



Submissions in Response
to Submissions of
Counsel Assisting -
Case Study 43

from

the Truth Justice and Healing Council

Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse

Case Study No.43

| Maitland-Newcastle

Contents

1	The Marist Brothers.....	3
1.1	Introduction	3
1.2	Romuald	3
1.3	Dominic.....	4
1.4	Patrick.....	4
2	Marist Brothers Hamilton.....	5
2.1	Sexual and physical abuse at Marist Brothers Hamilton	5
2.2	The death of Andrew Nash	5
2.3	Brother Wade’s knowledge about abuse by Romuald, Dominic and Patrick.....	6
2.4	Complaints by CNQ	6
3	Dominic	8
4	Patrick.....	10
5	Failure to document complaints and to ensure continuity of information	12
6	Impacts of physical and sexual abuse	13
7	Research project	14
8	Conclusion	15

1 The Marist Brothers

1.1 Introduction

- 1 These submissions are made on behalf of the Truth, Justice and Healing Council and the Marist Brothers (together, the Church Parties). The Church Parties adopt the defined terms used in the submissions of Counsel Assisting the Royal Commission (CA).
- 2 Case Study 43 focused on the response of the Marist Brothers to allegations or incidents of child sexual abuse by three men, Brothers Romuald, Patrick and Dominic. The Royal Commission heard evidence from survivors, who had suffered physical and sexual abuse by Marist Brothers, in particular Brothers Romuald, Patrick and Dominic. The Marist Brothers commend the survivors for having the courage to tell their stories.
- 3 The submissions of CA state that the central issues that ought to be considered by the Royal Commission in relation to the Marist Brothers are matters relating to the knowledge or response of Brothers Christopher Wade, Alexis Turton and Michael Hill to complaints of abuse¹.
- 4 In circumstances where Brothers Wade, Turton and Hill were and are separately represented, the Church Parties make no submissions on matters relating to them.

1.2 Romuald

- 5 Between 1952 and 1978, Romuald held a number of teaching positions at schools in New South Wales and Queensland². The complaints which have been received by the Marist Brothers with respect to Romuald show a history of abuse at a number of those schools³. A summary of that abuse is set out in section 1.3 of the submissions of CA.
- 6 Paragraphs 23 to 25 of the submissions of CA summarise evidence contained in an unsigned police statement of a man who attended Marist Brothers Maitland between 1959 and 1965. This man states that in or around 1960 he complained to Brothers Fingal and Florentine about abuse by Romuald⁴. Both Brothers Fingal and Florentine are now deceased⁵.
- 7 Paragraphs 30 to 31 of the submissions of CA summarise evidence contained in a police statement of a former student of Marist Brothers Pagewood. The man states that in or around 1967 he reported an incident of abuse by Romuald to Brother Willits, and that Romuald was removed from the school within days of the incident⁶. Brother Willits is now deceased, and for some period prior to his death, suffered from dementia⁷.
- 8 The Marist Brothers have not identified any contemporaneous records of the reports described in paragraphs 6 and 7 above⁸. Nor have the Marist Brothers identified any record of any action

¹ Submissions of CA [5].

² Carroll [139].

³ Carroll [143].

⁴ TB171 at [13].

⁵ Carroll [168].

⁶ TB202.

⁷ T18235:47-18236:5.

⁸ T18235:14-16 and T18235:35-35. See also Carroll [168].

being taken in response to such complaints⁹. In circumstances where the complainant did not give evidence, and the Marist Brothers to whom reports were alleged to have been made are deceased, the Church Parties submit that the evidence in the police statements should not be relied on by the Commission¹⁰. To the extent that CA relies on evidence that was unable to be tested, that evidence should be given appropriate weight by the Commission .

- 9 Paragraphs 32 to 38 of the submissions of CA set out the evidence relating to the abuse suffered by Michael Balk and his reporting of that abuse to Brother Willits and his father. The Marist Brothers note that as Brother Willits is deceased, he was not available to give evidence about the issues raised by Michael Balk.
- 10 In response to paragraph 42 of the submissions of CA, the Marist Brothers refer to their comments above at paragraph 8.
- 11 The Church Parties accept the submission that nothing effective was done to protect children at Marist Brothers schools from abuse by Romuald¹¹, and that no appropriate action was taken in response to any complaints made to the Marist Brothers in the 1960s¹². The Marist Brothers note the absence of any appropriate policies or procedures of the Marist Brothers at the time. As stated by Brother Carroll, *“One of the major learnings that has come out of the reviews of the Marist Brothers’ responses to child abuse has been the need to listen attentively to young people and to take action and respond to their genuine needs.”*¹³
- 12 Any complaints of the nature described in section 1.3 of the submissions of CA should have been recorded, should have led to appropriate action being taken within the school and should have been reported to the Provincial¹⁴.

1.3 Dominic

- 13 Between 1963 and 1996, Brother Dominic was a teacher at various schools, including Marist Brothers Hamilton¹⁵. The complaints received by the Marist Brothers against Brother Dominic show a history of abuse at a number of the schools where he taught¹⁶. A summary of that abuse is set out in section 1.4 of the submissions of CA.

1.4 Patrick

- 14 During his period as a Brother, Brother Patrick served and taught at many different locations, including Marist Brothers Hamilton¹⁷. The complaints received by the Marist Brothers against Brother Patrick show a history of abuse at a number of those schools¹⁸. A summary of that abuse is set out in sections 1.5 of the submissions of CA.

⁹ T18235:8-12.

¹⁰ Submissions of CA [27] and [41].

¹¹ Submissions of CA [27].

¹² Submissions of CA [43].

¹³ Carroll [173].

¹⁴ Carroll [173]; T18235:18-29.

¹⁵ Carroll [80].

¹⁶ Carroll [83].

¹⁷ Carroll [29].

¹⁸ Carroll [31].

2 Marist Brothers Hamilton

2.1 Sexual and physical abuse at Marist Brothers Hamilton

- 1 The Royal Commission heard evidence from a number of survivors about sexual and physical abuse at Marist Brothers Hamilton. That evidence is summarised in section 2.1 and throughout the submissions of CA. It is clear that those who gave evidence suffered greatly. The Marist Brothers again acknowledge that the impact of the abuse in the short and long term has been devastating for the survivors¹⁹.
- 2 The Church Parties accept the submission that the evidence supports a finding that some students were subject to frequent and sometimes brutal physical violence at the hands of certain Brothers and teachers at Marist Brothers Hamilton in the 1960s and 1970s²⁰. The evidence shows that some students were fearful and intimidated by Brothers and teachers.
- 3 The Church Parties agree that the sexual abuse by Dominic, Patrick and Romuald, as described by the survivors, was “brazen, frequent and in some cases quite blatant”²¹. The Marist Brothers reiterate their collective remorse and apology. What happened in the past should not have occurred.
- 4 The Church Parties acknowledge that physical and sexual abuse, in addition to “spiritual intimidation”, can combine to make it very difficult for survivors to come forward²². As stated by Brother Carroll, “I think it was a Church culture issue where Brothers, nuns, priests were put on pedestals. They were regarded as special and, therefore, people were less likely to speak out against them. I believe that’s very much what was part of the history of all of this”²³.
- 5 The Marist Brothers encourage any survivors who have not yet done so to contact the newly appointed Coordinator of the Healing and Support Program²⁴.

2.2 The death of Andrew Nash

- 6 The evidence relating to the death of Andrew Nash is summarised in section 2.2 of the submissions of CA. On behalf of the Marist Brothers, Brother Carroll repeats the statement he made in the public hearing regarding the death of Andrew Nash:

I acknowledge the pain carried by the Nash family for the past 40 years. I express my admiration for the way they have summoned the courage to give evidence this week. Andrew’s family has honoured his memory and expressed their enduring love and grief.

I heard what Audrey Nash and [CQT] have said, and yesterday, with the evidence of [CQS], I think we gained more information about the terrible events of 1974.

¹⁹ Carroll [25].

²⁰ Submissions of CA [87].

²¹ Submissions of CA [89].

²² T18278:5-12. See also 18258:44-18259:13.

²³ T18258:38-42.

²⁴ T18276:12-30 Ex 43-0041 Advertisement for Co-Ordinator – Healing and Support Program, Marist Brothers .

I want to acknowledge today, in public, that I accept on behalf of the Marist Brothers that all the evidence points to Andrew having been sexually abused and the evidence also points to Andrew having taken his own life.

Importantly, it is obvious that many things have been said about the circumstances of Andrew's death, some of which must be corrected. It has been suggested in some places that Andrew's death was a prank gone wrong involving a family member, and yesterday we heard that the school at the time told the students that Andrew might have died by an accident involving another family member. To me, it is obvious that no member of the Nash family was involved in causing his death. Any suggestion that they were is completely wrong and hurtful to the family. These ideas must be totally rejected. Such comments have immeasurably compounded the family's pain and sense of loss.

I am concerned about what was said at the school at the time about Andrew's death and what information was given to the students. I have agreed with the Nash's request to look into this further and find out what I can for them. I have already taken steps to start the process.

2.3 Brother Wade's knowledge about abuse by Romuald, Dominic and Patrick

- 7 Paragraphs 115 to 159 of the submissions of CA summarise the evidence relating to complaints said to have been made to Brother Wade about sexual and physical abuse suffered by students at Marist Brothers Hamilton.
- 8 Paragraphs 160 to 169 relate to matters particular to Brother Wade. Brother Wade was and is separately represented. The Church Parties make no submission as to Brother Wade. However, if the reports described were made, it is clear from the subject matter of those complaints that records should have been made and immediate action should have been taken²⁵. As stated by Brother Carroll²⁶:

... I would have thought that if you had an allegation that there was some inappropriate behaviour, you'd firstly find out what the behaviour was and then if it was of a - if it was sexual abuse, then certainly it would have been reported to the Provincial and hopefully to the police; parents would have been contacted; some support would have been provided to those young boys who were being assaulted.

2.4 Complaints by CNQ

- 9 CNQ gave evidence that Patrick sexually abused him on multiple occasions in 1980, and that after a particular incident, he complained to Brothers Alfred and Venard. The evidence of CNQ is described in paragraphs 170 to 172 of the submissions of CA. Brother Venard is 88 years old and was not able to give evidence to the Royal Commission²⁷. Br Alfred is deceased.

²⁵ T18239:30-45. See also T18243:39-18244:8 and Carroll [125].

²⁶ T18240:1-8.

²⁷ Submissions of CA [174].

- 10 In around 2015, Brother Venard provided responses to questions put to him, by the solicitors for the insurers of the Marist Brothers, about the complaint made by CNQ²⁸. Some of his responses are recorded in paragraph 176 of the submissions of CA. At the time he provided the responses, Brother Venard was 86 years old²⁹. To the best of the Brothers knowledge no assessment of his capacity or competency was made at that time, and accordingly, the material should be given appropriate weight .
- 11 In paragraph 180 of the submissions of CA, it is submitted that as a consequence of the conversation between CNQ and Brother Venard, Brother Venard knew that Patrick had touched CNQ inappropriately. In circumstances where Brother Venard was unable to be called, and the meaning and the reliability of the responses relied on by CA is uncertain, the Church Parties submit that it is unclear whether Brother Venard had been informed about the abuse suffered by CNQ, in a way that gave him clear knowledge of the complaint. Nonetheless, the Church Parties agree that if Brother Venard did respond to the complaint, in the manner described by CNQ, that response was plainly inadequate³⁰. As stated by Brother Carroll *“if his overriding hope was to smooth it over, then that seems, once again, to be inadequate to an accusation that was made.”*³¹
- 12 Brother Carroll gave evidence that, prior to receiving CNQ’s statements, he did not believe that the Marist Brothers had seen any documents recording or referring to CNQ’s complaint³². Any complaint of this nature should have been recorded, should have led to appropriate action being taken within the school and should have been reported to the Provincial³³. As Brother Carroll stated, *“if the event occurred as has been explained, then it must have been obvious that it was a sexual assault, so one would have – well, what we would do now is we would stand the person down, investigate it, refer it on to the police and upwards in the Brothers, you know to the Provincial.”*³⁴
- 13 CNQ also described how he and his mother had a meeting with Father Brennan, prior to CNQ commencing at St Pius X. CNQ said that during that meeting, he informed Father Brennan that Patrick had been “touching” him. That evidence is summarised in paragraphs 177 to 178. Father Brennan is deceased³⁵. The Marist Brothers note that Father Brennan is deceased and therefore not available to give evidence about the issues raised by CNQ. As a result, to the extent that CA relies on evidence that was unable to be tested, that evidence should be given appropriate weight.
- 14 Brother Carroll gave evidence that he has seen no records of any disclosure to Father Brennan about Patrick around the time being passed on to either the Provincial or the Provincial Council³⁶.

²⁸ TB234 and TB237.

²⁹ TB234 and TB237.

³⁰ Submissions of CA [183]; T18254:31-33.

³¹ T18254:26-33.

³² Carroll [68].

³³ Carroll [68].

³⁴ T18254:35-41.

³⁵ Submissions of CA [179].

³⁶ Carroll [69].

3 Dominic

- 1 Between 1978 and 1985, Dominic held positions at St Mary's³⁷. Between 1983 and 1990, John Hamilton was the deputy principal at St Mary's³⁸. A summary of his recollection of Dominic is set out in paragraphs 186 to 192 of the submissions of CA.
- 2 Paragraphs 194 to 210 of the submissions of CA relate to a complaint made to Brother Turton about abuse of CNM by Dominic, when CNM was a student at St Mary's.
- 3 From 1991 to the end of 1996, Dominic was the principal of Riverview³⁹. Paragraphs 213 to 263 of the submissions of CA relate to complaints made about abuse by Dominic, while Dominic was at Riverview. The Brisbane Catholic Education Office was involved in the handling of that complaint.
- 4 In May 1996, Brother Hill proposed that Dominic be appointed principal of St Francis Xavier's⁴⁰. However, following a complaint about Dominic while at Marist Brothers Hamilton, Brother Hill revoked Dominic's appointment. The Provincial Council minutes dated 16 August 1996 record that Dominic was "*unable to go to Hamilton next year because of health reasons*". The minutes do not record the complaint made against Dominic. Paragraphs 264 to 310 and 315 to 318 of the submissions of CA relate to that proposed appointment and complaint.
- 5 In 1997, Dominic attended the Wellsprings Renewal Program in the United States⁴¹. Upon his return, he was appointed to Provincial House, Drummoyne as the Province Secretary and Community Leader⁴². The evidence relating to his attendance at this Program and his return to Australia is summarised in paragraphs 319 to 333 of the submissions of CA.
- 6 In 2005, Dominic was appointed Assistant Community Leader and Personal Assistant to the Headmaster of Marist College Ashgrove, Queensland⁴³. In response to paragraphs 335 to 337 of the submissions of CA, the Church Parties submit that, in hindsight, the decision to appoint Dominic to a position at a school was ill advised, irrespective of the fact that he held an administrative appointment which did not involve teaching⁴⁴.
- 7 The evidence relating to the involvement of police in complaints made against Dominic is set out in paragraphs 338 to 341 of the submissions of CA. The evidence relating to restrictions placed on Dominic by the Marist Brothers is set out in paragraph 342 of the submissions of CA.
- 8 Much of section 3 relates to matters particular to Brothers Turton and Hill. Brothers Turton and Hill were and are separately represented. The Church Parties make no submission as to Brothers Turton and Hill. However, based on the documents provided to the Royal Commission, the Church Parties acknowledge that Dominic's conduct should have led to some action earlier⁴⁵. With hindsight, further action should have been taken in 1996, and Dominic should have been

³⁷ Carroll [80].

³⁸ Hamilton [18].

³⁹ Carroll [80].

⁴⁰ TB68.

⁴¹ Carroll [80].

⁴² Carroll [80].

⁴³ Carroll [80].

⁴⁴ Carroll [115].

⁴⁵ Carroll [105].

required to stand down by Brisbane Catholic Education ⁴⁶. The Church Parties accept that Dominic should not have been placed at Marist College Ashgrove in 2005.

⁴⁶ Carroll [106].

4 Patrick

- 1 At the end of 1980, Patrick left Marist Brothers Hamilton⁴⁷. He then held teaching positions at Kogarah Marist High and Marcellin College Randwick, before being appointed to Marist College Ashgrove as a remedial teacher in 1989⁴⁸. Patrick continued to tutor students until 2001⁴⁹.
- 2 A number of complaints were made to Brother Turton about Patrick in the early 1990s. Paragraphs 350 to 420 and 440 to 446 of the submissions of CA relate to those complaints and the subsequent conduct of Brother Turton.
- 3 After making a complaint to Brother Turton, on 30 September 1993, CNK made a statement to NSW Police in Lismore⁵⁰. Paragraphs 422 to 426 of the submissions of CA contain a summary of the evidence relating to that report.
- 4 In September 1994, after spending a year at the Crossroads program, Patrick returned to Marist College Ashgrove in a tutoring position, despite five separate complaints of abuse by Patrick having been received by the Brothers⁵¹. He remained in that role until his retirement at the end of 2001⁵².
- 5 In June 1995, CNK made a further complaint about Patrick⁵³. Paragraphs 429 to 433 of the submissions of CA relate to that complaint.
- 6 In October 1996, Bishop Malone informed Brother Hill of further complaints made about Patrick and Romuald, which related to their conduct while at Marist Brothers Hamilton⁵⁴. Paragraphs 451 to 460 of the submissions of CA relate to those complaints and the subsequent conduct of Brother Hill.
- 7 In February 1998, CNJ reported to the Newcastle Police that he had been sexually abused by Patrick⁵⁵. Paragraphs 462 to 474 relate to that report and the subsequent conduct of Brother Hill.
- 8 In April 2001, a complaint was made against Patrick by CNI, who was a student at Marist College Ashgrove⁵⁶. Paragraphs 475 to 480, 486 to 487 and 511 to 512 of the submissions of CA relate to that complaint.
- 9 After the complaint was made by CNI, Queensland Police made a request for documents from Brother Hill. Paragraphs 481 to 485 and 488 to 510 of the submissions of CA relate to that request.
- 10 Much of section 4 relates to matters particular to Brothers Turton and Hill. Brothers Turton and Hill were and are separately represented. The Church Parties make no submission as to Brothers Turton and Hill.

⁴⁷ Carroll [29].

⁴⁸ Carroll [29].

⁴⁹ TB126.

⁵⁰ Tab 54.

⁵¹ Carroll [53].

⁵² Carroll [29].

⁵³ TB61.

⁵⁴ TB82.

⁵⁵ TB96.

⁵⁶ TB109.

- 11 The Church Parties note that the evidence shows that despite a growing number of complaints and concerns through the early 1990s, Patrick was not removed from his role at Marist College Ashgrove, and he continued to tutor students until a further complaint was received in 2001⁵⁷. More investigations should have been carried out in response to the complaints in the 1990s, and Patrick should have been removed from contact with students⁵⁸. As stated by Brother Carroll in his statement, "*the fact that he was not is deeply regrettable*"⁵⁹.

⁵⁷ Carroll [54].

⁵⁸ Carroll [55].

⁵⁹ Carroll [55].

5 Failure to document complaints and to ensure continuity of information

- 1 The Church Parties note the submission of CA that “*During the period that Brother Turton and Brother Hill served as Provincials, where complaints about a Brother were made, they were (on occasions) not documented adequately or at all*”⁶⁰. The Church Parties acknowledge that one of the flaws in the historical approach for handling complaints was a lack of documentation of complaints when they were received⁶¹.
- 2 The Church Parties accept that at the time there were inadequate handover processes between Marist Brothers provincials⁶². As stated by Brother Carroll, “*I think that seems to have been a major problem, with the lack of continuity of information going from one person – from one leader to another*”⁶³.
- 3 The Church Parties accept the conclusion of CA that “*These deficiencies in record keeping and the absence of an adequate handover process impeded the ability to respond adequately and appropriately to complaints of child sexual abuse and put other children at risk*”⁶⁴. The Church Parties note that the Brothers’ approach to responding to complaints today is very different, and the systems of the Marist Brothers have fundamentally changed, so that past failings are not repeated⁶⁵.
- 4 In 2001, the Brothers established the position of Province Professional Standards Officer (**PPSO**), to assist the Provincial to respond to the increasing number of complaints⁶⁶. Since that time, the PPSO has had primary responsibility for the management of professional standards issues, including the handling of abuse complaints against Brothers⁶⁷. Today all claims are processed through the PPSO, and when complaints are received, reports are made to Police and other relevant bodies, including in accordance with mandatory reporting requirements⁶⁸. The Marist Brothers hope that the current approach to responding to complaints will minimise any deficiencies in record keeping and ensure continuity of information. As stated by Brother Carroll⁶⁹:

... in the past, it was left to the one man, the Provincial, largely, to handle that, and there was this culture of privacy and confidentiality and not telling people. And so when the Provincial went, the information seemed to go, if it hadn't been recorded. So now, with the systems that we have with the Professional Standards Office in place, and the staff there handling these, there is not much chance that any of that will not be known by future leaders or by future Professional Standards Office staff. They will have it all documented and recorded.

⁶⁰ Submissions of CA [513].

⁶¹ T18268:41-45.

⁶² Submissions of CA [514].

⁶³ T18251:1-3.

⁶⁴ Submissions of CA [515].

⁶⁵ T18269:21-35.

⁶⁶ Carroll [197].

⁶⁷ Carroll [197].

⁶⁸ Carroll [200]. See also T18269:3-19.

⁶⁹ T18269:26-35.

6 Impacts of physical and sexual abuse

- 1 Section 6 of the submissions of CA describe the devastating impacts of the physical and sexual abuse suffered by the survivors, whose stories were told during the public hearing.
- 2 During their testimonies and in their statements it was obvious how deeply the Hunter survivors have suffered from the crimes of Brothers and Priests. Theirs were stories full of pain and loss. Recounting their experiences was difficult for them and moving for those who were listening. The Church Parties thank them for having the determination and courage to come forward and put on record their experiences, and can only reiterate their apology and express their admiration.

7 Research project

- 1 During the public hearing, a number of questions were asked of witnesses about why Brothers have sexually abused children and young people⁷⁰. Brother Carroll stated, *“this is the issue that has troubled me most and not just – not just in the last 12 months, but before that: how could these things have happened with such regularity from people who were supposedly religious.”*⁷¹ Brother Carroll agreed that the “why” question is something that is of *“great concern”*⁷².
- 2 The Marist Brothers are currently involved in a research project that will attempt to identify why Brothers have offended, and to apportion some degree of priority to the various factors which emerge, including the competing roles of psychological, cultural, societal and situational factors. The research outcomes are stated to be⁷³:
 - (a) to understand the profile of Brothers who sexually abuse children and young people;
 - (b) to investigate the impact of historical formation processes on the psycho-sexual development of Brothers;
 - (c) to interrogate the culture within Marist institutions that allowed the extent of abuse during the 1960s and 1970s to occur;
 - (d) to interrogate the culture within the Religious Institute of the Marist Brothers that allowed the extent of the abuse to occur; and
 - (e) to identify other societal and wider Church factors, if any, that may have contributed to child sexual abuse within Marist institutions.
- 3 The suggested research methods are stated to be⁷⁴:
 - (a) Review of relevant research literature.
 - (b) Review of the files of offending Brothers.
 - (c) Review of the psychological reports prepared about offending Brothers.
 - (d) Interviews with offending Brothers.
 - (e) Engagement in a series of professionally supported round table conversations with those impacted by the child sexual abuse of Marist Brothers. The conversations will be facilitated by external research academics; victims, their families, Marist Brothers and professionals in the area will be asked to participate.
 - (f) Analysis of documentation of historical formation practices – initial and ongoing – and interviews with Brothers from different eras, including non-offending Brothers.
- 4 The Marist Brothers note that the research is ongoing.

⁷⁰ T18259:15-19.

⁷¹ T18259:22-25.

⁷² T18259:25-26.

⁷³ T18259:47-18260:20.

⁷⁴ T18259:31-40.

8 Conclusion

- 1 During the public hearing, Brother Carroll offered an apology to those affected by sexual and physical abuse by the Marist Brothers⁷⁵. In making that apology, Brother Carroll recognised that as the current Provincial, he had a responsibility to answer not only for any of his own actions, but also for the organisation and its past actions⁷⁶. Brother Carroll restates that apology here:

We cannot deny the unpalatable truths that have been revealed about the Marist Brothers' responses to child sexual abuse; vulnerable young people were sexually abused by Brothers, criminal activity took place, our response was entirely inadequate, the serious effects of sexual abuse were unrecognised, leaders failed to take strong, decisive action, victims were offended against again by means of aggressive legal processes. Our responses were naive, uninformed, even callous at times.

I know that this Case Study has revealed similar patterns - failures, inadequacies and ignorance.

My predecessor in his statements at both previous case studies has expressed our collective remorse and apology. I reiterate that today. What happened in the past should not have occurred. Children should not have been abused by those into whose trust they were willingly placed. Our response to victims and their families should have been immediate, compassionate and authentic.

As a Religious Order we have failed to protect the young people for whom we were founded and for whom many thousands of men have dedicated their lives. Those who have offended against young people have betrayed the trust placed in them by children and their parents, and by their own fellow Brothers.

Our commitment today is what it should have been in the past: full cooperation with authorities, thorough, professional and effective processes and protocols to protect children and ensure their safety, compassionate responses to victims. We ask forgiveness for ourselves in our failures and we hope for healing for the victims of past crimes.

- 2 Brother Carroll, on behalf of the Marist Brothers, wishes to convey the following to the Royal Commission:

This hearing, like the previous ones in which we have been involved, has been a challenging and confronting experience for everyone involved; for survivors and their families, and also for the Brothers and their associates, albeit in different ways. However, we believe that it has been important for the victims of the Hunter to have the opportunity to tell their stories and to publicly express their pain, anger and ultimate disappointment. Hopefully this process will lead to some degree of healing and validation for the survivors. I believe it has already led us and other church authorities to improve our response to victims and commit ourselves more vigorously to child protection and ensuring such abuse never recurs in any of our institutions. We thank the Royal Commission for providing this opportunity to the survivors and to us.

⁷⁵ Carroll T18231:14-18232:5; Carroll [20-24].

⁷⁶ T18233:46-18234:3.