

submission to Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse by

John Casey

REDACTED

to: GPO Box 5283 SYDNEY 2001

or to: catholic@childabuseroyalcommission.gov.au

**1) My interest**I am a lifelong but questioning Catholic in my 80th year of age

No one in my family has suffered sexual abuse

REDACTED

2) My complaints

a) That the demand for secrecy has exacerbated the sufferings of victims insofar that many such cases probably would (or should) not have occurred if timely and appropriate action by the Catholic Church had been taken. By my observation, the root of this problem lies in Canon Law of the Roman Catholic Church and the failure of the Catholic church to recognise its damaging effects.

REDACTED

c) I have made a face-to-face verbal request to a Catholic bishop and three emailed requests to a prominent Catholic professor of law for clarification of the in-context role of Canon Law. All have been ignored although the former merely confirmed the absolute (monarchical) authority of the local bishop

3) Canon Law

This is a minefield for the casual observer and I make no claim to expertise.

I would like to draw the Commission's attention to a book – THE CASE OF THE POPE by Human Rights lawyer GEOFFREY ROBERTSON QC published by Penguin in 2010. It sets out in a respectful manner, what and where the problems are and offers some helpful advice to the Catholic Church which seems to have been ignored. A search of the Vatican website will confirm that what I and Mr Robertson see as problematic, continues to exist in Canon Law. In particular, I draw attention to

Chapter 3. Canon Law (pp42-62) paras. 57,60,65,66,67,71,72,76,78,80 & 82

Appendix B (pp189-197) Extracts from Crimen Sollicitationis issued in 1962

Appendix C (pp198-200) Extracts from Sacramentorum sanctitatus tutela issued in 2001

Appendix D (pp201-204) de gravioribus delictis issued in 2010

Note the numerous references to Pontifical Secret, Secrets of the Holy Office and similar strictures.

In his video-link submissions to the Commission earlier in 2016, Cardinal Pell stated that **'he was not there to defend the indefensible'**. He repeated that assertion a little later but then went to claim that **'the problem was not systemic'**. In view of my reading of Mr Robertson's book and my other researches, there is, quite clearly a **'systemic problem'** under pinned by Canon Law.

4) Closure

I submit an opinion that the universal and the Australian Roman Catholic Church cannot claim a just and lasting closure of its part in Clerical sex abuse until all Canon Law references to SECRECY are removed, hopefully by the voluntary actions of the Vatican rather than coercion by one or more nation states. I am concerned that the Church, though appearing to comply with current reporting laws- especially in NSW, might emerge from three government investigations in Australia with its Canon Law intact leaving open the possibility of a future recurrence of COVER-UP.

5) Appreciation

I thank to Commission for its patient, respectful and diligent search for the truth and I retain hope that a just and lasting outcome can be found and implemented.

John Casey

17 June 2016

YY_39324