



# ANGLICAN MEDIA TASMANIA

Media Officer: Rev. Stephen Carnaby

Tel: 0417 343710

Email: [stephen@baywest.org.au](mailto:stephen@baywest.org.au)

PO Box 405, Sandy Bay, 7006

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**MEDIA RELEASE:**

## Church Responds to Ex-Priest Guilty Plea

The Anglican Church has responded to the guilty plea yesterday of Mr Louis Daniels on a number of charges relating to abuse of minors.

Mr Daniels was formerly an Anglican Priest in Tasmania, who left the ministry 10 years ago. He was named in the Church's independent inquiry into sexual abuse, *Not the Way of Christ*, in 1998, and later jailed for an offence against one person.

The Bishop of Tasmania, The Right Reverend John Harrower, has spoken today of his sadness concerning Mr Daniels' actions. He said, "I want to again apologise to any people who may have been abused by past Tasmanian Church leaders. We are greatly saddened by the effects of this on people's lives."

Bishop Harrower also urged any other people who may have been abused to come forward to the Police. "We believe that the Police have both the powers and the will to investigate any complaints, and we will assist potential victims through that process as far as we are able."

Bishop Harrower said that the Anglican Church in Tasmania has been working hard to repair the damage done in the past by a small minority of priests and to create a culture in which such abuses will not reoccur. He said, "We have been working for a number of years to implement our Safe Ministry program, which checks and accredits all paid church leaders, and any volunteers working with children and young people, and trains them to be aware of abuse issues."

"We have developed processes for receiving and investigating complaints, and ensuring appropriate penalties are delivered. We offer counselling, as well as financial assistance through our Pastoral Support and Assistance Program."

Bishop Harrower said, "We are not claiming that any of this can make up for the abuses suffered by victims – but it can help them now, and also let them know that we will continue to be vigilant to ensure such abuses do not happen again."

The Bishop repeated his statement of 26 July 2000, his first full day as Bishop of Tasmania.

*I am deeply sorry for what took place. I make an unreserved apology to those who were abused by clergy or other officers of the Anglican Church in Tasmania. My heart goes out to those of you who were abused. Those abuses should never have happened and I pledge myself, as Bishop, to do all I can to ensure that such abuses do not happen again.*

**Contact:**

Media Officer - Rev. Stephen Carnaby 0417 343 710