MEDIA RELEASE

TJHC response to resignation of Marie Collins, abuse survivor, from Vatican's child protection commission

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The Truth Justice and Healing Council has called for the Vatican's child protection commission to be directly answerable to the Pope, rather than reporting to various levels within the Vatican bureaucracy.

Mr Sullivan made the call today following the resignation of Irish clerical abuse survivor and acvocate, Marie Collins, from the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors, a position she's held since the Commission's inception in 2014.

"It's a sad loss that sends a very bad signal about the level of obstruction within the Vatican," Francis Sullivan said.

"The Holy Father has made abundantly clear the direction he wants to take.

"This Commission is working its heart out, yet the resistance within the Vatican is clearly trying to win the day.

"Pope Francis is really the first pontiff to start naming the problem and to make it clear that he wants bishops, cardinals and others to be held responsible for the welfare of children.

"Its not just about perpetrators, its about those who administered the system. No wonder the system is reacting," he said.

Asked on ABC radio today what the Vatican should do, Mr Sullivan said it should:

- make the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors directly answerable to the Pope, so that he hears directly from them, not filtered through some other body;
- resource the Commission so it has professional, competent individuals, preferably from outside the Vatican running it; and
- make it abundantly clear that there will be transparency about how the Vatican is dealing with the issue, including the way it deals with priests and disciplines bishops and religious leaders who have dropped the ball and done the wrong thing.

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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.