ROYAL COMMISSION INTO INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSES TO CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

Public Hearing - Case Study 50
(Day 254)

Level 17, Governor Macquarie Tower
1 Farrer Place, Sydney

On Thursday, 23 February 2017 at 10am

Before:

The Chair: Justice Peter McClellan AM
Before Commissioners: Justice Jennifer Ann Coate
Mr Bob Atkinson AO APM
Mr Robert Fitzgerald AM
Professor Helen Milroy
Mr Andrew Murray

Counsel Assisting: Ms Gail Furness SC
Mr Stephen Free
MS FURNESS: Thank you, your Honour. Today we have three witnesses. Baroness Hollins is via videolink from London. Each are members of the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors. Perhaps if I can give a short introduction to that Commission before Baroness Hollins is sworn in, your Honour?

THE CHAIR: Perhaps we might get her sworn so she can sit down.

<SHEILA HOLLINS, sworn: [8.03am]
<WILLIAM FRANCIS KILGALLON, sworn: [8.03am]
<KATHLEEN VERA McCORMACK, sworn: [8.03am]

<EXAMINATION BY MS FURNESS:


The Commission's statutes describe its role as a purely advisory body at the service of the Pope for the purposes of promoting local responsibility in the particular churches for the protection of all minors and vulnerable adults. The statutes also describe the composition of the Pontifical Commission as a maximum of 18 members and a president appointed by the Pope for a period of three years.

The Commission initially comprised nine members. In December 2014, Pope Francis added eight members, bringing a total of 17 members, with 16 currently being active.

There are eight women and nine men, both clerical and lay, on the Commission and members come from a variety of countries, including the United Kingdom, Australia, Britain, Columbia, New Zealand and others. The group includes two survivors of child sexual abuse within the Catholic Church.

As your Honour and Commissioners might recall, Ms McCormack was scheduled to give evidence in the first week of the hearing and unfortunately she was unwell, but...
has recovered sufficiently to join us today and we're very grateful for Baroness Hollins and Mr Kilgallon to also join us today.

Perhaps if I can start with you, Baroness, you've been a member of the Commission for the Protection of Minors since 2014?

THE CHAIR: Ms Furness, I think we need a name?

MS FURNESS: I beg your pardon. Your full name, Baroness?

BARONESS HOLLINS: It's Sheila Hollins. My full title is Professor Sheila the Baroness Hollins.

MS FURNESS: Thank you. You've been a member of the papal Commission for the Protection of Minors since 2014?

BARONESS HOLLINS: Yes, that's right.

MS FURNESS: And you've done a deal of work in relation to the protection of minors for most of your working life?

BARONESS HOLLINS: Yes, I've been a clinical psychiatrist for 30 years and a psychotherapist with victims and perpetrators of abuse, and was involved in identifying abused children and adults in the 1980s.

My particular focus has been on children and adults with intellectual disabilities. That has been my particular focus for probably 22 of those years.

I'm also the Chair of the Scientific Advisory Group of the Centre for Child Protection at the Gregorian University in Rome, and another aspect of my curriculum vitae is that I was a researcher working - I ran a psychotherapy group for people with intellectual disabilities who had been abused and/or had abused others, which was a psychotherapy treatment group, which actually ran for 18 years altogether and involved quite a lot of clinical research and teaching on the subject.

MS FURNESS: Thank you. You provided to us a statement responding to various questions that the Royal Commission set out?

BARONESS HOLLINS: Yes.
MS FURNESS: And you have a copy of that with you, Baroness?

BARONESS HOLLINS: I do.

MS FURNESS: Your Honour, that appears behind tab 43 of the hearing bundle.

Do you have it with you, Baroness?

BARONESS HOLLINS: Yes. Mine I printed off myself this morning, all of these papers, so they may not be in the same order as yours.

MS FURNESS: Thank you. How was it that you came to be appointed a member of the Commission?

BARONESS HOLLINS: I was asked by Cardinal Cormac Murphy-O'Connor, who is now Emeritus Cardinal in England and Wales, if I would accompany him to Ireland as part of a Vatican visitation to the Catholic Church in Ireland, in response to concerns about the way in which the response of the Irish Church was taking place.

I spent three weeks with Cardinal Cormac in Ireland. He was very keen that there be a woman who had some clinical knowledge and experience of victims and survivors of sexual abuse - not necessarily within the Church - who would be able to support him in listening to the people that he was planning to meet in Ireland. We basically met, I would say, hundreds of people, including many, many victim survivors, their families, priests and religious, and we had several meetings with the bishops in Ireland as well.

Our particular visitation was one of five, the visitation which he was leading. I was accompanying him in the Diocese of Armagh and involved in assisting him with preparing his report at the end of that, and it was after that that I was asked if I would speak at a conference in Rome, at the Gregorian University, about the effects on children, the long-term, the long-lasting effects on victims of abuse.

My response to that invitation, after discussing it with the person who invited me, was to say that I would be
willing to do that, but only if they would also invite
a victim survivor to accompany me.

After some considerable discussion, it was agreed that
I should identify somebody who would be willing to come
with me so that we could prepare a joint submission,
a joint presentation, and we did that.

I think it was a very important event, because the
conference had been organised for bishops and religious
superiors from around the world - all the bishops
conferences were asked to send a representative - and
I think there were probably about 230 people there.

There were a lot of concerns about having a victim
survivor present and speaking to priests and a feeling that
this would be too difficult. But, anyway, I asked
Marie Collins from Dublin to accompany me. I didn't know
her before, but I did some research to find out who would
be a very good voice to really be the leading voice in our
presentation, she had a remarkable impact on the bishops
who were there.

I think one of the people who had been involved at
that time was Monsignor Scicluna, who is now the Bishop in
Malta, but for 10 years he was the promoter of justice in
the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, and he had
done some very, very good work to really try to speed up
the Vatican's response.

It was after that that I began to be contacted by
Monsignor Oliver, who is now the Secretary of the
Pontifical Commission, to discuss with me the idea that
there might be a Pontifical Commission and to talk to me
about the sorts of things which might be important. So
that's basically how I came, and also how Marie Collins
came, to be a member - because of our presentation at that
event.

MS FURNESS: What is the purpose of the Commission,
Baroness?

BARONESS HOLLINS: It is advisory to the Holy Father and
the idea is that we should advise him on the policies and
the educational programs that will try to ensure that
children and vulnerable adults throughout the world,
wherever the Catholic Church is working - that those
policies and educational programs will be in place to make
the Church a safer place. It was for us to recommend
whatever policies, whatever we felt needed to change,
needed to take place, in order that the Church would be
more responsive and better able to support people who have
been abused as well as to prevent it.

MS FURNESS: Do you - that is, the members of the
Commission - advise the Pope directly or is there some
intermediate group of people or individual within the
Vatican with whom you deal?

BARONESS HOLLINS: We advise the Holy Father directly
through the president, Cardinal O'Malley, who meets with
him regularly. We've all had the opportunity to meet the
Pope, Pope Francis. We believe that he is going to be
coming to one of our meetings this year, but we don't know
the details of that yet. Normally, at the end of a meeting
we have decided and prepared proposals, and when our
proposals are ready, they go to the Holy Father directly
through our president.

MS FURNESS: Is the work of the Commission primarily
through its working groups?

BARONESS HOLLINS: Yes, I would say that - well, the work
of the Commission - we have spent some time - in your
introduction, you talked about the statutes having been
prepared in advance. That was the implication. It's not
quite true. There was a lot of work discussing the
statutes during the first year, before the Commission was
fully up and running, and we identified the nature and
purpose of our work and identified the areas that we wanted
to work on, and the areas that we were keen to work on were
too many; there were too many areas. In a sense, we came
up with a lot of quite small issues, which became quite
exhausting to work on.

So we rationalised in the second year, when the full
Commission was there, to have six working groups, and it
has become much more efficient and effective, I think,
because we've been working in working groups where any
proposals are developed and then taken to the plenary
meeting, where they can then be discussed and debated and
agreed by the full Commission. So the idea is that they
would be prepared in advance of the meeting and then
brought to the whole Commission to formalise. And when
they've been voted on, they can then go to the Holy Father, but they need to be well worked up and prepared before that can happen.

MS FURNESS: What do you see as the most significant area of work of the Commission?

BARONESS HOLLINS: Personally, I think healing and - well, it's all important. It's all really important, but I personally - and it's because of my work as a psychiatrist and psychotherapist - I personally think the healing and care for victims and survivors is of critical importance.

One of the reasons I say that is because, in fact, if we are able to accompany, to be with, victim survivors and support them in all aspects of their recovery and their lives, it's actually going to make it easier, I think, also, to protect children in the future, because there will be better understanding through having had the courage to actually understand and hear what survivors have to say.

MS FURNESS: Are you doing research work in that area?

BARONESS HOLLINS: Are we doing research? We're not doing research. Unlike the Royal Commission, which commissioned research, I wouldn't call it research. I'm an academic. We have met with people who have advised us. We have read a lot. We have considered very carefully, from what we've read and what we've heard, what we think the important issues are.

MS FURNESS: What are those important issues?

BARONESS HOLLINS: Well, for example, one of the most important things is that there is some transparency and openness and that people are treated with respect and listened to. One of the typical responses of bishops when somebody does make an allegation - and, of course, remember that most people make allegations very late. I think the average - you know, it depends where you are, and so on, but it might be as many as 30 years before somebody actually makes an allegation or has the courage to do so, and when they do, it's often as a result of hearing about another case.

And this happened when I was in Ireland. I met many
people who were getting on with their lives and had perhaps
had not even told their wife about it or their husband
about it, and then something happened, something came out
in the news and they would break down. So here's somebody
having a breakdown, and perhaps they themselves don't
understand why they are actually not coping well, why they
have started having emotional difficulties, and it's quite
a crisis in people's lives. Not to be believed is really,
really difficult.

But then what often seems to happen is that there are
legal issues around compensation, around deciding whether
or not the allegation is a true allegation; there are
issues around the possibility that the person who abused
them is no longer alive; in some countries there's a
statute of limitations which says that 30 years is too
long - all of those things.

Then there is counselling which is offered. In some
countries there is quite sophisticated counselling and
therapy available to survivors, but in some countries there
is not. The provision of mental health services in many
countries is very, very scarce.

Then, finally, the thing which is often overlooked is
the spiritual needs of the survivor. A number of people
have said to me that they haven't lost their faith in God,
but they find it very difficult to go into a church or to
go to a service in a church where there's a priest
officiating, particularly if nobody has helped them to try
to make sense of the spiritual aspect of their experience
and their attempt to come to terms with and to live with
what happened for them. So many people will have stopped
going to church, because they find it too painful to be in
church.

MS FURNESS: With the learnings you've described from the
work in the area of healing and care, what recommendations
or advice have you given to Pope Francis in this area?

BARONESS HOLLINS: One of the recommendations is that it's
very important that when a survivor writes a letter, there
should be a response. That seems fundamental, that if
somebody writes a letter, there should be a response. It
seems that this is a very hard thing for many Church
leaders to do.
MS FURNESS: It sounds very simple, Baroness. Why is it so hard?

BARONESS HOLLINS: Do you know, I don't think it's - I'm a psychiatrist. I've been President of the Royal College of Psychiatrists. I've been involved in teaching psychiatrists. Psychiatrists find it hard as well. It's really interesting how difficult it is to get people to be able to allow the reality of abuse and the painfulness of abuse actually to be present in their consciousness. I think, to me, from a psychological perspective, I see it almost as a denial of what's going on and what it means.

It takes quite a lot of courage for people to actually face up to the reality of abuse and to understand that this is real, that this pain won't go away, that you can't just listen once; you have to listen and keep on listening and keep on being there, because this is long-term suffering that many people experience.

And I think where people haven't had the sort of psychological development which will allow them to experience that kind of human emotional pain, somehow acknowledging it is - it's a form of defence, really. From a psychiatric point of view, I can understand it and I've seen it amongst many different professional groups. I mean, I've seen it in the Church but I've also seen it, I'm ashamed to say, within my own profession. So I think it's denial.

MS FURNESS: When you say people haven't had that sort of psychological development, when speaking within the Church, are you referring primarily to bishops or those parish priests and others who might receive complaints?

BARONESS HOLLINS: I think the psychological development - within the preparation and the formation of priests, and this would be true also, although slightly different, for people within religious communities, there are four pillars of formation. One of them is human development. I think it's the aspect of human formation which, in many seminaries, has changed and in recent years has changed to make it a much more substantial and seriously taught part of their curriculum, but in some it is not, and in the past it was certainly not, a primary focus for the development, and I do see that failure to support men who are coming into seminaries to study to become a priest - they've often
not been enabled and encouraged and supported to develop that aspect of themselves, that emotional maturity and emotional understanding, which I think is a very essential part of a pastoral ministry.

And that's going to go right the way through, you know, at all levels of the priesthood and bishops. And there are some exceptional bishops who do have that emotional intelligence, but I'm afraid there are also some who haven't been encouraged and enabled to develop that emotional side of themselves.

MS FURNESS: Have you had any recent involvement with seminaries or the way in which formation occurs now to tell us whether you think it has changed sufficiently?

BARONESS HOLLINS: I have. I think that's an issue which is just going to be incredibly local and it's going to be culturally affected as well. So I think in some countries there have been huge changes and I think - I haven't had recent - I haven't visited a seminary for three years, I don't think, but I have spoken to the rectors of some seminaries and they speak positively about the changes they're implementing. That's in the UK. I don't know what's happening in Australia and I don't know what's happening in African countries, for example.

This is one of the issues that the Pontifical Commission is dealing with, which is that we're concerned with the worldwide Church and the different cultural issues and the different stage of understanding of the seriousness of child abuse within institutions.

MS FURNESS: One issue that has arisen here, Baroness, is when overseas-trained priests come to Australia, how one ensures that there is a process of, for want of a better word, enculturation, so that those priests understand the norms and values of this society in relation to child protection. Is that the sort of thing you're referring to?

BARONESS HOLLINS: Yes.

MS FURNESS: You indicated to respond to a letter was one of the pieces of advice or recommendations you made to the Pope. Are there any others in relation to this area of healing and care?
BARONESS HOLLINS: One of the things that we did was to ask him if he would meet survivors. He responded and agreed to meet survivors, because we felt that this would encourage other Church leaders to do the same. So over one weekend we invited six survivors from three different countries to come, and they all had an opportunity to spend as much time with the Holy Father as they wanted; they were the ones who ended the conversation. He spent about three hours - just over three hours, I think - meeting the six survivors, and they were all very touched and moved by what he said and how he was, and he was very, very moved by their experience.

Our hope was, and is, that when he does visit other countries, he would also able to do the same when he does visit. So we certainly, in our first year, recommended to him that it would be very helpful and very encouraging if he was able to do that when he visits.

What else have we recommended from that group? I'm not a member of the healing and care group now. I was for the first period, but I've been focusing my work in another area, although I have just rejoined that group. What else have we recommended? I'm not sure. Bill or Kath may be able to help me there.

MS FURNESS: Thank you. We'll come to them, and I'm sure they've made a note of that.

Education is a particular interest of yours as well, is it not?

BARONESS HOLLINS: Well, Kath McCormack is the leader of the education group, but, yes, education is an area of interest of mine, particularly - and one of the areas that I am involved in is the Centre for Child Protection at the Gregorian University, which has developed an education program, which is an e-learning course. I can't tell you right now how many students there are or how many countries it's in, but it has been growing hugely.

The idea of this e-learning program is that it helps prepare pastoral workers and Church leaders in different cultures and different continents. All continents are now involved in that program. The head of the unit is Father Hans Zollner, a Jesuit, who is also a member of the Pontifical Commission.
One of the other things that we've been doing is setting up a diploma course. It's in its second year now, and there are now 20 students from I think four continents who are attending this two-semester diploma, with the aim of trying to develop the leaders for those countries who will be able to take forward education programs themselves.

This work, although it's not part of the Pontifical Commission, is in response to the Pontifical Commission. And there are a number of other kinds of initiatives like that which I think are developing in different parts of the world in response to the education work that the Pontifical Commission has been encouraging.

MS FURNESS: The Commission has also published guidelines?

BARONESS HOLLINS: That's right.

MS FURNESS: The purpose of - I'm sorry, Baroness?

BARONESS HOLLINS: Bill Kilgallon is the leader of that working group and is best placed to talk about the guidelines.

MS FURNESS: Thank you. In your document you prepared for the Royal Commission, you expressed some views in relation to the factors that may have contributed to the occurrence of child sexual abuse in Catholic institutions or affected the response of those institutions. Can you tell us what you consider in relation to those factors that may have contributed?

BARONESS HOLLINS: Which question are you referring to here?

MS FURNESS: It's on page 3 of your document, Baroness. Do you have that?

BARONESS HOLLINS: Yes. So which was the question? Could you repeat the question, I'm sorry?

MS FURNESS: Certainly. Do you see the question that's bolded at paragraph 2?

BARONESS HOLLINS: Yes.
MS FURNESS: And then you were asked in relation to a series of topics, the second one being the Church's structure and governance, including the role of the Vatican.

BARONESS HOLLINS: Yes.

MS FURNESS: What are your views in relation to that in terms of contributing factors?

BARONESS HOLLINS: Well, I mean, I think --

MS FURNESS: Would it be easier to talk in terms of leadership?

BARONESS HOLLINS: Yes, it probably would. I mean, the important thing about the Church is that I've understood a lot more about the Vatican and how the Holy See relates to bishops conferences and bishops around the world since I've been a member of the Pontifical Commission. I have actually described the Catholic Church as the largest ungoverned organisation in the world, and I don't mean that in an unkind way, but I think it is that the Pope's role is essentially one of kind of unity around the teaching of the Church in the theology and the doctrine of the Church, and I don't think the Pope really - he doesn't have any responsibility for what a bishop does in terms of things which relate to civil society.

He appoints bishops to take leadership and to provide the leadership in their own dioceses, and it's quite a difficult thing to kind of really get to grips with and to understand, but that sort of subsidiarity that the Church is based on does mean that - just like St Peter and the apostles, the apostles were expected to look to Rome, to look to St Peter, the same way the bishops are expected to, but it's very much around their pastoral responsibilities.

So when a bishop neglects to respond appropriately and to show the moral authority that is needed when child abuse is present, that's a really tricky thing, because it raises a lot of issues about where does responsibility lie for holding that bishop accountable?

One of the big issues we have talked about is the issue of bishop accountability, and it leads on, then, to
the motu proprio, As a Loving Mother, which the Pope issued last summer, which was about the absolute importance of trying to find a way to hold bishops accountable if they're not being held accountable in their own country.

MS FURNESS: Can you hear me, Baroness? I think we're having difficulty hearing you. Could you perhaps speak for me?

BARONESS HOLLINS: Can you hear me now?

MS FURNESS: Yes, I can. Thank you very much. The tribunal that you referred to, that was established as a way of holding bishops accountable is no longer continuing; is that right?

BARONESS HOLLINS: No, I didn't refer to the tribunal. I was referring to the panel of jurists which the Pope set up as a result of the motu proprio that he issued in June last year. Originally there was to be a tribunal.

MS FURNESS: Yes.

BARONESS HOLLINS: And the way that he works is, if he takes one of our recommendations, then he will delegate responsibility for implementing that recommendation that has been agreed to one of the congregations, one of the dicasteries. But I think further research suggested that it wasn't necessary. We don't know exactly what happened. But then he issued the motu proprio, As a Loving Mother, and he said with this letter his intention was to underline the among the aforesaid grave reasons - this is about the possibility of removal from ecclesiastical life - one of the grave reasons is "the negligence of bishops in the exercise of their office, in particular in relation to cases of sexual abuse of minors and vulnerable adults".

We understand that that was to commence, to come into effect, from September 2016.

MS FURNESS: Did it come into effect from that date?

BARONESS HOLLINS: I believe it came into effect, but I don't yet know what the effect - I don't know. I think we have to wait and see what that leads to. What he said was that he can only be removed if he is objectively lacking, in a very grave matter, the diligence that his
pastoral office demands.

So the question about whether it has happened - as far as I know, I'm not aware of any bishop having been removed as yet under this edict.

MS FURNESS: Did you understand that the Pope had power under canon law to remove a bishop, in any event?

BARONESS HOLLINS: Yes, the understanding that we had was that the Pope had the power to remove a bishop, but there was no process to do so, and that's why we understood that a process was needed. Because it can't be on the say-so of a media report or it can't be on the say-so of anything. In justice, there has to be a process. So there wasn't a process, and my understanding is that that's what the panel of jurists is to be about.

MS FURNESS: Thank you. You indicate in your document to us that local leadership at parish and school levels may need to be improved, with one gap being a relative lack of oversight of diocesan priests. Now, is that a lack of oversight by the bishop?

BARONESS HOLLINS: I think it probably varies hugely. I've talked to a number of people about this. Some have said to me that they feel that diocesan priests do have as good oversight as anybody else. Others have suggested that it may not be adequate. I mean, there are quite a number of ways in which priests are subject to, their work is subject to, scrutiny, but they are all very much - you know, there are different people who have responsibility for identifying and being aware of, and of course parishioners or anybody with concern would go to a bishop if they had a concern, but - yes.

MS FURNESS: You also refer to clericalism. This is over on page 4 under (e), Baroness. You refer to there being a risk that the power which is part of clericalism may be misused or simply serve to further isolate the priest. Do you see where I'm reading from?

BARONESS HOLLINS: Yes, I do. I think that's right. I think that's been my experience, as a Catholic, kind of in my life, that some priests - not all but some priests - maybe through a feeling of insecurity or because they genuinely believe that they have an authority and
a position, that they do hold a great deal of power. It's not just priests, it's members of religious communities as well.

I've talked to priests and monks about the issue of power and asked them whether they have any understanding of the amount of power that they hold by virtue of their office and by virtue of the work and the ministry they provide, and I think they are often very unaware of how powerful their positions are perceived by laypeople and, indeed, by religious sisters, for example, who often feel very lacking in power in comparison with an ordained priest.

There is a problem with power, because abuse is always a consequence of a misuse of power. Power has to be used very wisely and very carefully. It's something that hierarchies need to guard against.

MS FURNESS: Have you noticed any change in the priests and religious that you have been dealing with more recently as a move away from the clericalism approach?

BARONESS HOLLINS: I have seen both a move away from clericalism, but I've also seen others in whom, perhaps in this time when priests may feel that they are under additional scrutiny, their clericalism seems undiminished and may indeed be a source of comfort for them.

MS FURNESS: Does it ultimately come down to a question of education and leadership in respect of priests so that they understand, as you say, the context of power and its abuse and, as well, are led in the right direction in terms of how to properly use their position and serve their congregation?

BARONESS HOLLINS: Do you know, I think to myself that it's really, really important that there is more lay leadership, because I think that without that lay kind of levelling of the situation, it's going to be very, very difficult for the ordained Church leaders to be able to change the culture of the current leadership. I think the places where I've seen most change have been in parishes, for example, and in dioceses, where the priests and the bishops have really welcomed, and not felt threatened by, lay leadership, and this obviously includes women. For many priests and bishops, they may feel more comfortable
having laymen advising them and supporting them. But I think until there is a sort of lay leadership which is able to stand alongside the ordained priests, then it's going to be very difficult for that perception of power and that potential misuse of power in any way to pass.

We've seen this in the medical profession in the United Kingdom, and I'm sure you have in Australia as well, where doctors thought it was perfectly fine for them to govern themselves and not to be accountable to lay scrutiny. That has changed, but it has taken quite a while to change that attitude.

MS FURNESS: In relation to the Church, is it a matter for the bishop to determine whether or not there's lay involvement and the extent to which they participate in governing the diocese?

BARONESS HOLLINS: For the bishop, it would be entirely for the bishop to decide how much they wanted to involve laypeople in working with them and advising them in either a professional capacity or just a wise counsel type of capacity.

But the same would be true at the parish level, where it would be down to an individual priest, unless there was real encouragement from a bishop. It would be very much down to an individual priest to decide how much he was going to manage his parish himself or how much he was going to seek guidance and support from the parishioners, the lay parishioners.

MS FURNESS: With your knowledge of the structure of the Church, who or what body is in a position to provide leadership to bishops and priests so as to encourage them to move in the direction you're speaking of?

BARONESS HOLLINS: Do you mean in the wider Church? I mean, of course people would look to - the Bishops Conference is a meeting of bishops, but it doesn't have authority over individual bishops, so it's a coming together. So they can debate these issues and discuss them, but it's down to the individual bishop to determine what happens in his diocese.

We can look to the Pope to provide leadership, and he does. At the angelus every day and in his sermons every
day he's an extraordinary teacher and teaches about moral leadership. Nearly every day he's giving extraordinary teachings, which, if people read them and work to learn from them and live by them, then we would see change. But he's talking to the whole world.

It is actually, the way the Church is structured, the individual bishop who is responsible for what happens in his own diocese.

MS FURNESS: You refer to a lack of consistency in the application of ongoing professional supervision in relation to working priests and religious. Is that something that you've experienced in the work you've done?

BARONESS HOLLINS: Probably only anecdotally, just that I understand that when CPD is offered, and if it's about human development, it will be poorly attended. It's not something which is sought. But that's only anecdotal. I've heard it a few times.

MS FURNESS: As you'd know from your work as a psychiatrist, doctors are required to attend continuing education, as are lawyers and other professionals. It's not a requirement for priests and religious. Do you think it should be?

BARONESS HOLLINS: Yes. I do.

MS FURNESS: How could that be imposed?

BARONESS HOLLINS: In the medical world, it has taken quite a long time to impose it. Originally, it was our professional organisations which would recommend, and it's only since we've had revalidation in the medical world that we've been able to actually require that this takes place. Prior to that, it was advisory.

Now, I'm not sure whether you've introduced revalidation for doctors in Australia yet. I talked about it some years ago when I visited the Australian Medical Association, and it's still quite new in the United Kingdom, but it's the first time we've had an appraisal system.

I don't see why there couldn't be an appraisal system and why that appraisal system shouldn't require feedback
from parishioners and others with whom a priest or bishop is in regular contact. But then part of that appraisal would require that the priest or bishop would need to show that they were keeping up to date and were familiar with the issues which they were personally responsible for. So it would require quite a lot of structure to do, but I think it's of fundamental importance that the people keep up to date.

MS FURNESS: Some bishops in Australia have the view that they have no power over their priest and cannot require him to undergo supervision, performance review or, indeed, mandatory education. What's your view?

BARONESS HOLLINS: I know that some priests feel that that is the case and would resist. I think that's wrong. I think if they really are trying to point to some rule which says that's the case, then I would say that rule needs to change.

MS FURNESS: Or perhaps the attitude towards that rule?

BARONESS HOLLINS: Yes. Can I just say that my experience in talking to priests in some countries has been that they would really welcome more interest in them and in their life, some priests. Now, I know in the United States there's research that, for example, Stephen Rossetti has done, where he found that priests were not lonely; that they were content with their lifestyle; the majority of priests were not struggling with their current lifestyle. That I don't believe to be the case in all countries, in all places, and I've certainly come across a number of priests who would really welcome more guidance and support from their bishops.

MS FURNESS: There has been some talk in Australia about licensing priests in a similar way to which, perhaps, psychologists are licensed, so a condition of the licence might be continuing education, regular professional supervision and the like. Is that an issue that has come to your attention?

BARONESS HOLLINS: I've certainly had discussions with senior people in the Church about this. I don't recall us discussing it in the Pontifical Commission. The answer is often that the sacramental part of a priest's role is not
something which could be subject to external lay scrutiny.

But my view is that there is a professional part of a priest's role which is very similar to the kind of professional role that, for example, doctors and teachers might have.

MS FURNESS: And counsellors?

BARONESS HOLLINS: And that that part of their role could be subject to licensing.

MS FURNESS: So to separate out the sacramental role or the role that has theological underpinnings from that which is essentially of a counsellor or a psychologist or dealing pastorally with people and licence or otherwise regulate in some way that role; is that what you're saying?

BARONESS HOLLINS: I think that could be possible and I've certainly had discussions along those lines.

MS FURNESS: Thank you. Baroness, I'll just go to Ms McCormack and come back to you with any additional comments you wish to make.

Would you tell the Royal Commission your full name?

MS McCORMACK: Kathleen Vera McCormack.

MS FURNESS: Ms McCormack, you were the director of welfare at CatholicCare for a very long time in Wollongong?

MS McCORMACK: In the Diocese of Wollongong, yes.

MS FURNESS: I think you began in about 1984?

MS McCORMACK: That's correct. I was appointed director.

MS FURNESS: And you were there for 30 years?

MS McCORMACK: In the end, yes, about 30 years.

MS FURNESS: You would have seen a deal of cultural change over that period?

MS McCORMACK: We started out in very humble beginnings, I was the only person employed, and we developed from
MS FURNESS: What was the organisation like when you left it a couple of years ago?

MS McCORMACK: It was a multi-service organisation employing about 240 people with services to children, to families, to the school student and family program, to aged care and disabilities, and I think the budget was about $18 million mostly coming from government.

MS FURNESS: So it was mainly government funded?

MS McCORMACK: Yes.

MS FURNESS: And regulated because of that government funding as well as through other means?

MS McCORMACK: Regulated, with auditing, et cetera.

MS FURNESS: You were also a member of the Professional Standards Resource Group for the diocese?

MS McCORMACK: For the Diocese of Wollongong, yes.

MS FURNESS: That was for three years in the late 1990s?

MS McCORMACK: That's correct. That was in the time when Bishop Philip Wilson was there. He was there from 1997 to 2000.

MS FURNESS: That was shortly after Towards Healing came into effect?

MS McCORMACK: Yes, when Towards Healing came into effect, Bishop Philip set up that group and he was able to secure members from the community, two members who were not Catholic, and mostly laypeople, and I think one priest was on it.

MS FURNESS: How did that group work in those days?

MS McCORMACK: It worked extremely well because at the time we had a number of cases in Wollongong and we were dealing with and working with the victims and survivors, and really the support of the people from the community was very - it really helped the bishop to make good decisions
and really make sure that the victims and survivors were supported.

MS FURNESS: Did you find that the presence of laypeople in that group and in the work that you were doing enhanced the ability of the diocese and the bishop to understand what was being experienced and to try to help people as best the diocese could?

MS McCORMACK: It really helped because we had people there, we had psychologists who worked in the community, we had people who worked in the Department of Community Services, we had lawyers and also people who worked on the ground just in the local community, but they really came with a wealth of knowledge and also knew some of the causes of child sexual abuse, and they were able to help the bishop to make really sound decisions.

What I was really impressed with at the time was that the bishop did listen and he learnt and was open to learning as to why this was happening and how he could deal with it.

MS FURNESS: Thank you. You've been on the Pontifical Commission for how long?

MS McCORMACK: Since 2015.

MS FURNESS: How did that come about?

MS McCORMACK: I think you'd have to ask Sheila Hollins that, but I was a new member appointed, and apparently what happened was that with the Commission, they were looking for people with different skills from all over the world, and they had very qualified people, like psychiatrists, canon lawyers; they have people who have worked with survivors and victims; and I think one of the things, when they looked to Australia, they were looking for someone not with the intellectual or the academic background but someone who had had on-the-ground experience. So I think that's how my name came up, because of the experience I had in Wollongong and especially in New South Wales.

MS FURNESS: You're chair of the education working group?

MS McCORMACK: I'm chair of that, yes.
MS FURNESS: What has that focused on?

MS MCCORMACK: Mostly it's focusing on the education of families and children to really alert them to the culture of sexual abuse and really about a culture of safety. But what's really hard about that group is that we're dealing with the whole world. We can look at and we can learn from what has happened in Australia, the United States, the UK and Ireland, but in some countries we're dealing with - and two of the sisters on the Commission, Sister Kayula and Sister Hermenegild - are from Africa, and in Africa child abuse is not even a crime, and they're working all the time protecting children, trying to educate them.

So we have to take into account, while we can learn from what has happened in the countries around us, that, okay, when we're helping to teach those countries, we have to really take into account their culture and not further upset them.

But what we're doing in Rome before the plenary in March, we're having a day at the Gregorian University. To start, we've invited three countries - Colombia, Argentina and Mexico - to come and share with us what they're doing, and we can try to learn from them and look at the gaps. We're also having Mr Francis Sullivan from the Truth, Justice and Healing Council to come over and talk about the experience in Australia, so that we can start to look at these different areas and see, then, with the Gregorian University, under the guidance of Hans Zollner, to start research as to how we can start working with different cultures in the world. But we're in our infancy. This is just a start. It's years and years of hard work that we have to look at.

MS FURNESS: You say that the Pontifical Commission is experiencing difficulties in reaching the performance stage of its development as a result of infrequent meetings, limited resources and structural and cultural barriers both in the Church and across nations?

MS MCCORMACK: That's true. When I say that, the people on the Commission, the people working on it, come from all over the world and they are so committed to the task. They really give wholeheartedly. They're volunteers. And when they come to Rome for the plenary, the work goes on there, but when they get back to their countries, the work
continues all the time.

I mean, people like myself, Sheila and Bill, our work groups, we Skype sometimes twice a month. It's ongoing. But the thing is, we're in the Vatican, we're advisory to the Holy Father. Our budget would be what you would do in a diocese, but we're dealing with the whole world.

I just look at what has happened here at the Royal Commission in Australia and the money that has had to be spent to look at what went wrong. If we could mobilise the Catholic Church and the world to help us with the Pontifical Commission to be in a position of prevention rather than cure - so we're looking to the Royal Commission, we're following everything, all the research and such. But I think part of our role - this is just my thinking; I'm not speaking on behalf of the Commission now. My thinking is if we can really reach out to the world to help us so that we can be in a very good position about prevention in the future, especially with the countries in the third world we're moving into.

MS FURNESS: Thank you. You quote a letter that the Baroness recently wrote in relation to criticism in overseas media that the Vatican was moving too slowly in this area. Baroness, I'm not sure that you have a copy of that with you. Do you have a copy of Ms McCormack's notes?

BARONESS HOLLINS: Yes, I do.

MS FURNESS: You will see on page 2 she sets out a letter that you wrote and says that she agrees with that.

BARONESS HOLLINS: Yes.

MS FURNESS: What were the circumstances of writing the letter?

BARONESS HOLLINS: The Guardian newspaper had published an article about the review of a book written by somebody who'd previously worked in the Vatican called Fittipaldi, and it made some criticisms of the Pontifical Commission, saying that it had only met twice and saying that Pope Francis wasn't serious about addressing child abuse. And I disagree with that. I think he's very serious about trying to address it. So I simply wrote to the Guardian saying that, actually, I was a member of the Pontifical
Commission and that I personally had attended I think eight plenary meetings but also that the majority of our work took place in working groups.

This was responded to by other people, and so I wrote again in rather more detail, because the criticism suggested that I wasn't acknowledging the seriousness of the situation. So I wrote a second letter, the same week, which was also published, and this is the letter.

MS FURNESS: You refer in this letter to the fact that for many years bishops have been advised to cooperate fully with civil authorities, but that some still fail to do so and it's a matter of huge concern. Is that failure a current failure, according to the information available to you?

BARONESS HOLLINS: Well, it is very difficult, because we don't deal with individual cases. We don't receive cases. We will only know about cases that are reported on in the media, for example, or through more informal sources. Because that's not our role, to deal with individual cases.

But the fact that complaints are still made about a failure of bishop accountability - I suspect that there will be countries in the world where this issue has still not actually really reached their consciousness as being relevant to them.

I'll just give you one example briefly. It was when we had the conference in 2012 at the Gregorian University where, after Marie Collins spoke very, very powerfully about her own experience, one African bishop stood up and said, "Thank you so much, because I wondered why I had come to this conference. I thought this was a western issue. I didn't realise it applied in my country. You've opened my eyes. I now realise that it is an issue in my country and I was unaware of it."

I think that insight and realisation and awareness is something which the Commission is working hard through its educational endeavours to change, so that there is a wider awareness. It's some of the work that Kath McCormack was speaking about, the importance of raising awareness so that people actually recognise the signs that abuse may be happening or that there may be risk of it.
So the question about whether there are bishops who are not cooperating fully we suspect is true, but of course what we also know is that there are some countries where it may be very difficult to cooperate with civil authorities, because civil authorities may not see this as a crime but may see the allegation and the reporter of the crime as the problem and punish the reporter of the crime.

THE CHAIR: Baroness, Ms McCormack identified what I understand to be a need for more resources for the Commission to effectively carry out its work. I hope I have it right. She nods. Do you share that view?

BARONESS HOLLINS: I do. I do share that view.

THE CHAIR: Then can I ask you why can't the Pope help you?

BARONESS HOLLINS: Well, we are - we've been - setting up this Commission has been quite a complex thing because, as Kath McCormack spoke about and I spoke about, we are trying to find ways of raising awareness and introducing guidelines, which I'm sure Bill Kilgallon will talk about, which will be relevant and meaningful and effective in all countries in the world where the Church is operating.

So why can't the Pope help us? Well, to some extent, we have to understand what the resources are that we need, and the resources are, in my view, about the administrative competencies to be able to run a very effective organisation. I think that perhaps the Vatican itself - how can I put this? - maybe hasn't understood the possibilities.

When we see the organisation and the competencies involved in the Australian Royal Commission, we don't have that level of support. We have some individual, very well qualified members, but in terms of the support that backs it up, they are very good, very committed staff, but they don't have that breadth of experience that I think a larger, more professionally organised body would be able to provide.

THE CHAIR: Well, again, the same question. Why can't you go to the Pope and say, "We don't have the resources we need to effectively carry out our work"?
BARONESS HOLLINS: I think that may well be something that we will be wanting to feed back to him when we complete our review that we're undergoing at the moment. We're looking at the future of the Commission at our next meeting.

MS FURNESS: Back to you, Ms McCormack. In the notes that you provided for the Royal Commission, you set out some challenges that you think exist in Australia in terms of child safety, complaint handling and risk management.

MS MCCORMACK: With complaint handling, I really believe that it's ongoing education all the time and that we can never have enough education about it. Also within the Church I think we've really done our best in some areas to get it across.

One of the things that I'm really impressed with is what is being set up with Catholic Professional Standards Limited, which will be overseeing the work of the Catholic Church. But to do that - you can have all the audits in the world, like in my experience with aged care, disability and childcare, where we had to meet the requirements, of the Children's Guardian, of Ageing and Disability Services; you can tick the boxes all the time, and the five years comes up and you do the audit again. But if you don't start to have an alert culture and it become part of the staff and the people working with children, you're missing the point.

So I think it's education, education, education, and that people start to pick up the behaviours of people, to look at the safe environments, to look at people who are not following the guidelines of the organisation, to look at people who work in isolation, so that all the staff start to understand the indicators. I think that's what has to happen. It has to be an alert culture and that people are working at it all the time.

MS FURNESS: You refer to the pastoral approach to management often taken within the Church being a soft-handed approach?

MS MCCORMACK: Just in my experience in working in the Church, I think that's where the bishops come unstuck, because, as a bishop, they're a pastor to their priest and they take the pastoral approach. It's all about forgiveness, and at times they don't realise that the
person they're taking the pastoral approach to is really managing them very well. They're not dealing with the issue. The recipient is just continuing that behaviour.

So I really think that some of the things that Baroness Hollins spoke about with professional guidance and also with priests being accountable are really important, because I really believe it's very hard for bishops.

One of my experiences is that with working with the bishops, I've been able to enable them to take some responsibility for what has happened and they've really learnt about sexual abuse of children, et cetera, but it has been the clergy who have not come with them. And even to this day, there would still be some priests who would not agree with what the bishop is trying to do for the care and protection in their diocese.

MS FURNESS: And is the structure thus that those priests can do what they wish to do, notwithstanding it's contrary to the bishop's wishes?

MS McCORMACK: Could you repeat?

MS FURNESS: The structure within the diocese with the bishop's role in relation to the priest?

MS McCORMACK: It is the structure in the diocese, but hopefully with what's coming out of the Royal Commission and what the bishops are looking to do together at the Bishops Conference, they will all start to learn what their real role is and be able to work together on that for the future.

MS FURNESS: You'll have heard Baroness Hollins' answers to questions about professional supervision, mandatory continuing training and some sort of performance review as being part and parcel of a priest's life. What do you have to say about that?

MS McCORMACK: Look, I agree with that. A number of my colleagues and friends are priests, and they do operate like that. They're very responsible people. They're professional people. They have ongoing training. They have supervision. They try to help others to do it as well. So it is possible, but I just think that leadership has to make sure that it happens and instill in them.
MS FURNESS: By leadership, you mean the bishops?

MS McCORMACK: I mean the bishops, yes. And the bishops themselves - some bishops take courses and they have their professional retreats. I know that in each diocese, they do have in-service days, and apparently priests are supposed to attend those in-service days, but some don't, and especially around child protection I think it's very serious. Because in the workplace, in places like Catholic Education and CatholicCare and any other organisation in the diocese, if people haven't done their child protection training and have ongoing training in that, that's part of them not being further employed. Well, I think that should be for the priest as well if the priest is a parish priest.

MS FURNESS: Thank you. You speak in your notes about Catholic Professional Standards Limited, the company you've referred to earlier, and you say there that it is to be hoped that dioceses will report on abuse cases and their strategies, et cetera. When you say "it is to be hoped", do you have some doubt that that will occur?

MS McCORMACK: Look, I've been very encouraged by listening to the hearing here over the last couple of weeks and hearing the religious leaders and the bishops saying that they're going to go along with this, that they agree with it. But I think it is about the leadership making sure that all their people who are in their communities or dioceses come along with it.

The whole thing is that in New South Wales we have very good guidelines that we follow. We're fortunate. It would be good if that were Australia-wide, because then you have an external body that's really monitoring what's happening.

MS FURNESS: What you seem to be saying is that it effectively depends upon the qualities of the bishop as to what the culture will be within that diocese?

MS McCORMACK: I think that's right.

MS FURNESS: And the same with the parish priests, their personal qualities will determine what happens in their parish?
MS McCORMACK: Yes.

MS FURNESS: And whether or not they involve laity in the work they do?

MS McCORMACK: One of the things - my experience has been that laity have been very involved, and, as I said, I've been very fortunate in the diocese that I've worked in because I had bishops that did listen and I was able to work with them and able to lead them to put appropriate processes in place.

Also, before I left the diocese, it was women who were doing all the work around child protection. That was a real breakthrough, and that is continuing and I know that. So I do think a lot of bishops are very open to that.

MS FURNESS: You speak about training as being very important and education as being very important and you provide some statistics from 2015 in relation to the United States. This is on page 6 of your notes. You say that from its 2015 audit, the Catholic Church in the United States has already trained 98 per cent of its volunteers, employees, educators, clergy and candidates in parishes how to create safe environments and prevent sexual abuse, and prepared more than 4.3 million children to recognise abuse and protect themselves. I take it that's the sort of work that you would be encouraging take place in Australia?

MS McCORMACK: Most definitely, yes, and I think that's the sort of work with the Pontifical Commission we would be looking and hoping to do, to get other countries to do that.

One of the other things is that in Australia - and I can only speak about the diocese that I've worked in - there have been a lot of good processes put in place, although a lot of things haven't been done appropriately, but I think we need to start talking about how we do educate - what are the requirements for people to work in a diocese, whether they're a teacher, social worker, psychologist or a priest, and then to make sure that, within that diocese, we then tell people what is going on, how many cases there have been, how we've dealt with it, what education programs have gone on, so that people then -
we can start to alert people who live in the community that
we are trying to be an alert culture for children.

MS FURNESS: Thank you. Can I turn to your colleague.
Would you tell the Royal Commission your full name?

MR KILGALLON: Yes, it's William Francis Kilgallon, but
Bill generally.

MS FURNESS: Thank you, Mr Kilgallon. And your current
position?

MR KILGALLON: I currently work for the Catholic Church in
New Zealand as Director of the National Office for
Professional Standards.

MS FURNESS: And you've been a member of the Pontifical
Commission since December 2015?

MR KILGALLON: Yes. I joined at the same time as
Kath McCormack.

MS FURNESS: How did your appointment come about?

MR KILGALLON: I was consulted about the membership of the
Commission and recommended somebody that I thought would be
very suitable to be a member of the Commission and had
a reply inviting me to join the Commission.

MS FURNESS: Was it your background in professional
standards, do you think, that caused you to be invited?

MR KILGALLON: No. I think it was - that's something
much sort of later in my life. It's a mixture of my
experience. I started my working life as a Catholic priest
in a city called Leeds in the north of England, as you'd
guess by the accent, and spent most of my working life
there.

I went there in 1970, and in 1971 I set up an
organisation to work with homeless people, because there
were lots of them in the city centre, and set up an
independent organisation to work with them and then trained
in social work and then went back to work there and then
left the priesthood and carried on in that work and
developed that organisation.
Now, people who end up homeless on the streets are there for a variety of reasons. Many of them had serious issues with alcohol misuse, serious mental health problems, so over the years we developed services for drinkers, we developed services for street drug users, and a series of services for people with mental health problems and learning disabilities. So I ran that organisation for I think 24 years.

From starting in a basement building behind the cathedral, by the time I left it, we were working across the north-east of England, had about 850 staff and provided a wide range of services.

At the same time, I'd got involved in the politics of the city and so was on the city council and on various health service management boards.

In the early 1980s the issue of sexual abuse in families started to become really apparent, and one of the paediatricians in the city and a police officer did some really pioneering work in recognising it and taking action. They faced very, very severe criticism. People did not want to hear their message in the city.

I was at that time responsible for social services on the city council, and so it fell to me to get involved very closely with them and, if you like, stand alongside them in that work.

I got involved, then, over the years in a number of advisory bodies to government on mental health issues and on learning disabilities and on the training of social workers, so at national level, and eventually then went to work heading up an organisation the government had set up called the Social Care Institute for Excellence, which looked at trying to identify what works in social work and social care and then set guidance for policy and practice, to set the standards so that the inspectorates could go in and look at those services and measure them against best practice. So I did that for some years in London.

I'd earlier in my career, as well, been involved in a couple of inquiries, one into very serious failures in a local authority children's service in the north-east of England where, in residential care, there had been systematic and continued sexual abuse of children, and
I was appointed to lead that inquiry, and, again, an inquiry into a hospital for people with learning disabilities where there had been significant abuse and really major failures in the management of that hospital that was part of the National Health Service.

MS FURNESS: Can I bring you to the Pontifical Commission. Is your work there primarily in relation to the guidelines?

MR KILGALLON: That has been the focus up till now - mainly developing those guidelines. The guidelines are important because you have to have a starting point. The guidelines, if they're not followed -

MS FURNESS: Can I stop you for a minute so you can explain what the guidelines are about?

MR KILGALLON: Yes. We start off with - these guidelines are a template for the Church around the world. Each conference of bishops is required to have a set of guidelines about how they will prevent and respond to sexual abuse.

So we've given them a template to draw up their guidelines on. It starts from the foundations are the gospel; that this isn't some kind of optional extra that children and vulnerable adults should be safe, this is absolutely central to the mission of the Church. The second foundation is the United Nations declaration on the rights of the child, because right through, wherever the abuse takes place, whether it's in the Church, in government establishments, or wherever, those children are being abused, their rights are being ignored, and that's a fundamental issue for us, that children have rights. So that's where we begin.

The next stage is that within a country or set of countries that are grouped together, there should be one set of guidelines that every diocese and every religious order signs up to. We don't want a situation where you have a country where everybody agrees it except one rogue bishop doing his own thing, or one rogue order saying, "We don't want to sign up to that." It needs to be a coherent set of guidelines for the whole country.

Then it goes through a fairly logical process of saying we need to have safe recruitment, we need to have
good training of the people we recruit, we need to develop
a safe Church environment, and that includes having
education and awareness raising. We then need to see what
happens when abuse does happen, that there are good
structures for responding to abuse. Then the next section
is about how we work with survivors and victims, and then
finally about offenders. The last section says when you've
got all this in place, you need a monitoring system,
a system of audit and monitoring that has some independence
and that can look at each diocese and order and see if they
are carrying out what is in the guidelines. So that's the
structure that we are recommending to every country.

MS FURNESS: When you say you're recommending, is it the
Commission that's recommending it or is it Pope Francis
that's recommending it?

MR KILGALLON: At this stage it's the Commission that's
recommending it. We've published it on our website, as
you've seen, because you've read that. I think it's a very
useful template.

Now, we're working across the world and we're working
with some countries where they don't have much in the way
of a developed system of safeguarding for children and
vulnerable adults, and so we've had initial talks with some
of the Catholic development agencies, and they're willing
to help in those countries to promote the structures and
develop and train people to undertake this sort of work.

MS FURNESS: Do you have any system in place for
determining whether, and if so who, has taken up or not
taken up the guidelines?

MR KILGALLON: One of the proposals that we're looking at
next month is having an assessment, having somebody review
all the guidelines that are currently in existence, so
there will be 120 Bishops Conferences, roughly, it might
be - 120 at the most, I think - reviewing all those,
analysing them, and seeing how they compare with the
template and then working to see how we can assist those
countries to develop it, particularly those that are way
off the mark. That will need a significant research
capability.

MS FURNESS: I take it that in terms of your dealings with
these 120-odd, did you say Bishops Conferences --
MR KILGALLON: Yes.

MS FURNESS: -- that your role is one of influence and persuasion with the imprimatur of the Pope behind you, having established the Commission?

MR KILGALLON: That's right. Now, whether influence will change and how long that influence will take is a matter of debate, but that's the approach that's being taken.

The same system works within our work across the Vatican as well, that because our remit is broad, we don't fit with any departments in the Vatican, but our work touches many of them. So, for example, the congregation that's responsible for training clergy has, in its last directive about training clergy, said that there must be, in seminary training, specific modules on safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults. So that has to be introduced into all seminaries. The reference for that is work that's being done by the Pontifical Commission.

So our work touches many of the departments, and that's a challenge, too. I mean, anybody who has worked with government, whether it's in Church or in the state, knows how jealously government departments guard their own domain and there can be some push-back about taking advice from others.

MS FURNESS: The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith has quite a significant role in relation to priests who are accused, where the bishop accepts some semblance of the truth about their conduct. Perhaps I might ask this of you, Baroness, there has been evidence that, in Australia, the CDF is very slow in responding to matters that are brought to its attention by Australian bishops. Now, I understand that there is no functional relationship between you and the CDF. However, Cardinal O'Malley, I think, has recently been appointed to the CDF. Is that right?

BARONESS HOLLINS: Yes, that's right.

MS FURNESS: What have been, if any, your dealings or interactions with the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith?
BARONESS HOLLINS: One of the first appointed members of the Pontifical Commission was a professor of canon law, a lay professor of canon law, who was employed as a staff member within the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. He resigned from the Commission last year because he felt he couldn't give the time that he needed, and I don't know the full reasons, but we were told that he had decided he couldn't make the contribution that was needed.

But it was useful having him. It was also very difficult for him because he only spoke Italian, and the working language of the Commission is English. Most people have at least some English. But it does make communication very difficult, even with good interpreters.

The other thing that has happened is that at our last meeting, a staff member from the CDF came for the meeting, and Bill Kilgallon could say more about that, because one of the reasons he came was specifically to work with the guidelines working group.

MR KILGALLON: Yes. We have identified in every department a link person with the Commission. The link person identified by the CDF was an American canon lawyer working in the CDF, and he was very helpful, in the last meeting we had, in talking to us about the guidelines.

Sadly, he has returned to the USA because appointments to the Vatican are for a fixed period usually of five or seven years. People go from different countries. So we'll hopefully get as good a link person again. But there are challenges there, as I say, about relating to departments.

MS FURNESS: There has equally been evidence that the process with the CDF works reasonably well, so there is differing evidence before the Royal Commission about that. Have either of you had any dealings with the CDF or others who have had dealings with the CDF to be able to comment on that?

MR KILGALLON: Yes, I've had dealings there. The process I've found to be slow and I think there are systems that could be improved considerably. It could be dealt with regionally instead of everything being sent to Rome.

The risk of that is that regions would not do it well, but the CDF could have the auditing role rather than the
doing role, and that would, I think, be more effective. So you could have a region - Australia, New Zealand, Pacific Islands, PNG and the Solomon Islands - as a group, for example, and do it regionally and have some expertise attached to that.

MS FURNESS: Is there any role that the Commission has in relation to raising an issue like that?

MR KILGALLON: Yes. One of our working groups looks at particular issues about canon law. We're meeting this time - they've looked at a number of issues in canon law, and, for example, one of the issues I've asked them to look at is, within canon law, there is the equivalent of a statute of limitations for dealing with sexual abuse cases of 20 years, which can be dispensed with on a case-by-case basis and usually is.

I'm recommending that they request a change to canon law so that there is no statute of limitations because the statute of limitations, in my experience, is a great disservice to those who have been abused. It does nothing for them. It only serves to protect the organisation and sometimes the abuser.

MS FURNESS: Thank you. Now, I think we might be having some difficulties with the video connection. Can you hear me, Baroness?

BARONESS HOLLINS: I can hear you, yes. I can't see you any more. It says that somebody has left the meeting. The lights went off in the room, and I think the security officer came to turn them back on again, but just when he did that, the video connection disappeared. I could go and just call him and ask him to come back, but I can hear you.

MS FURNESS: Why don't we just continue without seeing you but hearing you.

THE CHAIR: We can't see you, either, Baroness.

BARONESS HOLLINS: Okay.

MS FURNESS: Baroness, is there anything you wish to add, having heard the evidence of the other two members?

BARONESS HOLLINS: I agree with what they've said. One
thing I'd like to say is that I think we are all speaking as individuals. We're not actually representing the Pontifical Commission. That's quite important because - so that's one thing.

Is there something else that I would like to say? No, I don't think so.

THE CHAIR: Baroness, that comment intrigues me. Would the Commission say different things?

BARONESS HOLLINS: I think the individual members will have different perspectives. I don't think they would say - I don't think all of the Commission members would necessarily agree with everything that I've said, because people will have their individual perspectives. And, remember, people come from all over the world, so their own experience will be different.

MR KILGALLON: Yes. We're not, as a group, developing any party line. If we did, I think some of us would choose not to be there. The invitation was quite clear that we were there as individuals because of the experience we've had. Certainly I would personally resist any attempt to say that, "This is a line you will follow", because I don't see that as our purpose.

THE CHAIR: It leads to a further question. The picture you all paint, from an outsider's point of view, is of a world organisation which is struggling to come to terms with the safety of children and its responsibilities in that area. Is that right?

MR KILGALLON: I would agree with that, yes, yes.

THE CHAIR: Baroness, do you share that view?

BARONESS HOLLINS: Yes, I do. I think as the total leadership, that is true. I think the Pope does understand the seriousness of it and I think there are many other leaders who do, but I think that the organisation, with the leadership that it has - there are some people struggling to come to terms with it.

THE CHAIR: Insofar as you each make your contribution as you do, do you have confidence that you have the capacity, resources and, if you like, the power to actually influence
change?

MR KILGALLON: I would say that although we've not been refused anything, we haven't had any request for funding denied at all, I think the way that the Commission has been structured in terms of the support staff is inadequate. I think those inadequacies will be discussed at our next meeting because we have a session about that, and I think we all have views on how that could be improved.

It's early days in those terms, and I think we have to learn from experience elsewhere. I have to say that looking at this Commission, I have followed this Commission very closely. Although we're only over the ditch there, New Zealand doesn't always see Australia as a model in anything --

THE CHAIR: I'm surprised.

MR KILGALLON: But we've been following this, I've been following this, and one of the things that has really impressed me is the approach you've taken to research. It seems to me that you've had a very systematic, well thought out program, and you've commissioned research widely into some really important topics. I have to say I was pleased to see my former organisation undertaking one of the research proposals. That's of value not just in Australia but throughout the world, because many of the issues you've looked at apply elsewhere and there's a huge amount of learning that you've brought there.

We as a Commission can follow that example. Take an issue that was debated yesterday with the religious orders about whether people should be kept within communities or not. As far as I can see, there's no evidence base for taking a decision on that. There has been no research that I'm aware of as to whether sending people - detaching them from the community or keeping them in community, whether one works better than the other. That's an area of research that we're talking about whether we should commission from the Pontifical Commission, specifically looking at that, because that seems to me to be a crucial issue.

THE CHAIR: You realise that the significance of the work that you're doing in relation to the whole Church is of fundamental importance to individual countries?
MR KILGALLON: Yes.

THE CHAIR: Because insofar as this Commission has identified, recognised and discussed problems with culture, practices and the way the Church conducts itself in Australia, real change will only occur, as we understand the process, if it's coming from Rome ultimately.

MR KILGALLON: Yes.

THE CHAIR: I assume you all share that perspective?

MS McCORMACK: I'd just like to, if I could, answer the question about the Commission, and Bill answered you. I would just like to say that when I first started out in this work in the late 1980s and the 1990s, there was such resistance. I worked in such isolation, because no-one believed what was happening, and we had no guidelines, we had no processes, no map, and we just had to work our way through it.

Through doing that, we were able to draw the state into it and child protection - everything. We were able to do it. And that's how I experience Rome. The only way that I can stand it is that I have to have hope, and it's like water on a rock. We've just got to keep at it. The few things that we have achieved - and I think one of the greatest things is, with the formation of bishops, that now Cardinal O'Malley and members of the Commission are there speaking to the bishops and educating them about child protection, and that's happening already.

So if we can start there in Rome, maybe that can have a ripple effect through the world. So we know how serious it is, but it's the responsibility we have and, as I said, it's hope.

THE CHAIR: Baroness, do you want to say anything on that subject?

BARONESS HOLLINS: Yes. When we first started out, there were big issues about what kind of organisation would we be? Would we be entirely independent? Who would fund us? What would our relationship be with other organisations within the Vatican? Whereas on one hand some members were very keen that we should be entirely independent, in the
end it was decided that we would become what's called an autonomous institution within the Vatican.

We're actually not like any other organisation within the Vatican. We were very clear that we didn't want to be part of a dicastery or part of a congregation, because we wanted to be separate. However, there are real difficulties in doing that. Part of what we've been doing over the three years - and it may seem that it has taken us a long time to get to where we've got - is that we've been having to establish relationships and try to understand how things are done within what is essentially an Italian kind of organisation.

I think we believe very strongly that the Church should be paying for this work, that we shouldn't be raising money from outside or from philanthropy, that we should be looking to the Church to fund it, but trying to work out what we need to have in place in order to be able to have the influence that we need is quite difficult - and I think the way that Kath McCormack has just put it, about trying to find the map which will enable us to know where we should be putting our efforts.

And I would just say one more thing, which is that rather than actually doing research ourselves, I do think that we're beginning to understand the need to engage other people to do some of that work and we're going to have to work through partners. There's no way a small organisation, or even a big organisation, in Rome could ever do what needs to be done across the world. So it is going to be through educating leaders, educating Church leaders, and through commissioning or encouraging research to take place in other places.

For example, the Centre for Child Protection now has six PhD students coming from different countries, who are doing research on formation, around issues which have been raised by the working group on formation in the Pontifical Commission. It's those kinds of partnerships and the partnerships that Bill Kilgallon spoke about with the Catholic development agencies where we need other people to be supporting our work and really developing it. But that sort of central organisation, I would say, is still a work in progress. We haven't got it right yet.

THE CHAIR: Ms Needham, do you have any questions?
COMMISSIONER ATKINSON: Excuse me, I have a couple of things. Thank you.

Ms McCormack, you mentioned an alert culture when you talked about auditing and ticking the box and that sort of thing. As well as an alert culture, though, would you not agree that there needs, as well, to be a supportive culture so that if someone does see a boundary violation or something that concerns them, they can go to the appropriate management level and be fully supported in raising that issue and not be the subject of any criticism or punishment?

MS McCORMACK: That's what I mean by an alert culture, that everybody is on the same bus, that people all take responsibility; it's not just management. If a colleague sees a colleague not following the guidelines or working individually with children, that they would have the confidence to go forward - that's what I'm talking about.

COMMISSIONER ATKINSON: Would you see the responsibility for inculcating that sort of culture in any organisation as starting at the top?

MS McCORMACK: Of course, yes, but I think with the top being open to the suggestions of the people in the workplace as well.

COMMISSIONER ATKINSON: Yes, and in the Catholic dioceses, that would be the bishop?

MS McCORMACK: Yes, and in the Catholic dioceses, the bishops do have professional standards groups and hopefully there are a lot of people there who are qualified in education, welfare, et cetera, and understand child protection completely, and that's where that would happen.

COMMISSIONER ATKINSON: Thank you. Do you want to add anything to that, Mr Kilgallon?

MR KILGALLON: I think that's absolutely essential. Certainly I found in the work I did in the UK with the Church that one of the best ways of getting people into training was the commitment that the bishops and congregation leaders made that they would themselves have safeguarding training on a regular basis, and so they could
then encourage or direct people in the Church, their priests, their religious, to follow that example.

And you're absolutely right, it's creating a culture in an organisation where people can report concerns, where they will be listened to and it will be acted upon. That's absolutely essential in any organisation.

COMMISSIONER ATKINSON: Thank you for that.

Baroness Hollins, can I just ask you - you mentioned, as I understood it, in your evidence before the Commission, that there was a difficulty perhaps for the Pope in terms of removing a bishop from office without very, very strong evidence to do so. Is that a fair summary of what you said?

BARONESS HOLLINS: I think it's about being - I mean, for any legal process to take place, people need to have a case presented and for that case to be clearly presented. It shouldn't just be on the word of - it shouldn't, in my view, be done just privately, quietly, without some kind of process. We were told that there was no such process; that if there was a complaint about a bishop, it would probably be a cardinal who would take that case. They're restricted to such a process.

COMMISSIONER ATKINSON: Could I just ask you, are you aware generally of any bishops that have been removed from office in the United Kingdom?

BARONESS HOLLINS: Well, I know of bishops that are - Bill probably knows, because in your previous job you would know whether that had happened. I'm aware of one bishop at the moment who has been stood aside from his diocese pending investigation.

COMMISSIONER ATKINSON: Do you know if that's for failure to act in terms of child sexual abuse matters?

BARONESS HOLLINS: That wasn't in terms of child sexual abuse, no.

COMMISSIONER ATKINSON: Do you know what it was for?

BARONESS HOLLINS: It was for an allegation of a sexual relationship with one or more women.
COMMISSIONER ATKINSON: And no other matters that you're aware of in the United Kingdom where a bishop has been removed from office?

BARONESS HOLLINS: I'm not. I don't know whether Bill Kilgallon is aware?

COMMISSIONER ATKINSON: Perhaps Mr Kilgallon might respond. Thank you.

MR KILGALLON: Sheila is correct, that a bishop in England was removed. He has been replaced. In another part of the United Kingdom, Scotland, which in Church terms is a separate country and separate hierarchy, the cardinal there was stood down as a cardinal because of inappropriate sexual behaviour with adult males who were - he was in a position of power over them as a seminary rector and then as a bishop.

COMMISSIONER ATKINSON: Thank you.

MR KILGALLON: And there's one fairly close to here, the Archbishop in Guam is currently being processed by the Vatican. He's been accused of abusing children, and there's a statute of limitations in Guam, because it's a US dependency, and the US is very keen on statutes of limitations, and he's currently going through a Vatican trial. He's the most local to here that I know of.

COMMISSIONER MURRAY: Baroness Hollins, it's Commissioner Murray here. Earlier in your evidence you said that one of the important issues included transparency and openness. The evidence to the Royal Commission in Australia has been that a lack of internal accountability and a culture of secrecy and concealment, even between bishops and within individual dioceses, has allowed damage to accelerate and accumulate because matters weren't dealt with in a timely and responsive fashion - tremendous damage, therefore, to the Church's reputation.

Overcoming a culture like that is a massive enterprise. Do you genuinely, as an involved person in the Pontifical Commission, believe there is a climate at large to end that culture of secrecy and concealment and to really introduce genuine transparency and openness and internal accountability at least?
BARONESS HOLLINS: I think this is a really big difficulty and I think it's associated with - I think it's linked to clericalism. I think to change that culture is really, really difficult. The remarkable film that was made about the sexual abuse situation in Boston, which I presume you've seen?

COMMISSIONER MURRAY: Yes, yes.

BARONESS HOLLINS: We watched that as the Commission, and fundamentally one of the things that it showed was the way in which secrecy was really so damaging. My feeling is that that film ought to be watched by Church leaders all over the world so that they can understand how that came about and how damaging it was. Sometimes one needs different ways to try to get across to people just what secrecy means.

For me as a psychiatrist, I've seen it all the time, in families where they will keep secrets, or in organisations where secrets are kept, because it's felt that if the truth came out it would hurt people more. And it's exactly the reverse: the truth is usually much less bad, you know, than what people fear.

So secrecy is a bad thing, on the whole. But people don't understand that and it's really, really hard to change cultures.

COMMISSIONER MURRAY: That was the point of my question. I'm not yet convinced that the climate exists for that culture to change in that fashion.

BARONESS HOLLINS: I don't think it's just an edict from above which can change it. I think it's the process which has to be undergone, and there are lots of people trying to change that culture. The Pontifical Commission is one of them.

But it takes a long time to change cultures. I know that from my work with institutions, for example. One of your research reports, which was about institutions, showed how difficult it is in total institutions, in closed institutions, to help people to change and to understand the harm that's caused by those kinds of closed organisations.
COMMISSIONER MURRAY: Thank you, Baroness.

THE CHAIR: Ms Needham?

<EXAMINATION BY MS NEEDHAM:

MS NEEDHAM: Baroness, just a couple of questions to you. Can you hear me?

BARONESS HOLLINS: Yes, I can.

MS NEEDHAM: Thank you. It's Jane Needham. I'm representing the Truth, Justice and Healing Council in this hearing. You were asked some questions about how the Commission was formed and your role in choosing personnel for the Commission. Do you recall those?

BARONESS HOLLINS: Yes. I didn't choose people. The members were asked to help to identify members, and so I participated actively in making inquiries through my own networks to see whether I could identify people with the right skills.

MS NEEDHAM: You noted that there was a balance of gender and a mix of clerical and lay members on the Commission. Was that a thoughtful process which was engaged in to have that outcome?

BARONESS HOLLINS: For me, it was absolutely imperative that the Commission members would include a majority of laypeople, and it was also very important for me that there should be an equal number of women, because I felt that without it, the Commission wouldn't have any credibility and there would be a real risk that the lay voice would be marginalised. I also felt that it was very important that the survivor voice should be present, however hard that might be for survivors. And that is in fact what we have achieved. We have achieved I think an equal number of women and the majority of laypeople.

MS NEEDHAM: Has there been, to your observation, an acceptance by the Holy Father of advice from a body with a balance of women and a majority of laypeople?

BARONESS HOLLINS: Absolutely, yes.
MS NEEDHAM: Now, on day one of the hearing, Ms Furness opened in a statement, which I think you have seen, and noted that you had declined the Chair’s invitation to give oral evidence, preferring to rely on a submission. Do you have a comment about that?

BARONESS HOLLINS: Well, I felt that the questions that were being asked were quite complex and that to answer those through videolink would be very difficult and I said that I preferred to give written evidence.

I submitted my written evidence and had expected that I might have some follow-ups requesting further information or, indeed, if people were still wanting to have a video interview with me, they would ask. But I in fact had no further response to the submission that I made until very recently.

MS NEEDHAM: Thank you, Baroness.

Finally, for Mr Kilgallon, you were asked some questions about tab 46 of the tender bundle, which is the guidelines, the template guidelines. These came up in evidence I think last week and there was some query about the status of the guidelines - whether they were draft or in development or whether that was the final form. Would you be able to give your assistance to the Commission on that point?

MR KILGALLON: Yes, this is the final form. The reference at the top, on the website, to - I think it says a beta version, is the beta version of the website, not of the content. So it's the website that's still in development.

MS NEEDHAM: Thank you. No further questions.

MS FURNESS: Your Honour, just one matter arising from the guidelines. There's reference in part 9 to responding to complaints of abuse, and the second dot point says:

There should be a clear statement about compliance with the requirements of civil authorities and Church authorities ... [including] any civil requirements on mandatory reporting.

MR KILGALLON: Yes.
MS FURNESS: I think Cardinal O'Malley has said recently that his view was that there was a moral obligation to report, notwithstanding a legal requirement. Do you remember him saying that?

MR KILGALLON: I do indeed, yes.

MS FURNESS: Was there a discussion, when developing these guidelines, about whether his view should be reflected in the guidelines?

MR KILGALLON: Yes. There's a discussion, and it's a continuing one, about how we can have a guideline on mandatory reporting for all countries, because there are some countries in which we have been told by people living there that for somebody to report abuse to the civil authority puts them at risk, particularly in countries where there are particular versions of sharia law. For example, if a woman reports a sexual assault by a man, she can, in some countries, be also gaoled for having sexual intercourse outside marriage, even though it was unwilling; she wasn't consenting.

So in some countries, it would present a real difficulty in protecting the victim. Now, we need to phrase that in such a way that that doesn't give a let-out to those countries which do have a proper system of reporting and where it would be safe to report.

So I think that my assessment is that the guidance will be adapted to say - and this is certainly what we're looking at, so it's a bit premature to say it will be agreed, but it is likely to say, in my view - that the general rule should be that the Church reports offences except where a country establishes very clearly that that would create greater risk for the victim. And, sadly, there are those countries. And of course there are countries where it's not considered to be a crime.

MS FURNESS: You say that's your assessment of the guidance that may come. Has it been discussed within the Commission to know whether the majority view is --

MR KILGALLON: Yes, and it's being discussed again next month, yes.
MS FURNESS: Are you in the majority?

MR KILGALLON: I don't know. I think the difficulty for some countries that has been expressed to us is that they see it as a very western solution. You know, they say, "It's okay for you in countries where there is a trustworthy police force", but in a country where there isn't that trust, where there isn't a reliable civil authority, and where that person would be at risk, then they've got to exercise some judgment about that.

So I think we have to find a way of - and that's one of the challenges of working across the world, that we're talking to some countries where the most significant abuse of children is that they're drafted into the armed forces at the age of seven and eight; they become child soldiers; in other countries where the biggest issue is that children are being sold into sex trafficking, and that's often with the connivance and the involvement of authorities rather than expecting any protection from authorities. So that's a really difficult issue for countries that, as I say, are at a stage where they don't have stable civil government and a government that accepts that this is a crime.

MS FURNESS: The way you have spoken of dealing with it - that is, an exception where it would do harm to report - is one way of dealing with those two very different systems, isn't it?

MR KILGALLON: That's my view, yes, that we'd need to move to that, because I think it's important that people realise that abusing children is a crime and that people who do it should be prosecuted. There should be no question about that. Anybody who abuses a child should be prosecuted. They're criminals.

MS FURNESS: Baroness, do you have anything you want to add to that issue?

BARONESS HOLLINS: I think it has been the position in Rome for quite a long time that bishops should fully cooperate, but this was raised at the conference in the Gregorian University when a bishop asked Monsignor Scicluna, the protector, the promoter of justice at the CDF, how far is a bishop required to cooperate, and he said a bishop is required to fully cooperate with civil authorities.
The issue of mandatory reporting is always going to be a contentious one in different countries. In the United Kingdom we don't have mandatory reporting in the same way that you do in many Australian states - I don't think all, do you? And there are members of the Commission, the Pontifical Commission, who feel very strongly that nothing less than mandatory reporting for the whole world should be introduced.

I think one of the difficulties we are facing is trying to define what is meant by it. Bill Kilgallon explained I think very well how that obligation to cooperate may need to be modified according to the reliability of civil authorities in those countries. Of course, that could be seen as being a very difficult one. But the Church does expect the Church leadership in each country to determine how they work within that country's legal framework.

MS FURNESS: Thank you. I have nothing further, your Honour.

THE CHAIR: Yes, that brings this discussion to an end. Can I thank you all for your contribution.

Baroness, I'm sorry if there was a misunderstanding about your giving evidence, but we are very glad that you were able to join us today.

As may be apparent from what I've said already, we see the work that you're doing as a very important part of the Church's response, which of course will assist the Church to perhaps come to terms with the recommendations we will make in due course.

Can I thank you again and excuse you from further attendance.

<THE WITNESSES WITHDREW

THE CHAIR: We will adjourn to 2 o'clock.

LUNCHEON ADJOURNMENT

MS FURNESS: Thank you, your Honour. The purpose of today's panel is to largely understand the work that has
been done in the five metropolitan archdioceses and the reforms that have been undertaken to ensure the protection of children, and we have each of the archbishops present to give evidence today.

<MARK BENEDICT COLERIDGE, on former oath: [2.03pm]

<DENIS JAMES HART, sworn: [2.03pm]

<ANTHONY COLIN JOSEPH FISHER, sworn: [2.03pm]

<PHILIP EDWARD WILSON, sworn: [2.03pm]

<TIMOTHY JOHN COSTELLOE, sworn: [2.03pm]

<EXAMINATION BY MS FURNESS:

THE CHAIR: Archbishop, I trust you feel comfortable there. We didn't have a capacity to accommodate you with the other four.

ARCHBISHOP COLERIDGE: I feel demoted, your Honour, but very satisfied.

THE CHAIR: Very well. Thank you.

MS FURNESS: I will start with you, Archbishop Coleridge. Would you tell the Royal Commission again your full name?

ARCHBISHOP COLERIDGE: Mark Benedict Coleridge.

MS FURNESS: You are the Archbishop of Brisbane?

ARCHBISHOP COLERIDGE: The Archbishop of Brisbane; correct.

MS FURNESS: Could I turn to you, Archbishop Hart. Would you tell the Royal Commission your full name?

ARCHBISHOP HART: Denis James Hart.

MS FURNESS: Archbishop, you have given evidence before the Royal Commission earlier?

ARCHBISHOP HART: I have.

MS FURNESS: You are the Archbishop of Melbourne?
ARCHBISHOP HART: Correct.

MS FURNESS: Archbishop Fisher?

ARCHBISHOP FISHER: I'm Anthony Colin Joseph Fisher and I am the Archbishop of Sydney.

MS FURNESS: You haven't given evidence earlier, have you?

ARCHBISHOP FISHER: I have not.

MS FURNESS: Archbishop Wilson?

ARCHBISHOP WILSON: Philip Edward Wilson, the Archbishop of Adelaide.

MS FURNESS: And you have given evidence earlier?

ARCHBISHOP WILSON: Twice.

MS FURNESS: And --

ARCHBISHOP COSTELLOE: Timothy John Costelloe, the Archbishop of Perth.

MS FURNESS: Thank you. Each of you has provided a statement to the Royal Commission answering a series of questions that were put to you; that's right?

(ALL ARCHBISHOPS): Yes.

MS FURNESS: And you have referred to a range of policies, procedures and reforms that have been undertaken in relation to each of your archdioceses. Each of those documents has been tendered and is in evidence, just so that you are aware that it is already before the Royal Commission.

Can I start with you, Archbishop Costelloe. You have a copy of your statement before you?

ARCHBISHOP COSTELLOE: I do, yes.

MS FURNESS: If I can turn to paragraph 6 of your statement - do the Commissioners have access to that statement?
JUSTICE COATE: Yes.

MS FURNESS: As a preamble, as it were, to your statement, you gave reasons as to why you considered that the reforms that you have set out in your statement were necessary?

ARCHBISHOP COSTELLOE: Yes.

MS FURNESS: The first reason you give is:

The high incidence of sexual abuse of minors by clergy, religious and other Church personnel in the Catholic Church indicates that there has been catastrophic failure in relation to the protection of children in the Church in Australia.

ARCHBISHOP COSTELLOE: Yes.

MS FURNESS: Is that a catastrophic failure of leadership?

ARCHBISHOP COSTELLOE: It certainly is a catastrophic failure of leadership, yes. I think it's a catastrophic failure in many respects, but primarily in leadership, yes.

MS FURNESS: What other respects?

ARCHBISHOP COSTELLOE: Well, in the sense, I suppose, many of the things that I would mention in many ways relate to poor leadership. One of the things that occurs to me is that the very reality of the sexual abuse of children and young people is such a fundamental betrayal of what the Catholic Church purports to stand for that I have spent a lot of time reflecting on how it is that someone who has given his or her life to the Church could be engaged in these kinds of activities.

That leads me to reflect that there has also been a catastrophic failure in - the best way I can express it is in keeping people faithful to the commitments they made. So I ask myself what can possibly have gone wrong or what was missing or what has been out of balance that could lead not just to one, which would be bad enough, but to countless, countless people failing in this way.

MS FURNESS: Thank you. Archbishop Wilson, can I ask you
whether you share Archbishop Costelloe's view in relation to the catastrophic failure primarily in terms of leadership but in other matters?

ARCHBISHOP WILSON: Yes, I do share that.

MS FURNESS: Archbishop Fisher?

ARCHBISHOP FISHER: I do also.

MS FURNESS: Archbishop Hart?

ARCHBISHOP HART: Certainly.

MS FURNESS: Archbishop Coleridge?

ARCHBISHOP COLERIDGE: Yes, I would agree.

MS FURNESS: Coming back to you, Archbishop Costelloe, in your second point, you refer to the response to the scandal by some church authorities, especially in the past, as hopelessly inadequate.

ARCHBISHOP COSTELLOE: Yes.

MS FURNESS: Is that the strongest term you think applies to the response of some Church authorities to the scandal?

ARCHBISHOP COSTELLOE: I think it is a fair description. It perhaps could be augmented by other descriptions. I think it has been scandalously insufficient, hopelessly inadequate, scandalously inefficient. I'm struggling for other words. It's just such a fundamental failure that I am not sure what else I could say.

MS FURNESS: The consequences of that hopelessly inadequate response have been catastrophic, haven't they?

ARCHBISHOP COSTELLOE: Yes, yes.

MS FURNESS: Archbishop Wilson, do you agree with Archbishop Costelloe's view as to the response of the Church?

ARCHBISHOP WILSON: I do. I think that people were all at sea and really unaware of what they needed to do.
MS FURNESS: That's perhaps a reason for it rather than the nature of it. Is there anything more you would say about the nature of the response?

ARCHBISHOP WILSON: I would agree with what Archbishop Costelloe said about that. I think that his description of it is really accurate.

MS FURNESS: Thank you. Archbishop Fisher?

ARCHBISHOP FISHER: Yes, I entirely agree. I think you might want to use stronger words in some cases, that it was a kind of criminal negligence to deal with some of the problems that were staring us in the face.

In other cases, I think there were people that were just like rabbits in the headlights. They just had no idea what to do, and their performance was appalling.

MS FURNESS: Thank you. Archbishop Hart?

ARCHBISHOP HART: I would make my own very much the words that Archbishop Fisher used and the description that he gave - totally, totally inadequate. Just totally wrong.

MS FURNESS: Thank you. Archbishop Coleridge?

ARCHBISHOP COLERIDGE: It strikes me that the failure, which was colossal, was in some ways a colossal failure of culture, because, you see, you had leaders who were in themselves good and decent and experienced men but who, in very different places and different times, made exactly the same mistakes without comparing notes or even talking to each other about it informally.

Now, where you find those kinds of convergences, I think that's when you are dealing with culture. If it was, as I think it is, a colossal failure of leadership, it did amount - and I think this has emerged through the process of the Royal Commission - in important ways as a colossal failure of culture that led to the colossal failure of leadership.

MS FURNESS: Coming back to you, Archbishop Costelloe, in your last subpoint under subparagraph 6 you say: *Because the Catholic Church, as an*
institution, has been responsible for many shocking incidents ... the Church has an obligation to now be a significant part of the solution ...

ARCHBISHOP COSTELLOE: Yes.

MS FURNESS: Now, this statement of yours was signed in September of last year?

ARCHBISHOP COSTELLOE: Yes.

MS FURNESS: Since that date, you have no doubt become aware of the data by the Church authorities in relation to claims of sexual abuse?

ARCHBISHOP COSTELLOE: Yes.

MS FURNESS: Is there anything you would revise in relation to that paragraph, having regard to the data you are now aware of?

ARCHBISHOP COSTELLOE: I'm not exactly sure what the --

MS FURNESS: You refer to there being "many shocking incidents of child sexual abuse".

ARCHBISHOP COSTELLOE: Yes.

MS FURNESS: Is there anything you would want to add to that in light of the data from the Catholic Church authorities that you are now aware of?

ARCHBISHOP COSTELLOE: Well, I suppose, as I read it, the word "many" might just be completely inadequate. When the data was released, I looked both broadly at the data for the whole of Australia and, in particular, of course, also at the data for my own archdiocese. It's a sad thing to have to admit, but I wasn't surprised. I've been the archbishop for five years. I've dealt with many allegations and sat with many survivors of sexual abuse. Sometimes I get very discouraged because it seems that every - you know, quite regularly, in a sense, another complaint will come forward, and you start to wonder, you know, just how extensive this is.

So I wasn't surprised by it. I would have to confess
that I was surprised that our percentage - not that it was
as high as it was but that it was amongst one of the
highest in the country, because I had thought that other
dioceses might have an even worse record than our own.

Every time we face these statistics or come across
another allegation or find another person whose life has
been so damaged by sexual abuse, it's a shocking thing, and
so I think you can be unsurprised but nevertheless
constantly shocked and horrified.

I think what I was trying to say in the last point
there is that precisely because we have failed so badly,
our society has a right to expect us to do what we can to
contribute to a solution, if we can. I mean, there may be
many people who would think that our record and our
reputation is so damaged that we have nothing to offer, and
I would understand that, but I think that, tragically and
unfortunately, we have learnt an awful lot about this
terrible scourge.

We have over the years, not just in my diocese but
around the country, made a number of attempts to respond to
it, some more successful than others. So there are some
learnings there that I think we might be able to offer for
consideration by the wider society. That was the point
I was trying to make.

MS FURNESS: You are saying in that point, aren't you,
that it is an institutional responsibility for what has
happened?

ARCHBISHOP COSTELLOE: Yes, I am, yes.

MS FURNESS: Archbishop Wilson, you would agree that the
Catholic Church as an institution is responsible for the
events?

ARCHBISHOP WILSON: I would agree with that. On the other
hand, would I say that when you look at the nature of the
Catholic Church, it is more complex than just saying that
it is an institution. There are some institutional aspects
of it which were failures here, but there are many people
who belong to our Church who were not responsible for this.

MS FURNESS: Are you talking about parishioners and
congregationers and the like?
ARCHBISHOP WILSON: I am.

MS FURNESS: You are not talking about the leadership of the Church or office holders of the Church?

ARCHBISHOP WILSON: No, no, I'm just saying there is a distinction, when you are talking about responsibility, between those two groups.

MS FURNESS: Archbishop Fisher, do you have anything to add to that?

ARCHBISHOP FISHER: Yes, I think I would want to say it is both - there are individuals that should be held to account for terrible deeds or terrible failures to respond once they knew of things happening, and then there is the sense in which the institution as a whole, or the Catholic community as a whole, hangs its head in shame and its leaders in particular have to do what they can to bring about redress and healing, to make sure we are a safer Church in the future. So I think it's both the corporate and the individual responsibility and we have to hold everyone to account.

MS FURNESS: Thank you. Archbishop Hart?

ARCHBISHOP HART: I certainly would be totally committed to what has been said already and would endorse that as if they were my own words. But I also say that because it has been so awful, so cataclysmic, that we have a much more serious responsibility to be part of remaking and of the future.

MS FURNESS: Archbishop Coleridge, I know you have spoken on these matters before. Do you wish to add anything?

ARCHBISHOP COLERIDGE: Just to say that I do think we are dealing with a very powerful and complex interplay between individual and institutional responsibility. I would never underestimate the institutional responsibility, but it doesn't cancel the individual responsibility.

The other thing is Archbishop Costelloe speaks about the possibility of being part of a solution. It seems to me it is not just a possibility; it is an obligation that we have, to be part of the solution, but not on our own, to
be working with others, whoever the others may be, to be part of the solution. I see that as a most solemn obligation imposed upon us, first of all, by the demands of the gospel but, secondly, by the demands of responsible citizenship.

I say this as a leader of an institution that is hugely embedded in this society and therefore has a special responsibility to exercise responsible citizenship, which, in this particular regard, we have failed to do.

MS FURNESS: I will come back to the question of why, which you have touched upon, Archbishop Costelloe.

ARCHBISHOP COSTELLOE: Yes.

MS FURNESS: As I have indicated, there are various reforms that each of you has instituted and there are policies, practices and guidelines which have been provided to the Royal Commission, and I will come back to those in some detail as well.

But firstly looking at what you have done individually in response to the tsunami, as it has been described, each of you has at some stage apologised, I think. Perhaps if I can start with you, Archbishop Costelloe. Have you issued an apology?

ARCHBISHOP COSTELLOE: I have, yes, on a number of occasions, yes.

MS FURNESS: Were those apologies in writing?

ARCHBISHOP COSTELLOE: They were, yes. What I have done, generally speaking, is in what we would call pastoral letters, letters to the people, the Catholic community of the Archdiocese of Perth, I have tried to address these matters on probably four or five occasions in the five years that I've been there, and I have included in those what I know to be a very sincere apology - I hope that it has been understood that way - to the victims and survivors. Yes.

MS FURNESS: Thank you. Archbishop Wilson?

ARCHBISHOP WILSON: In both of the dioceses that I've been involved with, I have issued apologies.
MS FURNESS: In the same format as Archbishop Costelloe?

ARCHBISHOP WILSON: Pretty much in writing but also verbally in some circumstances, too.

MS FURNESS: At public meetings and the like?

ARCHBISHOP WILSON: In a couple of cases, it was public meetings, yes.

MS FURNESS: Archbishop Fisher?

ARCHBISHOP FISHER: I have, in both the dioceses I have had responsibility for, in writing, as videos that people access on the internet, that are played in all the Churches, from the pulpit, at public meetings - in lots of different formats.

I also authored for all the bishops of my province, all the bishops of New South Wales, a joint letter of apology a few years ago, and I have kept saying again and again, as loudly as I can, no excuses, no cover-ups, no paedophiles ever again near our churches and schools. And I repeat again in this forum today my apology for the shameful things that have happened, especially the harm to the victims.

MS FURNESS: Archbishop Hart?

ARCHBISHOP HART: Certainly in writing and in public statements, I've expressed how gravely I feel at the situation, that people have been wronged and the terrible, terrible suffering that people have undergone. On behalf of the Church and in meeting with individual victims and others, too, I've tried to express myself, I know in inadequate ways, just how sorry I am that these things ever happened, which are the very opposite of what the Church should be about and the contribution we should be making to society.

MS FURNESS: Archbishop Coleridge?

ARCHBISHOP COLERIDGE: Yes, like the other archbishops, on a number of occasions and in various parts of Australia, I have offered written apologies and things like pastoral letters. I have offered apology in videoed messages but
also verbally, both publicly and privately. It has
certainly been a crucial part of my dealings with survivors
of abuse. So in various ways, I have sought to offer an
apology that has grown in strength and sincerity, I have to
say, through the years.

MS FURNESS: Each of you, I take it, will accept that the
delivery of apologies and the creation and publication of
practices, policies and guidelines is necessary but not
sufficient in terms of dealing with child sexual abuse by
clergy; do you all accept that?

ARCHBISHOP WILSON: Yes.

ARCHBISHOP FISHER: Yes.

ARCHBISHOP HART: Yes.

ARCHBISHOP COSTELLOE: Yes.

MS FURNESS: What has appeared in the evidence before the
Royal Commission generally and also the evidence of the
Baroness this morning is that what is most needed is for
the victim survivors to be listened to by the leadership of
the Church. Now, each of you accepts that that evidence is
real?

ARCHBISHOP COSTELLOE: Yes.

ARCHBISHOP HART: Yes.

MS FURNESS: Again, can I start with you
Archbishop Costelloe: can you tell us what you personally
have done in terms of listening to individual victims and
survivors?

ARCHBISHOP COSTELLOE: Really, my listening is almost
exclusively focused on my private meetings with survivors
of sexual abuse at the end of the process of engagement
with the Towards Healing protocols. I always meet the
survivor of sexual abuse in a facilitation meeting, is the
way the professional standards, Towards Healing protocols
describe it. That can sometimes be a very lengthy
encounter, and we certainly give it whatever time it needs.
It always also includes an expression - and, again, I know
it to be a genuine expression - of apology, of sorrow, of
regret, of shame for what has happened.
And, yes, part of that process, the structure of that process, is to give the survivor as much time and opportunity as he or she needs to tell the story and for me, as the archbishop, to assure them not only that I have listened to them but that I believe them, and I think that that is a very important part of the process.

MS FURNESS: That is in the context of a person coming to your archdiocese --

ARCHBISHOP COSTELLOE: Yes.

MS FURNESS: -- making a claim or seeking some form of redress under Towards Healing?

ARCHBISHOP COSTELLOE: Making a complaint, yes. That's --

MS FURNESS: The meeting is conducted with you, the survivor and whoever else she or he wants present?

ARCHBISHOP COSTELLOE: Always it is monitored, I guess is the word I would use, by someone who facilitates it. That's why it is called a facilitation. So an independent person who acts as a kind of a facilitator of the encounter; there is the survivor, himself or herself, with a support person or anybody else that they may want to bring with them, with me as the Church leader and normally with someone that I would have to support me as well.

MS FURNESS: That is at the initiative of the survivor?

ARCHBISHOP COSTELLOE: It is part of the process, if the survivor chooses to have it, yes.

MS FURNESS: Thank you. Now, in your statement you refer to the Towards Healing process.

ARCHBISHOP COSTELLOE: Yes.

MS FURNESS: If we can turn to paragraph 28 of that statement, you refer there to:

Where the findings of the assessment do not satisfy the Archbishop - that is you - of the truth of the complaint, the Director of Professional Standards may recommend that
ARCHBISHOP COSTELLOE: Yes.

MS FURNESS: That's not the meeting you have described, is it?

ARCHBISHOP COSTELLOE: No, that's a different meeting. The facilitation meeting is at the end of the Towards Healing process. Perhaps if I could just explain briefly. When an allegation is brought forth, or a complaint, sometimes the person who is being accused is deceased, and that is in fact most of the time, in my experience in the situations that I've dealt with in Perth. But occasionally the perpetrator, the alleged perpetrator, may still be alive. If he or she - and normally it is he, of course - disputes that or denies it, then the process of Towards Healing would be that some independent assessors are appointed to look into the story, basically.

Now, they are independent of me. I don't appoint them. The director of professional standards appoints them. They conduct some inquiries, to the best that they are able to, and according to the protocols of Towards Healing, as I understand them, they reach a finding on what I think is understood to be on the balance of probabilities, which I think is the level of evidence, if that's the right word, for civil cases. I think that's right. I think that's the procedure.

MS FURNESS: Is it the case that it is invariably you who meets with the survivor when indeed they wish a meeting with the Church to take place?

ARCHBISHOP COSTELLOE: I would normally meet with the survivor right at the end of the process.

MS FURNESS: But is it you from the Church that meets with the survivor or may it be you or a senior member of the Church?

ARCHBISHOP COSTELLOE: Normally, unless I am unavailable for some reason, some serious reason - for example, I think we had a case where the process was coming to an end; I was away and would be away for some weeks, and so we gave the survivor the option of waiting until I returned or meeting
the auxiliary bishop or the vicar general. So it is always one of the leaders of the Church - one of the leaders of the Church authority, but with very few exceptions, it is me.

MS FURNESS: Outside the formal facilitation process that you have described, have you met with survivors individually?

ARCHBISHOP COSTELLOE: Sometimes the first approach is directly to me, and depending on the nature of that approach, I might meet with the person who is making the allegation or the complaint initially. And I'm willing to do that, but I'm sensitive to the fact that often it's very difficult for people to have to tell this story over and over again, and if they tell it to me, which I'm happy to hear, the next step is then to go to the Professional Standards Office and tell it again, and then they may have to tell it again to prepare a contact report. So my practice really is, as quickly as I can, to refer someone immediately to the Professional Standards Office.

MS FURNESS: Have you met with victims outside of the Towards Healing process?

ARCHBISHOP COSTELLOE: On rare occasions, yes. Sometimes a person will prefer not to go through the Towards Healing process, doesn't really want to go through a legal process, but just wants to meet with the Church authority. On two or three occasions, I have done that, yes.

MS FURNESS: Have you indicated to those within your archdiocese a willingness to meet with survivors who wish to talk to you outside of any redress process?

ARCHBISHOP COSTELLOE: I can't say that I've made public statements about that, no. The people who deal with these matters in the archdiocese know that I'm very prepared to meet with people, but it's not kind of a public announcement. Perhaps it should be.

MS FURNESS: Archbishop Wilson?

ARCHBISHOP WILSON: The majority of meetings that I've had with survivors has been as a result of the Towards Healing process in the facilitated meetings. There have been other occasions when I have met people who are survivors as well...
on a private basis. They have just asked to talk to me. I've tried to make it clear to people that I'm willing and open to talk in any set of circumstances.

I have to say, though, to be honest, that sometimes that's not successful. There are some parts of our experience in Adelaide that we weren't - I wasn't happy that we did it as well as we could, and that was something that was pointed out to me in the report from the Royal Commission that came to study what happened in regard to that particular case.

So it's of big value for me, and sometimes I have failed in that area, but I would really make it a high point to try to engage with the survivors as much as I can.

MS FURNESS: It seems from your answer that your position is similar to Archbishop Costelloe's, which is that the vast majority of your meetings are within the formal facilitation stage of Towards Healing?

ARCHBISHOP WILSON: That's right. That's right.

MS FURNESS: Have you indicated broadly to those within your community a willingness to speak to survivors who wish to speak to you outside of any redress process?

ARCHBISHOP WILSON: I don't think I've done that explicitly, but I've certainly given the message out in the community that I would be willing to see people and talk to them. But I've never made a statement explicitly saying that.

MS FURNESS: Thank you. Archbishop Fisher?

ARCHBISHOP FISHER: I have had a number of meetings with survivors or family members of survivors, both within Towards Healing and outside Towards Healing. Sometimes people have just asked to meet me; they don't want to go through the Towards Healing process, but they want me to hear or the Church to hear or they want to hear me say I'm sorry for what has happened. So I've had those.

On a few occasions I can think of, I've actually reached out to someone that I've thought, from reading their story or hearing about them, wasn't dealt with as well as they could be. I've actually initiated the contact...
or offered it. So it has happened in those different ways.

Also, I've had some contact with some survivors
groups, too, and that has been another way I've
encountered, where they've come perhaps three or four of
them as a group, wanting to tell me some things.

So in those different ways, I've had conversations
with survivors, heard their stories and tried, as best
I can, to tell them how ashamed and sorry I am for what has
happened.

MS FURNESS: Is it invariably the case that it is you, as
representative of the archdiocese, who meets with those
survivors going through Towards Healing who wish to meet
with a Church representative?

ARCHBISHOP FISHER: Any ones that I hear of that want to
meet me - and I'm convinced my staff know that - we make
that happen. Now, it may be that sometimes it's not as
quick as they might like. But as far as I know, I don't
know of any case of someone who is in that situation of
having asked my professional standards people to meet the
archbishop, or been offered that, and then found they
couldn't because I wasn't available.

MS FURNESS: Is it the case that you meet them in
circumstances where they make a specific request;
otherwise, your vicar general usually meets them?

ARCHBISHOP FISHER: That would be right. Normally at
first instance, the vicar general and the director of
professional standards would be the people they would first
meet. As soon as they form a view that it would be
helpful, they will even suggest it to the survivor. So it
doesn't have to be them demanding or asking to see me. It
might also be proposed to them if it was thought that that
would be helpful to them. Some people like that. Other
people are understandably very angry and the last thing
they want to do is to meet me. But either way, I try to
accede to any request.

MS FURNESS: Similar to the question I've asked the other
two archbishops, have you made known in your community
a willingness outside of a redress process to speak with
anyone who wishes?
ARCHBISHOP FISHER: Probably only implicitly, in that I've talked about the different survivors who have come to talk to me and their harrowing stories and the shame I have felt. So I have made it clear to my people that I do meet with survivors, that I'm not behind some protective wall. But I haven't put out a 1800 number for anyone that wants to ring me, that's true.

I have made it clear to my Professional Standards Office - and it's usually the first people they make contact with - that I would be available. So in that indirect way, I suppose, it is made clear. But I haven't made a public statement, "Call this number and the archbishop will be available."

MS FURNESS: Have you visited with survivors outside of the Church structure?

ARCHBISHOP FISHER: Yes. I've gone for walks in parks. Sometimes they have said they don't want to go near a Church building or a Church office, and I've gone to them. I remember meeting one in a coffee shop, one in a cricket field - other places, yes.

MS FURNESS: What period of time are we talking about, Archbishop Fisher, with your involvement with Towards Healing?

ARCHBISHOP FISHER: I have been the archbishop now for two years, and for five years before that I was Bishop of Parramatta, so it is seven years now that I've had some responsibility in those areas.

MS FURNESS: Most of your engagements have been with survivors at Parramatta?

ARCHBISHOP FISHER: Yes, most have been at Parramatta.

MS FURNESS: Significantly less in Sydney?

ARCHBISHOP FISHER: Significantly less in Sydney. You may know I was in hospital for most of last year, and so I have only really had about a year in office as Archbishop of Sydney.

MS FURNESS: Thank you. Archbishop Hart?
ARCHBISHOP HART: Certainly. I've always made the opportunity available for individuals who want to talk with me, whether in a formal context at the end of the process or at any other time.

I realise how difficult it can be for a survivor - they might want to talk to a Church person so that I can express my shame and apology, but they may find it impossible to get here.

Since we last spoke, I've expanded the pastoral care team in the vicar general's office. We have a senior adviser, a religious sister with 19 years' experience in family and social welfare and another 12 years as the superior of a religious order, who is a very welcoming and accommodating person.

What typically happens is that an engagement goes with her. She then walks with them to meet with me, with whoever they may want, but also she continues the relationship, if that is what people want. So we are expanding that and we hope that will meet the very real suffering and very terrible, terrible evil that has been perpetrated upon the survivors.

MS FURNESS: Just before I come to you, Archbishop Coleridge, can I ask the four of you, first, has there been an occasion where you have met with a survivor on more than one occasion, perhaps starting again with you, Archbishop Costelloe?

ARCHBISHOP COSTELLOE: Yes. Not many. Normally it is only one meeting. But on two or three occasions, yes, I have.

MS FURNESS: At their initiative?

ARCHBISHOP COSTELLOE: Yes.

MS FURNESS: Archbishop Wilson?

ARCHBISHOP WILSON: Yes, I think on one occasion.

ARCHBISHOP FISHER: I would say the same as Archbishop Costelloe, on a few occasions.

MS FURNESS: Thank you. Archbishop Hart?
ARCHBISHOP HART: I think on one occasion, with the explanation I gave about the expansion of the pastoral care which does go on now.

MS FURNESS: Have you met people out of the Towards Healing process or redress process?

ARCHBISHOP HART: I follow the behavioural aspects of Towards Healing. We have the Melbourne Response, of course. On occasions when people have asked, yes.

MS FURNESS: But as with your colleagues, overwhelmingly it is through a redress process that you engage with --

ARCHBISHOP HART: That would be right, yes.

MS FURNESS: Archbishop Coleridge?

ARCHBISHOP COLERIDGE: The same would be true of me, that overwhelmingly my contact with survivors would have been through the Towards Healing process, which is not really a redress process. In my own view, and I think in the view of many, it is intended at least to be a pastoral process. So within that process and at the end of it, there is a meeting which I attend whenever possible. This was not the case when I came to Brisbane, I have to say. At times no official of the archdiocese attended that meeting, or it was someone who was not, shall we say, at the top of the pecking order. But I attend those meetings wherever possible. If I can't be there, if I'm overseas or away, then it would be usually the vicar general or, when dealing with schools, it would be the Director of Catholic Education.

I have also had some, but not many, meetings outside the process of Towards Healing. I'm certainly open to it. I haven't made any public statements to that effect. And I have had a couple of occasions that come to mind where I have met more than once in a less formal setting. There was one when I was in Canberra and there has been one in Brisbane. But that, I have to say, is very unusual.

So I'm open to it as a pastor rather than a bureaucrat, but overwhelmingly my contact with survivors has been within the context of the pastoral process of Towards Healing. In that meeting, obviously I apologise,
but, perhaps even more importantly, I listen, and that has been one of the truly decisive elements of the journey that I've undertaken through years on this front, to listen to the story, which is not easy but is absolutely essential.

I have also had some contact with a group like Bravehearts in Brisbane, which is not a Church group but which does extraordinary work in the area of child protection. Again, my contact with them has been instructive.

MS FURNESS: Given that it has to be the case that the survivor wishes to meet with particularly somebody in your position, and that must be the way the process is initiated, is it the case that you think that any of you would benefit from engagement with survivors in such a way that you hear their voice, as has been told to the Royal Commission, outside of a process which - I understand what Archbishop Coleridge is saying - has a pastoral element but is largely considered to be a redress process? Has anyone given any thought to that?

ARCHBISHOP COLERIDGE: I would be very open to it if I thought it would help. So I am open to suggestions. But sometimes in dealing with abuse, you can, with the best of intention, do things which hinder rather than help. But if I thought for a moment that the kind of thing you are proposing, Ms Furness, was going to help, then I would certainly consider it and consider it very seriously.

MS FURNESS: Does anyone else wish to comment?

ARCHBISHOP COSTELLOE: I would just comment - I would agree with that. My experience, and I can only go on my own experience, but my experience of the meetings with the survivor at the end of the process - in one sense, they are quite structured, but in another sense, they are not. The survivor is really the person who drives the meeting. I can understand what you are proposing. I think it's certainly worth considering, but my experience is that I believe I do hear their voice and hear it very genuinely within that context of the pastoral meeting of Towards Healing. There may well be opportunities to do that on other occasions, but I wouldn't dismiss the value of the encounter between the survivor and the Church authority, if it is conducted in a proper way. As long as it is not too formal, too structured, as long as it is a genuine meeting
of people, I think it has a lot of value.

MS FURNESS: Or indeed too formulaic, archbishop, if indeed that is the place where each of you most meets victims, which follows a structure and has probably the same facilitator there on each occasion, and you perhaps have the same vicar general or similar person with you, so that it loses, or may lose, to some extent, its impact?

ARCHBISHOP COLERIDGE: That, I have to say, Ms Furness, has not been my experience. I take the point about it becoming formulaic, but at times the structure can be in some ways liberating. My experience of most of these meetings is that there is something intensely personal. It depends on individuals, obviously. But I don't think that a formal structure necessarily inhibits the intensely and deeply personal character that these meetings are intended to have.

I certainly try to make it as informal and as personal as I can. So whilst there is a risk of the formulaic approach, I don't think it necessarily needs to work that way, and in fact, as I say, the formula can at times be strangely liberating.

MS FURNESS: Archbishop Hart?

ARCHBISHOP HART: I have certainly found that the involvement of the senior adviser, who is a woman, from the vicar general's office, who has social skills - immediately the survivor comes and they feel they have someone who is supporting them as well as being with me, and it takes on very much, if you will excuse the pun, a heart-to-heart talk, and good can very much result particularly from that experience and then from how things go on in the future.

MS FURNESS: Thank you. Archbishop Fisher?

ARCHBISHOP FISHER: I don't know if I gave the impression that nearly all my meetings have been within Towards Healing.

MS FURNESS: No, you didn't.

ARCHBISHOP FISHER: But I can think offhand immediately of at least half a dozen that have been quite outside any redress process, where just a person concerned has
expressed a desire to meet me to tell me their story. It might be that they are looking for an apology. It might be that they just want me to know what happened. It might be that they are looking for some help of some kind. But it's not necessarily part of a formal Towards Healing or civil litigation or other kind of process. There have been some of those as well.

I think both have proved, in general, to be useful - certainly useful to me in learning more about this awful phenomenon, but I think often for the individuals that have wanted to be heard, it has been helpful too.

MS FURNESS: Archbishop Wilson?

ARCHBISHOP WILSON: Ms Furness, I have been the bishop of two dioceses and the experiences of dealing with the problems associated with sexual abuse are very different in both places.

I had the good fortune, when I went to Wollongong and walked straight into a huge problem in this area, to be able to work with Kath McCormack, who at that stage was the head of Catholic Welfare in Wollongong. She and I worked together to put things together and work out how we were going to respond and reach out to people, and so on.

In that process, she organised with me a meeting that we held quietly, so that all the victims - all the people who were survivors were able to come and talk and share with me. That happened on one Saturday afternoon and lasted several hours.

I was only in Wollongong a short time and was moved out of there to Adelaide and walked into another experience, which was very different, in that what I had to deal with there was not sexual abuse by clergy very much but a major case involving a bus driver in a school, who supposedly - because it's very hard to calculate, but was probably in a position where he would have been able to abuse 35 children that he had contact with.

Responding to that situation, again we held another public meeting and gathered people together and they spoke about their concerns, and so on, and we responded to that.

But I've not had any contact with other groups who are
associated with the survivors of clergy sexual abuse.

MS FURNESS: Thank you. Now, in addition to the theme of listening to the victim being a response which is desired above and beyond policies, procedures, apologies, and the like, is showing leadership on an individual basis - that is, an archbishop or bishop basis - to the diocese. Again, Archbishop Costelloe, how have you shown leadership above and beyond the matters we have discussed?

ARCHBISHOP COSTELLOE: In relationship to dealing with survivors or in relationship to the whole issue?

MS FURNESS: In relationship to the whole issue.

ARCHBISHOP COSTELLOE: I've tried to do quite a number of things. I can briefly explain them, if you wish. I have issued a number of pastoral letters to the people of the Catholic community. I have a belief myself, that not everyone agrees with, that my first responsibility, in a sense, the only community to which I have a right to speak, is to the Catholic community. I'm not the leader of anything else in Western Australia, just the Catholic Church, so I would normally - in fact, I would say always, unless it is issuing a general media release - speak to our own people.

So I have tried, on a number of occasions, to express the deep horror that I feel and I think pretty well every Catholic in my archdiocese feels about this. I think people want to see the leader articulate genuinely the shame of the whole Church, and I've tried to do that.

I have done all sorts of things that in some sense are, in and of themselves, relatively small in relationship to the way the Professional Standards Office operates, the way we apply Towards Healing, improving, I think, if I can put it this way, the fidelity to the protocols of Towards Healing. I've spent a lot of time and effort trying to heighten the awareness of our priests about the seriousness of this matter. I speak to them often about this and write to them often about this. It's always a part of my addresses to clergy.

I've put some very practical things into place. I think the main reform that I've instituted is the safeguarding project in the archdiocese. I've tried to be
proactive in making child welfare and child protection the
fundamental concern, the fundamental issue of the
archdiocese at the moment, and I made that decision when
I was appointed as archbishop.

MS FURNESS: What challenges do you face working within
the culture and structure of the Catholic Church to show
the leadership you believe is necessary to those who have
survived child sexual abuse and want to know that you are
stopping it happening again in your diocese?

ARCHBISHOP COSTELLOE: What challenges do I face?

MS FURNESS: Yes.

ARCHBISHOP COSTELLOE: If I could answer in a negative way
in one sense: I haven't encountered major resistance to
anything that I've tried to do. So I don't face the
challenge of a group of priests, for example, who are
resistant to what I'm trying to do or angry about what I'm
trying to do. I would say that my impression is to the
contrary, that I think that people are very grateful that
there are initiatives being developed, there are new things
being done, and so I don't find any opposition in that
sense, or any challenge.

I think one of the big challenges for all of us,
I suspect, around the country as far as the Catholic Church
is concerned, is to avoid any hint that we're now on top of
this issue and we can say, "Okay, we ticked that box", and
we move on. So keeping it at the forefront of people's
minds I think is a challenge.

THE CHAIR: Archbishop, you and the others, your
colleagues, accepted from Ms Furness that sexual abuse of
children in the Church reflects a failure in leadership.

ARCHBISHOP COSTELLOE: Yes.

THE CHAIR: You all accepted that.

ARCHBISHOP COSTELLOE: Yes, yes.

THE CHAIR: What have you done, firstly,
Archbishop Costelloe, to review the leadership within the
Church, or in your diocese, to be able to say to the people
gathered here and listening elsewhere, "I have started to,
or indeed I do, understand why the leadership failed"
What have you done in that space?

ARCHBISHOP COSTELLOE: In terms of "started to", I think
one of the things that I have done - and this is, in
a sense, an overall concept - we've just concluded a very
extensive consultation process about the whole life of the
archdiocese, the needs of the archdiocese, the future of
the archdiocese, and I won't go into all of the details,
but that process of consultation led to eventually
formulation of a plan for the next five years, which has
many elements in it. I identified professional standards
and dealing with the crisis of child sexual abuse as the
number one priority.

I've done a number of things in terms of improving,
I think, the capacity of the archdiocese to respond. When
I took over as the archbishop, the director of professional
standards was only part time, and I increased that to
a full-time position, provided extra administrative support
as well, and then we've had other people join that staff.
These are kind of concrete steps that I've taken to --

THE CHAIR: They are all steps that respond to the problem
that exists.

ARCHBISHOP COSTELLOE: Yes.

THE CHAIR: But the problem emerged, as I understand you
to be agreeing, from a failure of leadership within the
Church.

ARCHBISHOP COSTELLOE: Yes.

THE CHAIR: It is one thing to deal with the illness once
the symptoms have emerged, but unless you address the
leadership failure and understand why it happened, you
won't deal with the problem, will you?

ARCHBISHOP COSTELLOE: Well, the problem will always be
potentially there to arise again unless that issue is dealt
with. That's certainly true.

THE CHAIR: Well, then, can I press you again: what have
you done to examine the failure of leadership, which you
accept is at the root of this problem?
ARCHBISHOP COSTELLOE: I'm not sure if this is what you are asking me, but I would say, for example, that I have adopted a style of leadership that is, I hope, more consultative than has been the case in the past. Now, it's limited consultation, but it's a much broader consultation. So I think I could genuinely say that there would not be a significant decision that I have taken in the archdiocese that I have taken without consultation.

I think that is a response to what tended to be an issue in the past, where the bishop was perhaps regarded as almost like a little monarch in his own diocese and could make whatever decisions he wanted, irrespective of what advice he might seek or not seek. I've changed that, I think, quite deliberately and quite significantly.

That touches, I think, one of the issues that has come up often in the Royal Commission under the broad heading of culture, and I've tried to change the culture so that the archdiocese understands that there is a consultative approach to decision-making. I'm not sure if that's what you are asking, but that's one response.

THE CHAIR: It may be part of the issue. Would any other of you archbishops like to grapple with this issue? I rather thought, Archbishop Costelloe, what you might say to me is that the Bishops Conference is working in this space, but --

ARCHBISHOP COSTELLOE: I am sorry, I thought you meant just in the Archdiocese of Perth.

THE CHAIR: And generally.

ARCHBISHOP COSTELLOE: Okay.

THE CHAIR: Can anyone else help me?

ARCHBISHOP WILSON: Your Honour, I would like to talk about that. It seems to me that in the issues about leadership, there is a very big responsibility on the shoulders of we who are the leaders now in coming in and looking at what has happened in the past. It's a big responsibility for us to make sure that everything is changed and made to work properly.

We have responsibility, as you say, not only in our
own dioceses but throughout our whole country. We have a big responsibility through the Bishops Conference. The formulation at the beginning of the National Committee for Professional Standards, which was a decision taken by the bishops and religious, was meant to be, and I believe has been, a major change in the area of leadership. That organisation has worked really hard and with great insight to change the culture and the fact of our behaviour. So a lot of developments have occurred that way.

The other point is that as we have been moving ahead through all this, too, we've established working relationships with people involved in this area in other countries and at the Holy See, trying to work out ways where we would be able to work well in dealing with the issues that we face in this area.

When I became a bishop and was confronted by this, in my analysis I thought that in order to show leadership, there were four areas where we needed to make some change or take some new initiatives.

The first was to reach out to the people who are the survivors and their families. The second was to deal effectively with the perpetrators, which involved, then, making sure that we fulfilled our obligations according to the law. The third was to work really hard to make sure that we did all that we could in selection and formation so that paedophiles wouldn't appear in the clergy and be able to do the terrible things that they did.

The fourth was to establish a safeguarding program for our children so that the whole community of the Catholic Church would be really aware of all the values that need to be put into place to protect children and give them the opportunity to develop and grow in a way that they can be free and make responses to people and understand that they need to be treated with respect and kindness.

So I think that, in terms of leadership, we have been working and trying to put all those elements into place. What began in 1996, through the development of the committee, the establishment of Towards Healing and so on, has developed and grown since. It wasn't perfect then and it's not perfect now. We have new initiatives to take now that have been discussed before the Commission, and they are another step on the road of trying to change this and
to establish a new pattern of leadership.

ARCHBISHOP COLERIDGE: Episcopal leadership is exercised really at three levels - local, national and international. The mix varies from bishop to bishop, but the formula is the same. At each of those three levels, episcopal leadership has been changing and is going to change further. Episcopal governance is a kind of non-negotiable in the Catholic Church, but it can take so many different forms, and has historically.

Now, if you take the Bishops Conference, which works nationally, it can't tell bishops what to do, but it can exercise a subtle but powerful form of social pressure or peer group pressure, and there has been from within the conference a very strong desire expressed by the bishops to move from an administrative modus operandi to a pastoral modus operandi, and that's the shift that is taking place. Now, as we become a more genuinely pastoral body, the kind of leadership of which you speak becomes more possible.

Similarly, too, the relationship between, say, the Holy See and the local Churches is changing, and I think Baroness Hollins spoke of that this morning. So it is at each of those three levels that shifts are happening. But if one word sums up the shifts happening at each of the three levels, I think it would have to be "collaborative". We are learning to collaborate in new ways, not only bishops collaborating with each other, but within their dioceses, as Archbishop Costelloe has said, collaborating in all kinds of ways, which, in the not-too-distant past, were unthinkable, but also working more collaboratively with the Holy See, particularly in this area of abuse.

It seems to me that if we are genuinely going to provide leadership in this area of abuse, it goes to the heart of what it means for bishops to be leaders in the Church across the board. In other words, this is not an isolated area. The kinds of failures of leadership and the requirements of leadership now that have been identified go to the very heart of what the Church is and does.

That's why, in many ways, this Royal Commission, I think, particularly in this final hearing, has served mightily to generate what I would take to be the agenda of the plenary council of which I've spoken, where we will have to make big decisions about the future of the Catholic
Church of this country, including the shape of episcopal leadership, which is very much on the table, because it has been on the table so evidently here.

THE CHAIR: Would either of the other two of you wish to say something?

ARCHBISHOP HART: Certainly, your Honour, I would echo what Archbishop Coleridge is saying. I've been a bishop nearly 20 years. What is very evident in the Bishops Conference is the desire to look at issues with people, to look at the feelings of people, the problems of people and how we can walk with them. It's much more collaborative. It's much more engaged with the challenges that we have in our society - and they may be moral; they may be family; they may be societal - but also to look at what we can do as a Church to engage with those needs and to do so in a way which builds up and encourages people.

THE CHAIR: Archbishop Fisher?

ARCHBISHOP FISHER: Yes. I think there are lots of ways. I've tried to think how I can be a better leader or how those working with me as leaders can be better. What can we learn from what has gone wrong? So I would think, like Archbishop Costelloe, certainly my style of leadership would be much more consultative than might have been in the old model of the monarchical bishop. I would always have a group of people working with me before I made any significant decisions.

I think I involve a lot more external review. When I first came into each of my dioceses, I had people come from outside and look at our performance in this area and how it could be improved and look at our structures and review our cases, and so on. I want to take into account other perspectives from people who are not part of my bureaucracy already or not employed by me necessarily.

I try also to lead by example. So if I'm saying to my priests, "You all have to have education in this area, know the protocols, have training in professional standards and professional integrity", I have to submit to that myself. If I ask them to all have regular appraisal of their performance as leaders, I have to submit to that myself. So the group of Sydney bishops has just recently agreed that just as we are going to be asking our clergy to have
regular appraisal, we will also go through that process of external people commenting on our performance.

I think in those ways, I'm trying proactively to learn both from what has been done well in the past but also from what has been revealed to have gone wrong and try to be leading differently, and I ask the same of the people that lead with me.

THE CHAIR: That opens up some of the issues in the territory, but I'm sure Ms Furness is going to pursue a number of questions with you.

MS FURNESS: Turning to what went wrong, from the discussion you have just had, it's clear that each of you is of the view that the leadership failed monumentally in the past. You have spoken, each of you, as to how your leadership, you believe, differs from the leadership in the past.

Perhaps again with you, Archbishop Costelloe, we can start with what was it about the leadership in the past that was a causal factor in not only the appalling abuse that occurred but the appalling response to that abuse?

ARCHBISHOP COSTELLOE: I think there are probably many ways of approaching that question. I think one of the ways I would express it would be to borrow a phrase that Archbishop Coleridge, I think, used earlier on in this Commission hearing, and this is a cultural question: the Church, in a sense, saw itself largely as - I think the phrase the archbishop used was a law unto itself, that it was somehow or other so special and so unique and, in a sense, so important that it stood aside from the normal things that would be a part of any other body that works or exists in a society.

So I think there was a profound cultural - I'm not sure what the word is - not instinct, exactly, but a profound cultural presupposition, perhaps, about the uniqueness of the Church and the specialness of the church, in a sense the untouchability of the Church, that it didn't have to answer to anybody else; it only had to answer to itself.

I think if you look at that at the global level of the church, you can then take it down and say, well, that's
probably going to be the way many bishops in their own
dioceses might also think of themselves, as a law unto
themselves and not having to be answerable to anybody, not
having to consult with anybody but just to make decisions,
in a sense, out of their own wisdom, without consulting the
wisdom of anybody else. I think that can then trickle down
to the priest in the parish. I would see that as one of
the major causes of this inability to deal with this
terrible crisis, and in that sense I would see it as
a fundamental cultural issue.

MS FURNESS: Given your explanation, it seems, then, that
the change will only come about due to the individual
characteristics of a bishop?

ARCHBISHOP COSTELLOE: No, no, I think it's more than just
the individual characteristics of a bishop. I think there
was a way of understanding the Church, which each bishop
may well have bought into, but it was permeating the whole
culture of the Church. So just changing the individual
bishops' approach, important though that will be, needs to
be informed by a reimagining of what the Church is really
supposed to be all about, how the Church relates to the
wider world in which it lives.

MS FURNESS: But the bishop could stand outside of that
reimagining and say, "No, I prefer the old way", and
there's nothing to stop him doing that?

ARCHBISHOP COSTELLOE: I'm not sure that there's nothing
to stop him. I think the very experience that we're going
through at the moment is a powerful impetus to the Church
generally and then to individual bishops within the Church
to realise that we can't continue to live with the kinds of
presuppositions we had in the past. So I don't think
it's - I wouldn't agree that it's easy, let me put it that
way, for a bishop to stand out of this. It's possible,
yes.

MS FURNESS: Bishops in the past did stand outside that.
We know that there were some bishops who operated in
dioceses well.

ARCHBISHOP COSTELLOE: Yes.

MS FURNESS: And we know there are some bishops who
operated appallingly in dioceses and let dreadful things
happen.

ARCHBISHOP COSTELLOE: Yes.

MS FURNESS: And they were working within the same culture, broadly speaking?

ARCHBISHOP COSTELLOE: I'm not able to explain why some bishops, if I can put it this way, why some bishops seemed to get it and other bishops didn't seem to get it. But I think it perhaps leads to the question or the comment about the power of that cultural presupposition about the uniqueness of the Church and, as I said before, the untouchability of the Church.

Now, not every bishop would have operated that way. Not every bishop would have seen it that way. But for those who did, it had catastrophic consequences.

MS FURNESS: How do you bring with you those that did in the past or those now that have a similar view, albeit one not expressed as loudly as they might have in the past?

ARCHBISHOP COSTELLOE: I think that the growing influence of the Conference of Bishops is one opportunity. I've only been a bishop for 10 years - that's a fairly long time, but in the scheme of things perhaps not so much. My experience of the Bishops Conference is that all of these kinds of issues are on the table; they are discussed; people speak very frankly about many of these issues.

As Archbishop Coleridge said, there's nothing that I, as the Archbishop of Perth, can do to determine how the Archbishop of Brisbane operates within his own diocese. But the culture has changed. The understanding has changed. I think that the face of the Church in Australia, anyway, in 2017 is vastly different to the face of the Church - I'm presuming this because I wasn't there at the time - say in the 1950s. I'm sure that the face of the Church is very different now.

So I think the likelihood of the contemporary Church throwing up an aggressively monarchical kind of bishop, if I can use that expression, is very low now.

MS FURNESS: Archbishop Hart, you are probably the longest-standing bishop on the panel; is that right?
ARCHBISHOP HART: On this panel, yes - no, no, Archbishop Wilson is.

MS FURNESS: I'm sorry, Archbishop Wilson.

ARCHBISHOP WILSON: I'm the oldest, thank you.

MS FURNESS: As the oldest archbishop --

ARCHBISHOP WILSON: The longest, yes.

MS FURNESS: -- you have experienced the change that Archbishop Costelloe has spoken of, and no doubt you knew well some of the bishops we were referring to as those who did well or did less well. What can you help us with about there being a change and how the change has been effected?

ARCHBISHOP WILSON: Ms Furness, I believe this is a multifaceted thing that needs to be considered in many different ways.

One of the big challenges for us is theological, in that over the last 100 years there has been a huge shift in the way the Church thinks about itself, which was expressed very clearly in the Second Vatican Council. That then takes some time to permeate through the life of the Church.

It's partially there now, because in 1983 a new Code of Canon Law was given to the Church, which guides bishops and everybody else in what they are supposed to do. That Code of Canon Law is shot through with the vision of the Church that comes from the Second Vatican Council. Elements like the role of laypeople, the role of women, and so on, all are part of that change.

I also think that part of the difficulty that we've had in responding to this crisis about sexual abuse was simply based on the fact that people just didn't know and understand what they were dealing with. I don't think they really understood the nature of sexual abuse of children and the effect that it had on the children.

MS FURNESS: It was a crime, archbishop.

ARCHBISHOP WILSON: Yes, that's right. But, I mean, they didn't - I'm just saying, though, on the level of
appreciating the reality of it, they didn't know that.
I understand it was a crime.

And then the other element would be that I think that
we have big cultural changes around us in the society that
we live in that have already had and will continue to have
an effect on the way that we experience ourselves as
a Church. One of the big shifts has been that when you use
the word "Church", often people would just believe they are
referring to bishops and priests, whereas the word "Church"
means everybody.

MS FURNESS: But just coming back to your proposition that
no-one really knew what was happening and what it all
meant, the Church, since at least the 4th century, has been
regulating the conduct of priests and religious in relation
to small children on the grounds that it was, at the very
least, misconduct and, at the worst, the most serious
crime.

ARCHBISHOP WILSON: That's right.

MS FURNESS: How can it be, then, that after centuries of
that knowledge, it appears that in the 1960s, 1970s and
1980s they didn't know what they were dealing with?

ARCHBISHOP WILSON: I just think that's ignorance. People
lost their knowledge and were unable to reflect on the
experience of the Church in regard to this matter.

MS FURNESS: Archbishop Hart?

ARCHBISHOP HART: I would certainly say that while there
were things that happened in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s, it
was always wrong, but the bishops seemed to be in a strange
way - you know, "We're different", and they just didn't
drill down to the reality. There was an unreality of the
way in which bishops operated and they just sort of floated
above it, and it just didn't - you know, the awful reality
of these crimes didn't make contact with them.

I don't understand why, but I do know that the way we
act now is very, very different, the way we consult, the
way we consult with people in various areas and relate to
the people who - very little comes up to me that hasn't
been reflected on by a group, the people in social welfare
or in evangelisation or whatever. Now, that's not an
excuse, but it's an explanation of how things have changed.

THE CHAIR: Can I just say to everyone in the audience
that it's very important that we hear from the archbishops
and that they have an opportunity to answer Ms Furness' and
the Commissioners' questions. I would be grateful if you
would keep any comments out of the hearing so that that
opportunity is properly provided. Thank you.

MS FURNESS: In the case of embezzlement, archbishop,
which is a crime, in the 1960s or 1970s if somebody -
a priest - embezzled the diocese for a significant amount
of money, that's a crime, is it not?

ARCHBISHOP HART: That's a crime.

MS FURNESS: The diocese, I suggest, wouldn't have any
hesitation in dealing with the person who embezzled the
money as though he had committed a crime?

ARCHBISHOP HART: Correct.

MS FURNESS: Leaving aside the civil authorities for the
moment, they would deal with it professionally?

ARCHBISHOP HART: Certainly.

MS FURNESS: Why is child sexual abuse different?

ARCHBISHOP HART: I think it might have been the thing
that wasn't spoken about. You know, it was so far out of
their consciousness.

Your Honour, I've given evidence before about people
in my situation who just couldn't believe that a priest
would do these terrible crimes. I'm not one of them. And
I think that illustrates the mindset. It doesn't excuse
it, but it illustrates what the mindset was, that it was
just out there and it was left out there. That's a serious
failure of responsibility.

MS FURNESS: But isn't it the same with fraud, that if the
priest was in the idealised state that we've spoken about,
and unique and perfect and above others, you couldn't
believe that he would steal money, but you accepted it?

ARCHBISHOP HART: I like your question and your analogy.
I think, really, that sort of shows the mental divide that might have been there. I don't approve of it.

MS FURNESS: Archbishop Fisher?

ARCHBISHOP FISHER: I think there was, as Archbishop Wilson said, a tremendous ignorance of the prevalence in the community, in families, in the Church, of this terrible evil. People knew of individual cases of it. I don't think they understood its prevalence. They certainly didn't understand the terrible damage it did or the fact that there was, it would seem to us now, very little you can do to cure it, as it were, in a perpetrator. People thought that there were things you could do, spiritual exercises or a quick course of psychotherapy, or something. So I think ignorance was a factor.

I think there was a lack of empathy, too, often. People didn't - it is not just that they didn't understand intellectually; they didn't feel the pain that was being caused and the long-term pain. And part of both of those was a self-protectiveness on the part of the institution, that you didn't want scandal, you didn't want causes for people to think less of the clergy or the bishops or religious, of the institution. And so you might say things were staring us in the face, but it seemed to me people wouldn't see it because they just wanted to protect the name or the institution very often.

MS FURNESS: But, archbishop, it seems inconsistent to on the one hand say that the Church and the leaders of the Church were ignorant of it - ignorant of the consequences. If that's the case, why was so much effort put in to covering it up and being secret about it, if it was not something that was known and understood?

ARCHBISHOP FISHER: When I talk about the ignorance of its prevalence and its damage, I think that this was commonplace. I think kids went and told their parents and were told to stop such talk, sometimes; they told their teachers and they were told, "How dare you talk about father that way." It wasn't just bishops behaving this way. I think probably the leadership class generally in Australia was very protective of its own. And add the clericalist culture and the self-protectiveness of the institution, it magnified this terribly.
So it's not just one little bit of this puzzle, you have to put it all together. But I think when I say there is ignorance, I don't mean that people didn't know it was evil, that it was a terrible sin and a crime - they knew that full well and that's part of, as you say, why they covered it up when it happened. But I think they didn't appreciate the long-term damage this was doing to people, the repetitiveness of it, the almost addictiveness of it in some of the perpetrators; the fact that there is no way to manage that by moving someone somewhere else - that you have to completely contain them, possibly for the rest of their life. I think people didn't understand that and maybe we still don't fully understand the phenomenon of paedophilia.

Maybe future generations will look back at us, in 2016, the way we look back at people from the 1950s, and think: how primitive they were in their understandings or in their responses. But I think we certainly understand better now, and I really believe empathise better now, than what often seems to have happened in the past.

MS FURNESS: You would be familiar with Dr Marie Keenan's work?

ARCHBISHOP FISHER: Yes.

MS FURNESS: She described that the offenders within the Church were there and had the characteristics that were unique to the Catholic Church in the way in which the Catholic Church operated - you will be familiar with what I'm saying?

ARCHBISHOP FISHER: Mmm-hmm.

MS FURNESS: If that's the case, then what was happening in the rest of society, albeit with familial or dealing with Church-related matters but outside of the structure of the Church, seems to have less effect.

ARCHBISHOP FISHER: Well, I think if we want to understand the problem, we have to understand the whole context and understand, for instance, how prevalent this was in the whole community and in other institutions. We've got some insight into that through this Royal Commission and through other people's studies, such as Dr Keenan's.
But there is no doubt you have both a perennial problem in communities, that perhaps was better or worse at particular times in Australia, and those factors specific to particular institutions, and we're focusing here on the Catholic Church. And there were some real ones. I think you have the intersection of these three powerful things of sex, power and religion here, that coincided in a very destructive direction, particularly in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s, that we've seen such a terrible tsunami, as you described it earlier.

I think there is a broader social context, there is a longer history - you have taken us back to the third or fourth century. But there is also something that was particularly awful at a particular time that has led to the demand for a thorough investigation.

THE CHAIR: Archbishop, you speak of the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s. Given that we know it has been happening for centuries, many of those who might have been abused in the 1920s, 1930s and 1940s will of course have passed on long before the issue rose to the public domain, which of course it ultimately did. And, as you know, once out in the public domain, many more people have come forward. I mean, thousands have come to this Commission, many of whom had never been to anyone else before.

So I'm not sure that it's appropriate to see it just as a phenomenon that was happening in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s. And if you look at it in that way you may be missing the real issues that lie behind this.

ARCHBISHOP FISHER: Yes. Thank you, your Honour. Look, I'm not wanting to say for a moment it had never happened before and it hasn't happened since. There's some reason to think there was a spike in this period - some reason to think. But, as you say, people weren't as free to speak of it in the past and, since then, it may be some people are still not ready to speak of it but may in the future. So we may discover there's more in the 1980s and 1990s than we realise.

THE CHAIR: We know that it takes men maybe 30 years to come forward.

ARCHBISHOP FISHER: Yes. So, we would expect, if the rates were similar, that at least the 1980s would be
showing by now, because we're 30 years on from then, and
they are not. So it does seem there was a spike, but
that's not to diminish.

I mean, one act of this is infinitely too many at any
time in history - today or any time. But if we're trying
to get to what were the factors that led to a particular
problem in a particular institution, then we're looking for
what was happening then and there, and I think there were
some very particular things happening then and there.

It was a time in history when the Catholic Church was
doing a lot of the heavy lifting with children -
orphanages, schools for poor kids, boys' groups, whatever.
Some of that I think was actually very good work. It was
a very important contribution to this nation. But it also
created opportunities for some terrible predatory
behaviour.

It was a period of a huge rise of vocations, huge
numbers coming in to the priesthood and religious life, and
it would seem very little serious selection going on; it
was like all comers.

It was a period of big change happening in the Church
and in the broader culture, and some disorientation.

So I think you have a number of things happening in
this period that might explain the spike, if there is
a spike. But I take your point we don't fully know that
because we don't have all the data of history.

THE CHAIR: We will never know.

ARCHBISHOP FISHER: And may never know.

MS FURNESS: You referred to the intersection of sex,
power and I think it was theology? What was the third?

ARCHBISHOP FISHER: Sex, power and religion. The sort of
three topics you don't discuss at the dinner table.

MS FURNESS: It depends upon your dinner table I suspect,
archbishop. Those three matters are not dissimilar from
Dr Ranson's theory. Certainly he used slightly different
language, but that was the effect of it. Is it the case
that your reference to power is effectively a reference to
clericalism?

ARCHBISHOP FISHER: That's part of it. I think part of it is about violence. I think we have come to understand it is too simple to call this just sex. It is often about violence, about the abuse of power and authority. So there were other things going on in these crimes and there were other things going on in why this was facilitated, permitted, overlooked, covered up, and so on, to do with power.

MS FURNESS: So what has changed, in relation to your trilogy of sex, power and theology, from then to now in the Church?

ARCHBISHOP FISHER: I think our understandings of all three have changed quite dramatically. I think lots of people would say they still need more change or that we have hardly begun to digest some of, say, what the Vatican Council said to us about authority as service, leadership as service not as an elitist class who are above accountability, transparency. But some of that certainly has changed in my lifetime, in my experience.

Attitudes to sex - I think you have heard from some previous witnesses that there was a time when it was unspeakable, it was just sort of seen as shameful. I think it's much more out in the open, people talk about it more, talk about its abuses as well as its proper place in intimate relationships.

And also with respect to religion. I think people now will be much more ready to critique, to not see it as a taboo area where they mustn't have anything to say.

In terms of your earlier questions, how am I convinced I can't be an absolute monarch the way some others might have been? Well, for one thing, people won't let me. People just won't have it. They might have once. Today, my priests and my people, if I start behaving tyrannically, one way or another they will vote with their feet, they will vote with their voices, they will go to the media, they will be sending me petitions. I will know that they are dissatisfied. That might not have happened at some times in the past, where people had an idealised view of bishops or people in authority and they didn't complain.
Today, we're under much more scrutiny from the general public. Our own people are much more likely to say their say. And I do believe in general we are wanting to hear them. It is painful sometimes to hear it, but I think most of us want to hear it now.

MS FURNESS: Archbishop Costelloe, as you would be aware, there has been much discussion of governance and the way in which governance may have contributed to not only the fact of abuse but the response to abuse.

ARCHBISHOP COSTELLOE: Mmm-hmm.

MS FURNESS: Do you have any thoughts on that that you want to share with us?

ARCHBISHOP COSTELLOE: I would suggest that the kinds of things that we have just been talking about in relationship to the ways in which bishops now hopefully are exercising the rightful authority that they have is very different to in the past.

So along with Archbishop Fisher, I would say - it's not my style, anyway, but if I were to try and be very autocratic and just make demands and not give any explanations or not try and bring people with me to consider my points of view or my suggestions, I would just lose cooperation and I wouldn't be able to function. So I think there is a very different way of being a bishop now.

In terms of governance, I think Archbishop Coleridge has mentioned that the way our church is structured there are certain things that are, if you like, fixed in stone, that we, certainly the Australian Bishops, are not able to change structurally, from that point of view - so the structures of governance.

The ways of working within those structures I think have changed dramatically and can continue to change.

One of the problems in the past - and I go back really to what I was saying before - is that there was this very deeply developed concept that we are immune from criticism; we shouldn’t be scrutinised; we are a law unto ourselves and, as I said before, if that's a general feeling in the air of the Church, it will express itself possibly in the
way bishops operate, in the way priests operate in their parishes or religious operate in their institutions.

So I think it's a question of the way in which the structures of governance are exercised, if I can put it that way.

MS FURNESS: You would accept that at least one of the principles of good governance is transparency?

ARCHBISHOP COSTELLOE: Yes.

MS FURNESS: And one of the issues in the past was a significant degree of secrecy.

ARCHBISHOP COSTELLOE: Yes.

MS FURNESS: How is the Church now, through the area you work in as Archbishop of Perth, more transparent?

ARCHBISHOP COSTELLOE: Well, I'm not sure that we're hiding anything, so I'm --

MS FURNESS: How do we know you're not hiding anything?

ARCHBISHOP COSTELLOE: Well, you are welcome to come and investigate.

MS FURNESS: Not an uncommon way of being transparent is producing documents that tell parishioners and the public generally what you are doing.

ARCHBISHOP COSTELLOE: Yes.

MS FURNESS: I don't know that the archdiocese has an annual report, does it?

ARCHBISHOP COSTELLOE: No, we don't.

MS FURNESS: That might be one way of being more transparent?

ARCHBISHOP COSTELLOE: Yes, certainly, yes.

MS FURNESS: Another might be publishing statistics in relation to professional standards so the public know what the numbers are, what you are doing with these people, what
the outcomes are.

ARCHBISHOP COSTELLOE: Yes, yes. And we haven't published those statistics so far.

MS FURNESS: Another aspect of good governance that is generally considered is having a diverse mix of skills and experience on boards and other committees that assist in governance.

ARCHBISHOP COSTELLOE: Yes, yes.

MS FURNESS: The church is not quite there yet, is it?

ARCHBISHOP COSTELLOE: No, it probably has a fair way to go, but I think it has made a good start. I would say that in my archdiocese, but I think probably in most jurisdictions of the Church, we have boards and we have boards of management, boards of governance, nearly always comprising laypeople - laywomen and laymen.

I think one of the things that is important for me, anyway, is to say that the Church that I experience now is different from the Church that I experienced when I was a boy growing up, and that was in the 1960s and 1970s.

I struggle a little bit, because I don't recognise in the Church of today some of the elements which are being identified as major contributors to this. Some I do, but not all of them, and this is one of them.

MS FURNESS: Thank you. Archbishop Wilson, you may have heard that your archdiocese received some praise from Professor Ormerod a week or so ago.

ARCHBISHOP WILSON: I have heard that.

MS FURNESS: That was partly in the context of the data that was released, which indicated that your archdiocese had a rate or proportion that was significantly below the average. You are aware of that?

ARCHBISHOP WILSON: I am aware of that.

MS FURNESS: Professor Ormerod gave a reason being that you and your predecessor had put in place structures where there were groups of laypeople who were your advisers, and
to some extent you had engaged with them in the governance
of the archdiocese.

ARCHBISHOP WILSON: That's right. In the history of the
Archdiocese of Adelaide there has been a long, long period
of involvement of laypeople in the life of the Church.
After the Second World War our diocese was very heavily
influenced by what was called the Cardijn method of youth
and looking after students.

So a large number of our people, who then were young
adults and teenagers, were involved in the life of the
Church through the YCW movement and YCS movement. Those
people then went on to take up leadership positions in
their parishes and so on.

At the same time, Archbishop Beovich, who was the
archbishop from 1939, came home from the Second Vatican
Council in 1965 and immediately began to create these new
bodies that allowed people to participate in governance.

So the diocesan pastoral council began then and has
continued on, albeit with a few changes.

Then Archbishop Faulkner developed a leadership team
at the top of the archdiocese that involved women working
alongside him. When I became the archbishop, I then
transformed that a little so that it would become canonical
and operate within the system of canon law.

So around the table, at the leadership of the diocese,
there are women who have heavy responsibilities and lots of
delegated authority from me to do the work of the Church.

MS FURNESS: Were there any rumblings from parish priests,
and the like, seeing women in positions of power that
perhaps were refused them?

ARCHBISHOP WILSON: Not in my time. There could very well
have been before I arrived. But no, not in my time.
I think that, as I said, our diocese was very heavily
influenced by the fact that so many people were involved in
this YCW movement, that it led people to see that, as
a result of their baptism, they had a role to play in the
life of the Church. So it was regarded as natural that
they would take up that kind of work in leadership.
MS FURNESS: When you refer to changing it to make it canonical, what do you mean?

ARCHBISHOP WILSON: Well, the arrangements before I went there were a sort of private arrangement made by Archbishop Faulkner, and it operated that way.

I wanted to make it so there was an expression of the 1983 Code of Canon Law, and therefore an expression of the organic growth that has gone on in the life of the Church since the Second Vatican Council.

MS FURNESS: What did you do that changed it?

ARCHBISHOP WILSON: What I did was that I appointed all the women and some men to the position of chancellor. Within the canonical system, there's a role of chancellor in a diocese, and you can have a number of them. It's possible, then, to create the role that they have to play by giving them a job description, and that's what we did.

MS FURNESS: Clearly, chancellors aren't gender specific?

ARCHBISHOP WILSON: No, they are not.

MS FURNESS: We have left you behind, Archbishop Coleridge. However, you have given some evidence on this before. What is it that you would like to say about governance in particular?

ARCHBISHOP COLERIDGE: I do agree with Archbishop Fisher when he says that even if you wanted to, you couldn't govern in the good old monarchical way of other times. Not long ago, I finished a very fine biography of Archbishop Mannix. I thought to myself, how extraordinary, this man died at a vast age but in my lifetime, and yet it's as if he is a creature from some other planet.

What you see embodied in a man like Mannix - and he would have been typical of others - is a kind of monarchical understanding of episcopal governance, and this has deep historic roots. It has deep theological roots, too, because if you imagine God as a monarch and then Jesus as a monarch and the apostles are sent out by Jesus, and the Pope and the bishops are the successors of the apostles, the whole structure and the model becomes monarchical. It had its power and its creativity at
a certain historical moment, but now it's like something from another planet.

MS FURNESS: But the structure hasn't changed?

ARCHBISHOP COLERIDGE: The structure is changing, albeit slowly, but is changing.

For instance, if you take Pope Francis, one of the things that he is dismantling, I think, is the papal court and the monarchical model of the papal ministry. I think this was a hugely powerful thing in the past, and it did confer upon the bishops, even in this country, certainly in Europe, a rather princely style, which could become autocratic.

Power in itself can be creative; it can be destructive. The call to serve is the call to use power creatively. Clericalism isn't just power; it's power used destructively.

The other thing that strikes me is that there weren't in the past, as you seem to imply, Ms Furness, some bishops who were, as it were, good and others who were bad. The thing that has struck me and perplexed me is that it seems to me that all bishops made the same kinds of mistakes in another time, in this country and elsewhere. The question of why has exercised my mind mightily in recent decades.

If I could put it in these terms, they were invariably company men, and that had both good and bad aspects about it, I suspect, but they were more interested in the institution than in the individual. The sense of individuality generally, certainly in the culture of the Church but more broadly in the culture, and still very strikingly in other cultures around the world - the sense of the individual is very subdued. It's the body corporate that really prevails, and I think that was the sense. So they had this passionate, lifelong commitment to the defence and promotion of the institution, and it made them blind to individuals.

The other thing that happened, it seems to me, is that things like abuse were spiritualised, so that our strength became our weakness. I could talk at length about that, and I may refer to it again later in this particular panel session; I'm not sure. But there was a spiritualisation of
what was going on, which amounted to a complete blindness

to the reality.

This became all the more striking in a post-Freudian
world where we became aware, the whole society but
certainly the Church became aware, of what we would now
call pathologies and therefore various compulsions and
addictions, which were unknown in a pre-Freudian world. So
all of that erupted at the same time - how to understand
the abuse of the young in a post-Freudian world as we come
to grips with the nature of the pathologies to which the
human being is liable.

MS FURNESS: Thank you, archbishop. Just one minute,
Archbishop Wilson.

Archbishop Fisher, you spoke before of there being
more empathy now, and in your statement you refer many
times to compassion. How do you engender empathy and
compassion in a person?

ARCHBISHOP FISHER: One factor in this area we have talked
about today you have already identified, and that is just
hearing from people who have suffered. If you have never
heard them or met them, you might have some notion about
what's awry, what's wrong. It is only when you hear people
speak of just how it has damaged them and how long-lasting
that has been, how it has played out in many aspects of
their life and then how it has affected those around them
too, such as their family members - so I think hearing from
people who have suffered is one thing that most hearts - it
will bring some echo in that heart.

I think there are other things you have to do to work
on building a culture of compassion and encouraging
compassion in the young, in people as they are maturing, in
people in formation. One thing you do is put them in lots
of different situations where people have various kinds of
suffering or challenges, not just one, but we take, for
instance, our young men in the seminary and we put them in
lots of different situations. It could be in dealing with
unemployed people or prisoners or sick people in hospital
or disabled people. We have a deaf ministry in this
diocese. There are many different kinds of suffering. You
put them with those people and you ask such people to help
mentor them, help them understand what their challenges
are, what pains they have suffered.
MS FURNESS: Wasn't that part of the ministry in the past, that pastors would deal with and treat the sick and speak to those in need?

ARCHBISHOP FISHER: I don't think, for instance, a seminarian, right back then, would have had any of those pastoral experiences. It was only once he was ordained that he was thrown into works like that, and possibly not had any mentoring, either. He was just given the collar and the status and expected to know what to do.

MS FURNESS: And the cane, if he was a Christian Brother.

ARCHBISHOP COLERIDGE: The strap.

ARCHBISHOP FISHER: Possibly, yes, and some kind of punishment. Now I think there is much more a sense that this has to be cultivated in people. It has to be monitored that it is actually demonstrating itself, too, so that some people who don't demonstrate any ability to feel compassion - that's a warning sign that if it can't be cultivated in them, they are not an appropriate person for ministry going forward.

MS FURNESS: Archbishop Wilson?

ARCHBISHOP WILSON: Ms Furness, I just wanted to say that there are some changes that are already levelled at bishops in the way that they run their dioceses, in that there are many different decisions a bishop makes when he has to consult people. The consultation is meant to be that he really listens to what they say, but there are some decisions when it comes to the point where the people who sit around the table control the decisions that he makes. Every diocese has to have a finance council. Within certain parameters, the bishop cannot make a decision without the permission of those people who are around that table.

MS FURNESS: That's in relation to money?

ARCHBISHOP WILSON: In relation to money, that's right. So there are ways in which the Church is gradually moving towards new ways of doing things.

COMMISSIONER FITZGERALD: Can I just ask one question
related to that. Can I just put a proposition to you, and it is directly related to this and the new model of governance that you have talked about in your own archdiocese.

Had the bishops in Australia adopted the opportunities and the possibilities presented by the Second Vatican Council in terms of pastoral councils and parish councils with true and genuine gusto, would not some of the problems that occurred in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s, and certainly the responses, have been quite different?

Isn't it the truth that in fact for more than 40 years, many of the things that are necessary both to abate risk and then to respond to risk appropriately were available to each and every bishop in Australia - some did it; most didn't - and over that time, it has waxed and waned? So the question is why is it that a Church that was presented with such possibility, such collective wisdom and opportunities, simply failed, failed to do that? Now we talk about them as something new, something rediscovered, but they were always available. I think most people, in looking at this issue, struggle to understand that.

So appreciating that it is changing - and each of you have indicated that - the lost opportunity seems extraordinary, with devastating consequences. So I just want to ask Archbishop Wilson, given that your archdiocese actually did follow through on that, do you have any insight as to why the Australian Church, by and large, did not embrace those practices in a consistent way over the last four decades?

ARCHBISHOP WILSON: I think that there were many different reasons why they didn't do it. I think in some places they made an attempt at it, and it failed, it didn't work, so they just let it go. But I don't have any answer for why people haven't taken up what is contained in the 1983 Code.

ARCHBISHOP COLERIDGE: If I might, Commissioner? Structures were set up. Many, many parishes set up pastoral councils and still have them. But structures are only as good as the people you put in them, and I'm afraid many of the structures did struggle, and even fail, because the people who were in those structures seemed unable to do what the structure itself required.
If anything has emerged clearly, I suppose, in these years since the Second Vatican Council, it would be that we are never going to be saved by a structure. They do matter, but, really, a structure is, as I say, as good as the people you put in it.

The other thing is that the dioceses of this country, and the parishes therefore, vary enormously. Whereas the Archdiocese of Brisbane can have councils and all these wonderful structures that were authorised by the Second Vatican Council, it's a bit harder for Wilcannia-Forbes, for quite obvious reasons. So that has to be taken into account.

I do agree with your general claim that there has been a missed opportunity. I'm not sure it has been quite as dramatically missed as your question suggests, Commissioner, but there are many reasons why the opportunity was missed. Some of them at least, I think, come back to individuals, by which I mean bishops, priests and others, who populated these structures but in a way that was ineffectual.

COMMISSIONER FITZGERALD: Without labouring the point, doesn't that go to the fact that associated with the establishment of those structures, both parish councils and pastoral councils, would have needed to be a very significant commitment to training and formation? Whilst I absolutely agree that the personalities and the individuals matter, one of the absences - and it is a question, archbishop - was that when they were established, was there a genuine commitment to the formation, training and skills development of the people that populated the structures? You are absolutely right, structures won't get you anywhere unless the people in them have those capacities.

ARCHBISHOP COLERIDGE: I think, again, the experience was sporadic. Again, Archbishop Wilson has referred to the whole Cardijn tradition that had taken root in the Archdiocese of Adelaide, which was precisely a formation of the kind of which you speak. I think in other parts of Australia, too, there were genuine attempts to induct people really into the vision of the Second Vatican Council, but it wasn't easy, in part because the vision itself was so dramatically different from what we had known.
So, yes, there were failures at adult education and deeper formation, but it wasn't as if attempts weren't made. At some point, we seemed to run out of steam on that front of adult formation or adult education, and people just weren't prepared to turn up. So that was another problem - a loss of momentum or a loss of energy on that front, which is vital, as you say.

MS FURNESS: Archbishop Coleridge, you spoke about Wilcannia-Forbes having difficulties, and presumably any regional or remote parish would. Isn't it the responsibility, to some extent, of the archdiocese to assist those sorts of parishes?

ARCHBISHOP COLERIDGE: Well, some of that does go on. The Archdiocese of Brisbane, I know, resources very heavily in all kinds of ways the very large and, in some ways, remote dioceses to our north. I know it happens in New South Wales with regard to the understanding between Sydney, with all its resources, and Wilcannia-Forbes. So a lot of this goes on, and the Australian Bishops Conference offers all kinds of assistance to the very remote Diocese of Broome. So there is quite a bit of that collaboration that goes on. There could be more, but I think there is already quite a bit that goes on.

MS FURNESS: So if, indeed, a small parish was struggling, one could look to the archdiocese to say, "Well, it's your turn to help this parish"?

ARCHBISHOP COLERIDGE: That also goes on. Again, I can speak only of the Archdiocese of Brisbane, really, and that is that we have centralised resources, which are constantly offered to communities that lack them. Sometimes there is enthusiastic take-up. Other times they look the other way, and you can't really force the issue - well, I can try. I can urge, cajole, encourage and all of that, but I can't rule by fiat.

MS FURNESS: Archbishop Hart, there has been some evidence, particularly from the Catholics for Renewal, about the need for and the lack of synods, plenaries, pastoral councils and those sorts of structures to enable the Church, the leadership of the Church, to hear from the laity and speak with the laity about issues affecting the Church.
ARCHBISHOP HART: I think that was the major idea in this context as to why the 2020 plenary council was put forward. May I just digress for a minute?

MS FURNESS: Certainly.

ARCHBISHOP HART: In a parish, I always saw myself as a talent scout. Your parish really is only as good as the people you have and who you can draw in to things. One of the challenges that we sometimes face at parish level - some parishes do very well because they have a whole lot of gifted people; some parishes are lacking in that regard.

Now, if we then apply that to dioceses, there are big dioceses with a lot of resources and the challenge is how to involve the people in a whole lot of areas. It may be in areas through the relative offices for evangelisation, education, and so on, and to draw people in. I know we did have a Catholic Education Commission in Victoria and perhaps in the context that Archbishop Coleridge mentioned, it ran out of a bit of steam, and whilst the Commission is there, the big Catholic Education board doesn't go ahead quite so much.

So it depends where you are. There are good things. It depends on the impetus and it depends on the ability to address and discuss the needs and topics.

MS FURNESS: A witness who gave evidence recently said that, in her experience, parish councils and parishes generally tend to grow in participation the more the parish priest allows there to be others, particularly laypeople, who participate in decision-making, and then when that parish priest moves on and you have one who is more autocratic, participation drops.

ARCHBISHOP HART: That's my point about being the talent scout. If you can identify people and give them their ability to serve, to use their gifts, that parish will flourish.

MS FURNESS: Just coming back to my question about the synods, you refer to a plenary council?

ARCHBISHOP HART: There is projected a plenary council for Australia in 2020. Archbishop Coleridge is leading the
committee with, I think, Archbishop Wilson. You are on that, aren't you?

ARCHBISHOP WILSON: I am.

ARCHBISHOP HART: The idea is to make it not just a meeting of the bishops in another guise but to be preceded by a broad-based consultation and to be really participatory so that we will not merely learn the lessons, the important lessons that the Commission has to give us, but so that we will grow as a Church, as the people of God, with all of the gifts and talents we have.

MS FURNESS: So, Archbishop Wilson, is it prepared that there will be organised and structured and formal consultation with laypeople, among others, leading up to the plenary council?

ARCHBISHOP WILSON: Archbishop Coleridge is in charge of this process at the moment, but, yes, I can say that the idea about doing this actually comes from an initiative of Pope John Paul II, who at the beginning of the new millennium said that he thought that every local church - say in Australia - needed to have a plenary council, a gathering like that, that would involve all the people, consultation with laypeople, religious and clergy, and so on, in determining what it is that we want to characterise the way that we move into this new century. So in explaining it, I've been saying that I think what we need to do is to formulate a national pastoral plan that covers all the works we want to do.

MS FURNESS: Archbishop Coleridge, is it expected that there be consultation with advocacy groups and survivors of child sexual abuse in that consultation process?

ARCHBISHOP COLERIDGE: As far as I'm concerned, there will be consultation with as many people as we can possibly consult. Unless it is that kind of consultation, it's hardly worth going to the trouble of having a thing as complex as a plenary council. So yes.

MS FURNESS: Thank you. Your Honour, I notice the time.

THE CHAIR: Yes, very well. We will adjourn now until 10?
MS FURNESS: Thank you, your Honour.

THE CHAIR: We will adjourn until 10 in the morning.

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