

MEDIA RELEASE

Royal Commission starts final public hearing as Catholic Church calls again for national redress scheme



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The Royal Commission starts its final public hearing today in Sydney as it examines the nature, cause and impact of child sexual abuse across the many different institutions it has examined over the past four years.

Francis Sullivan, CEO of the Truth Justice and Healing Council, said the start of today's hearing is a significant event in Australia's history and will look at the 'why' question across all institutions.

"Today is the beginning of the end of the public examination of many of the Australian institutions with the Commission estimating that children have been allegedly sexually abused in more than 4,000 institutions.

"The Commission has demonstrated, beyond any shadow of a doubt, that child sexual abuse and its devastating impacts must be confronted and dealt with by all.

"It has also demonstrated that the overwhelming need for a national redress scheme for child sexual abuse survivors has never been stronger.

"Now is the time for continued pressure on the Federal and state governments to get behind the scheme to ensure that fair, consistent and generous compensation is paid to people who have been abused," he said.

Over the past four years the \$500 million Royal Commission has examined many hundreds of different organisations and institutions in its 57 public hearings. It expects to have held more than 8000 private sessions by the time it completes its work.

"The Royal Commission has been a watershed in Australia's history. It has revealed, for the first time the horrific extent of abuse and complicity, not just within the Catholic Church, but across and within some of our most respected institutions.

"The Commission has demonstrated, beyond any shadow of a doubt, that child sexual abuse and its devastating impacts must be confronted and dealt with by all," Mr Sullivan said.

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The Truth Justice and Healing Council is coordinating the Catholic Church's response to the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.