

THE PASTORAL RESPONSE OFFICE

Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne

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MEMO

To: Archbishop George Pell: Vicar General, Monsignor Denis Hart

cc Bishop Peter Connors, Fr Mark Coleridge, Ms Maria Kirkwood, Mr Michael Wood

From: Helen Last, Co-ordinator, Pastoral Response Office

25 October 1996

Re: Facing The Issues Together Program: Forum 19th October 1996

Key comments to the Pastoral Response Office from victims, therapists, parishioners and clergy:

“impressed by the positive response from the Archbishop”

“his demonstrated concern for the victims”

“his statement that a new structure aimed at assisting victims through processes of justice and healing will be applied”

“the willingness to believe and accept the experiences of victims of abuse by the clergy”

“ that victims will be compensated not through an adversarial system but through mediation”

“a message of hope to dispel the cynicism and disappointments of the majority of victims in their search for justice and spiritual peace”

“an encouragement to return to the Church for alienated victim/survivors”

“recognition of the difficulties the Church faces in addressing the issue of sexual abuse ”

“clearer understanding of the hierarchical structure within the Church and the various areas of responsibility in regard to religious orders and other dioceses”

“streamlining of the compensation process”

“the victims’ sense of abandonment by the Church was addressed”

“appreciation of the Archbishop’s apology”

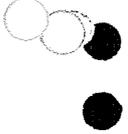
“congratulations on a process which touched my head, heart and spirit”

“the Archbishop has shown a courage which has asked me to reassess my relationship with the Church”

“the Forum was an expression of pain but also of hope and the possibility of a way forward”

“a sign of hope”

“maybe things can change . . . someone has stood and listened”




Helen Last
Co-ordinator

