

Witness Statement

Name	Rev Dr Adrian Farrelly
Address	172 Charlotte Street, Brisbane, Queensland
Occupation	Chancellor of the Catholic Archdiocese of Brisbane and Judicial Vicar of the Regional Tribunal of Brisbane
Date	15 November 2013

- 1 This statement, made by me, accurately sets out the evidence that I am prepared to give to the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. The statement is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and recollection.
- 2 Exhibited to me at the time of making this statement is a folder of documents marked Exhibit "AGF1". Unless stated otherwise, a reference in this statement to a tab number is a reference to a corresponding tab number in Exhibit AGF1.
- 3 I provide this statement in connection with my involvement in the handling of a complaint by Joan Isaacs (**Mrs Isaacs**).
- 4 This statement has been prepared in response to and compliance with a Summons dated 15 November 2013. It is produced to the Royal Commission on the basis that it will be tendered and received in evidence by the Royal Commission pursuant to that Summons and on the basis that the statement will be treated as evidence pursuant to section 6DD of the *Royal Commissions Act 1902* (Cth).
- 5 I have read a statement dated 23 October 2013 from Mrs Joan Katherine Isaacs (**Mrs Isaacs' Statement**).

Background

- 6 My name is Rev Dr Adrian Gerard Farrelly. I am the Chancellor of the Catholic Archdiocese of Brisbane and Judicial Vicar of the Regional Tribunal of Brisbane.
- 7 I was ordained a priest on 8 August 1973 and have been ordained 40 years.
- 8 After I was ordained I fulfilled temporary placements working in the parishes at Rosalie, Graceville and Caboolture. My first full time appointment was assistant priest at Ekibin from 1974 to 1976. I was then assistant priest at Gayndah from 1977 to 1979, when I was appointed parish priest there, an appointment I held until 1983.

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- 9 From August 1983 until May 1987, I studied in Ottawa, Canada for a doctorate in canon law.
- 10 From May 1987 until April 1998, I worked full time in the Regional Tribunal in Brisbane. I was appointed Judicial Vicar for the Regional Tribunal in 1994.
- 11 In 1998 I became the Administrator of the parish of St Agatha in Clayfield, whilst I continued to perform my role in the Regional Tribunal on a part time basis.
- 12 In 2008, I was also appointed Chancellor of the Archdiocese of Brisbane. I continue to perform my roles as the Administrator of St Agatha's and Judicial Vicar.
- 13 From 1997 to 2000 I sat as a member of the Professional Standards Resource Group Queensland.
- 14 I first became aware of the *Towards Healing* protocol at around the time that it was drawn up in 1996. I obtained a copy of the protocol, read it and discussed its content with other Church members. From time to time I became generally aware of various amendments and/or revisions being made to the *Towards Healing* protocol.

Joan Isaacs

- 15 On 20 April 1999, I attended the facilitation meeting for Mrs Isaacs' *Towards Healing* complaint on behalf of the Archdiocese of Brisbane, acting as the Church Authority. This was the first *Towards Healing* facilitation meeting which I had attended. I have a recollection that I subsequently attended a meeting with another complainant which may have been held under *Towards Healing*. Those were the only meetings of that nature that I recall attending.
- 16 I was asked to attend the facilitation with Mrs Isaacs because Bishop Gerry was unavailable as he had recently undergone surgery.
- 17 Prior to the facilitation meeting taking place, I:
- (a) read various documents relating to Mrs Isaacs as outlined in paragraph 19 below;
 - (b) had a conversation with Mr Rolls as referred to at paragraph 20 below.
- 18 I do not recall a conversation with Bishop Gerry or Dr Ken Robertson prior to the facilitation although it is possible that such conversations occurred.
- 19 Prior to the facilitation I was provided with a number of documents in relation to Mrs Isaacs. I read most, if not all, of those documents before the facilitation meeting. Those documents included:
- (a) a letter from Mrs Isaacs dated 12 February 1999 to Dr Ken Robertson, which is exhibit C to Mrs Isaacs' Statement;

- (b) a letter from Dr Ken Robertson dated 2 March 1999 to Bishop Gerry. A copy of that letter is at **Tab 1. 11**
- (c) a letter from Mrs Isaacs dated 8 March 1999 (which is exhibit D to Mrs Isaacs' Statement) to Dr Ken Robertson enclosing a number of documents including her personal statement dealing with the nature of the complaint (which is exhibit E to Mrs Isaacs' Statement);
- (d) a letter from Bishop Gerry to Mrs Isaacs dated 19 March 1999, which is exhibit F to Mrs Isaacs' Statement;
- (e) a letter dated 1 April 1999 from Dr Ken Robertson to me. A copy of that letter is at **Tab 2. 16**
- 20 Prior to the facilitation I had a discussion with Mr Rolls in relation to Mrs Isaacs' complaint. I understood Mr Rolls to be a representative of Catholic Church Insurances Limited (CCI). Although I no longer have a direct recollection of what was said during that discussion, I recognise my handwriting on a document titled, "*Don't Forget - Grade 7 Parents Drinks Night*". I wrote that note during the discussion with Mr Rolls. A copy of my hand written note is at **Tab 3.14**
- 21 In preparing this statement, I have seen a copy of a letter from Mr Rolls to Bishop Gerry dated 19 April 1999. A copy of that letter is at **Tab 4. 18**. I do not now recall whether I saw that letter before or after 20 April 1999.
- 22 With the assistance of my handwritten note, and of the contents of the letter from Mr Rolls dated 19 April 1999, my recollection is that what Mr Rolls said to me was along the following lines:
- (a) that if the issue of financial compensation was raised by Mrs Isaacs at the facilitation meeting, I should say that I did not have any personal entitlement to negotiate with Mrs Isaacs on that subject;
- (b) that I could suggest that the matter would need to be referred to the financial advisers of the Archdiocese on the question of whether repayment was required to be made as well as the appropriateness of any amount proposed;
- (c) that I could express sorrow but should not convey an admission of responsibility on behalf of the Archdiocese of Brisbane; and
- (d) that I could consider the cost of counselling for Mrs Isaacs over a number of sessions.
- 23 Prior to the facilitation meeting I prepared typed notes, which I used as an aide memoire at the meeting. A copy of my notes is at **Tab 5. 19**

Signature

Adrian Farrelly

Witness

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20 April Facilitation Meeting

24 I had not met Mrs Isaacs prior to the facilitation meeting. I did know Peter Deed, her support person and lawyer. I had met him when we were both seminarians in the seminary in which I trained to be a priest.

25 During the meeting I had the sense that Mrs Isaacs was happy that the Archdiocese of Brisbane had responded to her request and expressed sorrow. Mrs Isaacs was disappointed that the representative of the Archdiocese was me rather than a bishop. However, my recollection is that this disappointment was not because the bishop could have discussed compensation, it was just that she wanted to meet with a bishop.

26 I saw my role in the facilitation meeting as being mainly to give Mrs Isaacs what she had not received previously, that is the chance to tell her story to a representative of the Church, and recognition from someone in the Church that what had happened to her was not right. Mrs Isaacs did tell her story, and I hope and believe I did give her that recognition.

27 I now have little actual recollection of what was said at the facilitation meeting. However, very soon after it, possibly on the same day, I wrote a facilitation report (the **facilitation report**) which contains my immediate recollection at the time of what happened during the meeting. A copy of my written report is at **Tab 6. 20**

28 In the facilitation report I particularly note the following statement:

'I did not offer an apology on behalf of the Church but did express my sorrow at what had happened to her, and that the Church as a whole had not in those days listened well enough to the accounts of what people like Joan had suffered.'

29 I also note my statement in the facilitation report in response to Mrs Isaacs raising the prospect of compensation,

'I responded by saying that I was not entitled to discuss the allocation of monies entrusted to the Church but would refer the matter to the appropriate processes and advisers who needed to be involved in such decisions.'

30 Having now refreshed my memory from the facilitation report, I thought there were a number of aspects of the facilitation meeting which went well. In my view, Mrs Isaacs expressed herself very well in what must have been very difficult circumstances and I tried to convey as best I could the sorrow of the church and my personal sorrow for the harm she had experienced.

31 In paragraph 27 of Mrs Isaacs' Statement, Mrs Isaacs says that I said, "*I don't know how you survived what you survived*" or words to that effect. I do not recall using those words but I accept that is what I would have sought to convey in the circumstances. I do recall that it was clear to me

that Mrs Isaacs had been deeply affected by Francis Derriman's conduct towards her, and I recall being very moved by Mrs Isaacs' story.

- 32 In paragraph 28 of Mrs Isaacs' Statement, Mrs Isaacs says that I said, "*I am offering you an apology. I'm very sorry you've had to go through all of what you've been through*". I may well have said words to that effect. I certainly did express my own genuine sorrow at what had happened to her.
- 33 In paragraph 29 of Mrs Isaacs' Statement, Mrs Isaacs refers to me offering her the opportunity to see a counsellor and authorising 10 counselling sessions. I agree that this offer was made and I am aware that Mrs Isaacs subsequently saw Lynn O'Donoghue over a number of sessions.
- 34 In paragraph 30 of Mrs Isaacs' Statement, Mrs Isaacs says that I said I did not have authority to make an offer with regard to compensation and that after the facilitation meeting was finished, I would go directly to Bishop Gerry and report to him on everything that occurred at the meeting and that there would be negotiation put in place for compensation. I agree that I did say that.

After 20 April 1999

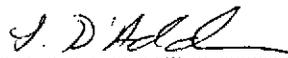
- 35 On 21 April 1999 I raised Mrs Isaacs' request for a written apology with Bishop Gerry. I said to Bishop Gerry that I would draft a letter and run it by Mr Rolls (who had mentioned the issue of an apology when he spoke to me before the facilitation meeting).
- 36 I then prepared a draft apology and sent it to Mr Rolls attached to a letter dated 21 April 1999. I have no recollection of receiving a response from Mr Rolls to that letter. A copy of that letter and the draft apology are at **Tab 7. 22**
- 37 I also had a conversation with Archbishop Bathersby in relation to the facilitation. I no longer recall any details of that conversation. However, I note that in the last paragraph of my facilitation report, I mentioned the possibility of the Archdiocese celebrating a mass for those who had been hurt in the way Mrs Isaacs had been hurt. I did raise that suggestion with Archbishop Bathersby at some point. I no longer recall when that was but it could have been immediately following the facilitation meeting. The Archbishop was not inclined to do this.
- 38 On 25 April 1999, I departed Australia for overseas. I did not return until towards the end of May 1999.
- 39 Whilst I was overseas, Mrs Isaacs sent me a letter dated 26 April 1999, a copy of which is exhibit J to Mrs Isaacs' Statement. I did not see that letter until I returned from overseas about a month later. In her letter Mrs Isaacs acknowledged that *Towards Healing* was "*a big step forward in the last couple of years*", and went on to make a number of thoughtful suggestions about the process. Among other things she said she would like to see both Bishop Gerry and Archbishop Bathersby take a more active role.

- 40 On my return from overseas, I replied to Mrs Isaacs' letter, by my letter of 25 May 1999, a copy of which is exhibit L to Mrs Isaacs' Statement. In my letter I said that I would forward copies of her letter to Archbishop Bathersby and Bishop Gerry. I assume that I did so, although I do not now have any specific recollection of this.
- 41 On a date which I do not recall, but presumably soon after 17 February 2000, I received a copy of a letter Mrs Isaacs wrote to Bishop Gerry dated 17 February 2000, a copy of which is exhibit R to Mrs Isaacs' Statement. Upon receiving that letter, I wrote to Bishop Gerry on 23 February 2000 confirming that Mrs Isaacs' request with respect to counselling costs was in line with the agreement I had reached with her at the facilitation. A copy of my letter to Bishop Gerry is at **Tab 8. 68**
- 42 On or around 3 March 2000 I was copied in on a letter from Mrs Isaacs to Bishop Gerry in relation to counselling and costs, a copy of which is exhibit T to Mrs Isaacs' Statement.
- 43 On or around 7 April 2000 I was copied in on a letter from Mrs Isaacs to Bishop Gerry in relation to counselling and costs, a copy of which is exhibit V to Mrs Isaacs' Statement.
- 44 To the best of my knowledge I had no further involvement in the handling of Mrs Isaacs' case.

Reflections

- 45 In preparing this statement, and with the benefit of hindsight, it seems to me that there are a number of respects in which those parts of the process in which I was involved could have been handled better. They include:
- (a) it is unfortunate that Mrs Isaacs may not have realised or been made aware that the negotiation of the amount of compensation would take place after the facilitation meeting rather than during it; and
- (b) it would also have been better if Bishop Gerry or Archbishop Bathersby had met Mrs Isaacs in person at some stage.

Signature		Witness	
Name	Rev Dr Adrian Farrelly	Name	STUART D'ADDONA
Date	15 November 2013	Date	15 November 2013

Signature		Witness	
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