



**You have spoken and continue to speak.  
We are listening, and we have heard you.  
We apologise and we are sorry.**

*To victims and survivors of abuse and your whānau,*

Many people asked for this Royal Commission to be established to give you, victims and survivors of abuse, a forum to be heard and acknowledged.

Today, recognising the importance of this moment, I apologise to you, on behalf of the bishops and congregational leaders of the Catholic Church in Aotearoa New Zealand.

I also apologise to you on behalf of those who preceded us as bishops and congregational leaders.

We offer no excuses for their actions, or for ours, that have caused you harm.

We have heard the survivors who have spoken to the Royal Commission so far.

We acknowledge all those victims and survivors who have spoken over the years.

We acknowledge all victims and survivors who have not yet been able to speak or may never be able to. We hear you in the silence and through those who speak for you.

We thank you all for your bravery and courage.

You have spoken of abuse perpetrated by bishops, priests, brothers, sisters, and lay people in the Catholic Church. People you should have been able to trust.

We have heard you and acknowledge that we have caused you pain, hurt, and trauma, and that this continues to impact you.

I repeat what I have said before, any kind of abuse is unacceptable and indefensible.

We are deeply sorry.

We acknowledge that the systems and culture of the Church allowed abuse to occur.

These systems and culture failed you and must change.

We apologise for the times that we or our predecessors protected the Church and not you.

You have spoken of times when we, within the Church, failed to listen to you, to learn from you, and refused to hear what you were saying.

We acknowledge that this compounded the hurt and suffering, and acknowledge the ongoing physical, emotional, and spiritual trauma you experience.

We apologise for our inappropriate responses, for all we could have done but failed to do, and for the times you were dismissed, ignored, not believed, belittled, forgotten.

As leaders in the Catholic Church in Aotearoa New Zealand, we are committed to ensuring a safe Church. We are committed to putting you, victims and survivors of abuse and your whānau, first, rather than focusing on the Church's systems and culture.



We understand and appreciate the proposals from individuals and groups who are calling for an independent body to provide redress. We will listen to and work with all parties who are considering and developing these proposals and continue to work with the Commission as it deliberates.

We remain committed to listening, to learning, to acting on what we hear from you, and to doing all we can to address the harm that has been done to you.

Pope Francis has said:

*“Looking back to the past, no effort to beg pardon and to seek to repair the harm done will ever be sufficient. Looking ahead to the future, no effort must be spared to create a culture able to prevent such situations from happening, but also to prevent the possibility of their being covered up and perpetuated.”*  
*Letter to the People of God, 2018*

I am committed to a Church that spares no effort to create a culture that prevents abuse and any possibility of cover-ups, to a Church that listens and learns from you, and then acts.

I personally apologise for when I have failed to listen, learn, and act in ways that would have put you first. I am profoundly sorry, and I am ashamed.

I commit to acting with you and your stories and experiences in mind.

John

John A. Cardinal Dew  
Archbishop of Wellington

President, New Zealand Catholic Bishops Conference

On behalf of the bishops and congregational leaders of the Catholic Church in Aotearoa New Zealand



**Kua puta ō kōrero, ā, e kōrero tonu ana koe.  
Kei te whakarongo mātou, ā, kua rongu anō i a koe.  
He kupu whakapāhā tēnei, kua hē mātou.**

*Ki te hunga i pākinotia, ki ngā mōrehu o te tūkinu, ki ō koutou whānau anō,*

E hia kē nei ngā tāngata i tonu kia whakatūria tēnei Kōmihana e whai wāhi ai koutou, ngā pāpurenga me ngā mōrehu o te mahi tūkinu ki te whakapuaki i ō kōrero, kia rangona ai koutou.

I tēnei rā, i runga i te mōhio ki te nui o tēnei wā, he kupu whakapāhā tēnei ki a koe mai i ngā pīhopa me ngā kaiārahi o ngā whakaminenga o te Hāhi Katorika o Aotearoa.

He kupu whakapāhā hoki tēnei nā ngā pīhopa me ngā kaiārahi o ngā whakaminenga o mua.

Kāore hoki ā mātou kupu hei whakawātea i a rātou, i ā rātou mahi, i ā mātou mahi anō e mamae ai koutou.

Kua rongu mātou i ngā kōrero a ngā mōrehu ki te Kōmihana tae noa ki tēnei wā.

Kei te mihi mātou ki ngā pāpurenga me ngā mōrehu i whakapuaki atu i ā rātou kōrero i ngā tau kua pahure.

Kei te whakaaro nui mātou ki ngā pāpurenga me ngā mōrehu katoa, arā, ko te hunga kāore anō kia kōrero, ko rātou anō e kore pea e āhei ki te kōrero. Kei te rongu mātou i te reo o te iwi nohopuku, me te reo o ō koutou māngai.

Kei te mihi mātou i tō kaha, i tō māia.

Kua whakapuaki koutou i ngā kōrero mō ngā mahi tūkinu a ngā pīhopa, a ngā pirihi, a ngā tāne tapu, a ngā wāhine tapu me ngā ringa āwhina o te Hāhi Katorika. Tōna tikanga, he pou whakawhirinaki kē tēnei hunga mōu.

Kua rongu mātou i a koe, kei te mōhio mātou kua mamae koutou i a mātou – he mahi tūkinu e ngaukino tonu ana i a koutou.

Ka tōwai anō ahau i aku kōrero o mua, kei te hē rawa atu ngā momo mahi tūkinu katoa, e kore e taea te karo. Nō mātou anō te hē.

Kei te mōhio mātou i pā mai ēnei mahi tūkinu i runga i te whakaae a ngā pūnaha me ngā whakaritenga o te Hāhi. Kua tino raruraru koe i ēnei pūnaha me ēnei tikanga – me huri ēnei āhuatanga.

Kei te tuku whakapāhā mātou mō ngā wā i whakamarumarutia te Hāhi e mātou, e ō mātou kaimahi o mua rānei, otirā, kāore mātou i whakamarumaruru i a koe.

Kua kōrero koe mō ngā wā kāore mātou o te Hāhi i whakarongo ki a koe, i ako i a koe, ā, kāore hoki i pīrangī ki te rongu ki ō kōrero.

Kei te mōhio mātou i kaha ake te pā o te mamae me te pōuri i ērā mahi, ā, kei te mōhio mātou e ngaukino tonu ana tērā āhuatanga ki tō tinana, ki tō ngākau me tō wairua.



He kupu whakapāhā tēnei i te hē o ā mātou whakautu, i te nui o ngā mahi i āhei engari kāore i tutuki i a mātou, arā, mō ngā wā i takahia, i whakarērea, i whakahēngia, i whakaitia, otirā, i wareware noatia koe i a mātou.

E pūmau ana mātou, ngā kaiārahi o te Hāhi Katorika o Aotearoa, ki te haumarutanga i roto i te Hāhi. E whakapau kaha ana mātou ki a koutou ngā pāpurenga me ngā mōrehu o te mahi tūkinu me ō koutou whānau i te tuatahi, kua ki ngā pūnaha me ngā tikanga whakahaere a te Hāhi.

E mārama ana, otirā, e mihi ana mātou ki ngā tāngata takitahi me ngā rōpū i tuku mai i ngā tono ki te whakatū i tētahi rōpū motuhake ki te whakaea i tēnei take. Ka whakarongo mātou, ka mahitahi ki ngā rōpū katoa e whakaaro ana, e whakawhanake ana i ngā tono, ā, ka mahitahi tonu mātou ki te Kōmihana ki te whiriwhiri i tēnei take

Ka rongo mātou i ō kōrero, ka kaha tonu mātou ki te whakarongo, ki te ako, ki te mahi tōtika hei whakaea i ngā mamae i pā ki a koe.

Ko te kupu a Pāpā Francis:

*“Ki te titiro whakamuri, ahakoa ngā whakapaunga kaha ki te whakaea, ki te whakatikatika hoki i ngā mamae o mua – e kore e ea te mamae. Ki te titiro whakamua, me whakapau kaha tātou ki te whakatū i ngā tikanga e tika ana hei kaupare atu i ēnei āhuatanga, waihoki, hei kaupare atu i te āheinga ki te huna, ki te whai tonu i aua mahi.”  
He reta ki te Iwi o te Atua, 2018*

Kei te tuku au i taku ake kupu whakapāhā ki a koe mō ngā wā kāore au i whakarongo, i ako, i mahi rānei i ngā mahi e tika ana hei hāpai i a koe i te tuatahi. Kei te hē rawa atu aku mahi, kua whakamā ahau.

Heoi anō, kia mōhio mai koe, ka pūmau au ki a koe, ki ō kōrero, ki ō wheako, ā, ka kitea ngā hua o ā tāua mahi.

John

John A. Cardinal Dew  
Archbishop of Wellington

Perehītini, New Zealand Catholic Bishops Conference

Hei māngai mō ngā pīhopa me ngā kaiārahi o ngā whakaminenga o te Hāhi Katorika o Aotearoa.