



Speaking the truth in love

Eph 4:15

The Hon. Justice Peter McClellan AM
 Chair
 Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse
 GPO Box 5283
 SYDNEY NSW 2001

Dear Justice McClellan

The Royal Commission has drawn my attention to paragraph 101 of the statement of Mrs Christine Foster. My purpose in writing this letter is to state very clearly that I sincerely regret that my comment on 16 July 2008 was taken as a criticism of victims of clergy sexual abuse and that I unreservedly apologize for any offence caused.

I deplore child sexual abuse, especially at the hands of clergy or church workers, and I strongly support the position that the Church must do more to bring justice, reconciliation and healing to the victims of abuse, as well as taking greater steps to prevent abuse from happening in the future.

I understand how some people interpreted my comments in 2008. At the press conference and in subsequent statements I explained that my remarks were aimed at some journalists and their hostile approach to World Youth Day, not at victims of child abuse or their families. Survivors and their families are of course entitled to speak about their suffering and should always have our support and respect.

In 2008 I offered my apologies to any abuse victims who thought I had criticised them, and especially to the Foster family. I wish to extend that apology once again at this time.

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Most Reverend Anthony Fisher OP, DD BA LIB BTheol DPhil
 Bishop of Parramatta

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The Royal Commission has enabled me and other Church leaders to hear and learn more about the experience of those affected by child sexual abuse. I am eager to work with all in the Australian Church to be ensure that our responses regarding complaints of this kind are unfailingly compassionate.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in green ink that reads "+ Anthony Fisher OP". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small cross at the beginning.

Most Reverend Anthony Fisher OP, DD BA LIB BTheol DPhil
Bishop of Parramatta
