

# Te Rōpū Tautoko, the Royal Commission, and the Public Hearings in October 2022

An Information Pack and Resource for Parishes, Faith Communities, and Schools

## What is Te Rōpū Tautoko?

*Te Rōpū Tautoko* exists to support engagement between the Royal Commission of Inquiry into Abuse in Care and the Catholic Church in Aotearoa, represented by the Catholic Bishops and Congregational Leaders of Aotearoa New Zealand.

## What is the Royal Commission?

The Royal Commission of Inquiry into Abuse in Care was established as a response to abuse of children, young people, and vulnerable adults in the care of both state and faith-based institutions. The Commission is investigating the reports of abuse that relate to the period since 1950. It has unique powers to request information.

Initially, the Royal Commission had intended to investigate abuse reported in state institutions. However, members of the public, and the Catholic Church, along with other Christian churches, requested that all survivors of abuse be included in the Inquiry.

## Key Principles Guiding the Church's Involvement with the Royal Commission

The work of *Te Rōpū Tautoko* is based on the Catholic Social Teaching on Human Dignity. Expressed as:

*The Bishops and Congregational Leaders believe that every person has an innate human dignity (te tapu o te tangata), therefore they:*

- ▶ regard all forms of abuse as unacceptable and indefensible
- ▶ accept the responsibility to continue to act to stop abuse in the Church
- ▶ listen to, learn from, and support survivors
- ▶ act swiftly on complaints and follow them through
- ▶ ensure action on accountability is followed through for those who are proven responsible for abuse
- ▶ support the need for the Inquiry and actively cooperate with the Commission
- ▶ commit to ensuring transparency

The Bishops and the Congregational Leaders have stated that the way to learn lessons for today and the future is to examine, understand, acknowledge, and address what has occurred. Therefore, many representatives of the multitude of Church institutions are likely to attend various Royal Commission hearings to the experience of witnesses and learn from the experience of listening. Some will be called as witnesses from time to time.

**“The challenge to all in the Church is to become more and more survivor-informed. This includes understanding the nature of trauma arising from abuse and the life long, intergenerational, and community-wide impact.”**

## Redress Report

The Royal Commission's Redress Report was published in mid-December 2021. The report outlines their findings regarding redress for survivors and provides 95 recommendations on the implementation of redress. The Church has contributed to the process with submissions along with survivors, stakeholders, and other institutions.

[www.abuseincare.org.nz](http://www.abuseincare.org.nz) >

## The Church's Roadmap

After the receipt of the Redress Report, *Tautoko* have created a roadmap which outlines areas of work that need to be done across all areas of the Church in order to respond. By setting this out now, the Church is working proactively to already do what it can, rather than wait for the Commission's final report and further recommendations.

[www.tautoko.catholic.org.nz/roadmap](http://www.tautoko.catholic.org.nz/roadmap) >

# Learn, Share, Discuss

What's taking place with the Catholic Church and the Royal Commission

## Messages to share and discuss

- ▶ This process and the changes we will embark on as a Church are at the heart of the life of the Church and who we are as Gospel oriented people. The protection and flourishing of each person with innate human dignity guides every part of Catholic teaching.
- ▶ Survivors have spoken about the lifelong pain and suffering caused by the abuse, and compounded by the failures of Church and authorities to bring their abusers to justice.

“This work will always be part of the life and mission of the Church: to continually ensure that our spaces are safe and welcoming to all who encounter them.”

## What do 2022 and 2023 look like?

In March 2022, after the Hearing into the St John of God Brothers (Marylands School), the Commission had a Public Hearing that inquired into Māori experiences of abuse in care. Other Hearings have been held that focused on Disability, Deaf, and Mental Health institutional care, Foster Care, and Institutional responses of State agencies to abuse in care.

Coming up, in October, the Public Hearing into responses of faith-based institutions to abuse in their care will be held.

Catholic Church leaders including representatives of St Patrick's College Silverstream will be in attendance along with leaders from other churches. *See p.3*

The Te Rōpū Tautoko website will have a page dedicated to this Hearing, [www.tautoko.catholic.org.nz/hearing](http://www.tautoko.catholic.org.nz/hearing) and you can follow developments there.

Following the series of hearings, the work will focus on the Commission's various reports including the Final Report that is due in June 2023.

*At [www.tautoko.catholic.org.nz](http://www.tautoko.catholic.org.nz) you can sign up to receive monthly updates and use a contact form if you'd like to contact us directly.*

### Read Tautoko's FAQ

Responses to common questions about Te Rōpū Tautoko, the Royal Commission into Abuse in Care, and the Catholic Church's response to abuse are available on our website.

[www.tautoko.catholic.org.nz/faq](http://www.tautoko.catholic.org.nz/faq) >

### Read the Apology from Cardinal John Dew

When giving evidence before the Royal Commission in 2021, Cardinal John Dew took the opportunity to deliver an apology on behalf of Church leaders addressed directly to survivors of abuse and their whānau.

[www.tautoko.catholic.org.nz/apology](http://www.tautoko.catholic.org.nz/apology) >

### Prayer

We invite you to pray the following prayer, as prayed at Te Rōpū Tautoko meetings:

*E te Atua o te Tūmanako, God of Hope. Listen to the prayers of your people, over the harm done to those who should have been safe in our care. Breathe wisdom into our prayers, show us the way to healing and wholeness.*

*E Hehu, ko te Heparā, Jesus, the shepherd. Join to your own suffering the pain of all who experience suffering in body, mind, and spirit. May we continue along the path, of following your example.*

*E te Wairua Tapu, Holy Spirit. Grant us courage and wisdom, humility, and grace, so that we may act with justice, and all may find peace in you. Strengthen us for the journey ahead, calling all into communion.*

*E te Ariki, Whakarongo mai rā ki ā mātou. Amene.*

### Newsletter Notice

If you have the opportunity to update your networks through your own channels, such as newsletters, staff briefings or social media you can use the following notice:

- ▶ The Royal Commission into Abuse in Care has been continuing with its work. Te Rōpū Tautoko, the Church's group coordinating Catholic engagement with the Royal Commission, has been contributing to this work and has released a roadmap of the changes the Church needs to make in anticipation of the Commission's final recommendations. You can view Tautoko's Roadmap on their website at [www.tautoko.catholic.org.nz/roadmap](http://www.tautoko.catholic.org.nz/roadmap). The final Hearing of the Inquiry will be held from 13-20 October and involve witnesses representing Catholic entities. You can find out more at [www.tautoko.catholic.org.nz/hearing](http://www.tautoko.catholic.org.nz/hearing).

# Faith-based Institutions Response Hearing

A Resource for Catholic School & Parish Leaders  
to support their communities during the Royal Commission

The Royal Commission will conduct their final public hearing from 13-20 October 2022 into the responses of faith-based institutions to abuse and neglect under their care. This is the second Institutional Response Hearing, the first focusing on abuse of care in State agencies. The hearings prior to these included significant survivor evidence and limited institutional evidence.

## What Is Being Investigated?

Church leaders, including those from dioceses and congregations of the Catholic Church in Aotearoa New Zealand and leadership of St Patrick's Silverstream, will be present at the hearing. Their perspectives on the responses to reports of abuse and neglect will be heard. They will be asked what structural, systemic, or practical factors led to or added to the reported abuse or failure to report the abuse. Finally, they will be asked what lessons institutions have learned and what changes have been made to prevent and respond to abuse under their care.

## Faith-Based Representatives

Alongside Catholic representatives, appearing at the hearing are representatives from the Gloriavale Christian Community, and the Anglican, Methodist, and Presbyterian churches. Specific institutions will have representatives appear including Dilworth College, Wesley College, and Presbyterian Support Services. The full schedule is available on the Tautoko hearing page – [www.tautoko.catholic.org.nz/hearing](http://www.tautoko.catholic.org.nz/hearing).

“Church leaders examining and acknowledging, in public, what has occurred, is part of the process that forms responses today and into the future.”

## How can I participate?

The Faith-based Institutional Response public hearing will take place at 414 Khyber Pass Road, Newmarket, Auckland.

This will be open to the public and live streamed on the Royal Commission's website.

## Catholic Representatives

### St Patrick's College Silverstream

- ▶ Fr Thige O'Leary
- ▶ Dr Clare Couch
- ▶ Mr Sean Mahony
- ▶ Mr Rob Ferreira

### The Dioceses and Congregations of the Catholic Church in Aotearoa New Zealand

- ▶ Cardinal John Dew
- ▶ Bishop Steve Lowe
- ▶ Bishop Patrick Dunn
- ▶ Sr Sue France
- ▶ Dr Paul Flanagan

## Hearing Schedule

The hearing runs for 6 days starting at 9am Thursday 13 October and concluding at lunchtime on Thursday 20 October. Catholic representatives appear on Monday 17 October.



## Find out more about this hearing

Te Rōpū Tautoko will be supporting the Hearing and be present for all 6 days. A dedicated page on the Tautoko website is available to keep up to date with proceedings:


[www.tautoko.catholic.org.nz/hearing](http://www.tautoko.catholic.org.nz/hearing) >

The Royal Commission's website and page with specific material on this hearing is:

[www.abuseincare.org.nz/our-inquiries/faith-based-institutions-response-hearing](http://www.abuseincare.org.nz/our-inquiries/faith-based-institutions-response-hearing) >



Much of the work that has been undertaken over the last three years has occurred behind the scenes. This infographic provides an overview of some of the work that Te Rōpū Tautoko has been involved in since the Commission began.



# Over 150,000 pages of documentation provided to the Royal Commission

## 12 Public Hearings

for which *Te Rōpū Tautoko* has provided to the Commission:

19 statements



14 briefing papers



10 submissions



## 33 Notices to produce and over

## 60 Submissions in response

300+ letters on various topics  
1000s & 1000s of emails!

## 6 Dioceses

with ~1,250 Diocesan Clergy since 1950

## 43 Congregations

with ~6,000 Religious in NZ since 1950



## 100s of witness statements

provided to *Te Rōpū Tautoko* for review, response, and natural justice processes



## 428

Catholic Parishes



## 393

Catholic Schools



## 65

Care Institutions

 Hundreds of other Catholic institutions, organisations, and groups

