

# MEDIA RELEASE

## Truth Justice and Healing Council CEO visits Melbourne's St Kevin's Catholic school



2 September 2013

Francis Sullivan, CEO of the Truth Justice and Healing Council, has met with some 200 staff from one of Melbourne's leading Catholic boys schools, St Kevin's in Toorak.

Mr Sullivan said the meeting, which was held at the Victorian State Library, was designed to provide information about the work the Council is undertaking as the Catholic Church prepares for the start of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse's public hearings later this month.

"We talked about how important it is for all Catholic wherever they come together: in parishes, in schools, in parent meetings, to have the opportunity to discuss all aspects of the clerical sexual abuse crisis which has engulfed the church," Mr Sullivan said.

"We discussed what the Church has put in place to professionally deal with allegations of clerical sex abuse over the past decades and we discussed the very serious failings of the church.

"The response was overwhelming. When given the chance everyone I talk to is very focused on what has happened in the past and what is being done to protect children in the future.

"People are hungry to hear how the Church is engaging with the Royal Commission and they always welcome the opportunity to have an honest conversation about what is going on and to be able to express their own frustration and anger.

"Hearing from ordinary Catholics, including staff members at St Kevin's, is an important part of our work. The focus of the Royal Commission will turn to the Catholic Church in December when hearings examining the Church's victim's reparation scheme, Towards Healing, commence.

"What will be required each time the Church appears before the Royal Commission is a frank, forthright and articulate presentation of the past including the good and the bad, the present including what we are doing now to protect children and the future, how we will help drive a reform agenda ranging across all aspects of child protection.

"And we will do this while helping ensure victims are treated with respect and given the support to tell their stories," Mr Sullivan said.

St Kevin's College, founded in 1918, is a private, all-boys primary and secondary school with around 2,000 students.

The Truth Justice and Healing Council was established by the Catholic Church to coordinate the Church's response to the Royal Commission. Its role is to oversee the Church's engagement with the Commission, to develop new policies to protect young people and to help the Church respond to any future complaints appropriately and with justice, putting the needs of victims first.

**Media contact:** Michael Salmon 0417 495 018

For more information on the Truth Justice and Healing Council go to: [www.tjhcouncil.org.au](http://www.tjhcouncil.org.au)

For more information on the Royal Commission go to:

<http://www.childabuseroyalcommission.gov.au/Pages/default.aspx>

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**Truth Justice and Healing Council**

PO Box 4593 KINGSTON ACT 2604 | Tel: +61 2 6234 0900 | Fax: +61 2 6234 0999