistics presented. Those who had little or no sense of what was coming – and that may include many of you – must have been shaken by what they heard or read.

This gruelling week makes the twofold task before us clearer than ever: first, to strengthen and extend our efforts to bring justice and healing to those who have been abused and, second, to do everything possible to ensure that in the future the Church is a truly safe place for all. That will involve many things, but at the heart of them all there must be a change of culture. The next two weeks of the final hearing will show more of what that will mean.

Through that time let's pray for each other. May the peace of Christ be with you all.

+Mark Coleridge