

**FOR THE INNOCENTS**

**RESPONSES  
TO  
A STRATEGY FOR HEALING**



**AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC BISHOPS CONFERENCE**  
General Secretariat

26 May 2015

The Innocents  
PO Box 2412  
MT WAVERLEY VIC 3149

Dear Signatories for The Innocents

Thank you for your letter and the attached document, *Restoring the Face of Jesus*, which outlines a strategy directed towards healing for victims of clerical child sexual abuse.

Your letter and the document will be forwarded to Mr Francis Sullivan, Chief Executive Officer of the Truth Justice and Healing Council.

Yours sincerely in Christ

Fr Brian Lucas  
**General Secretary**

cc Mr Francis Sullivan

To: FTI HS Project

Re: A Strategy for Healing: Response

Dear "FTI HS" friends,

The material you have prepared and provided has been a source of great encouragement to me. For some months the Pastoral Council of the Catholic Parish of Launceston has been conscious of a pastoral need to respond to the survivors of CCSA. The need arose from a consciousness on the part of parishioners who have a growing awareness of themselves being tertiary victims of both the abuse that has been perpetrated over the years and also the inadequacy of the response on the part of the institutional Church. As a pastor, I have had the deeply humbling experience of accompanying a primary victim of CCSA on her rather tortuous journey on the way of healing and recovery. I believe this has been the most "priestly" work of my 31 years in ordained ministry. I have learned a great deal about my own needs in the face of CCSA. I have come to know the great need that exists for strategies such as that which you have proposed. I am very impressed by your proposal. I sense there is a need also to address more significantly the need for "spiritual" healing. My experience has led me to understand that the capacity to believe, to have faith, to hope is robbed from the person who is a victim of CCSA. It seems to me these capacities need to be gifted back to survivors to enable the healing and recovery for which they yearn. Thank you for the deep love and courage you have invested in your proposed strategy. You are to be commended. I would be pleased to associate myself with your efforts. Your FTI HS provides an inspiration and a guide for our Pastoral Council's ongoing conversation (and, hopefully, action) with regard to responding to and supporting all survivors of CCSA.

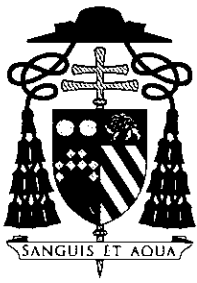
Warm regards and, at very least, a promise of prayerful support for all your efforts,

**Fr Mark Freeman**

Parish Priest

Catholic Parish of Launceston

0408 535 200



## THE ARCHBISHOP OF BRISBANE

7 July 2015

For The Innocents  
PO Box 2412  
MOUNT WAVERLEY VIC 3149

Gentlemen,

Thanks for sending me your document "Restoring the Face of Jesus" which addresses a burning issue and does so with a genuine sense of concern and a desire to be positive.

In addressing sexual abuse of the young and vulnerable in the Church – and more particularly in engaging the current Royal Commission – the Bishops and Major Superiors have adopted a whole-of-Church approach, since the lack of coordination of the past is something we simply can no longer afford. Therefore, the Bishops and Major Superiors as a whole rather than individuals will have to consider your proposal.

I will raise the matter at the forthcoming meeting of the Truth Justice and Healing Council, and it will be up to the Council to decide whether your proposal or elements of it should be recommended to the Supervisory Group which comprises the Permanent Committee of the Bishops Conference and representatives of Catholic Religious Australia.

The Supervisory Group will then have to decide whether the proposal or elements of it should be referred to the plenary meetings of the ACBC and CRA who alone in the end are competent to make decisions on matters such as this.

That may sound bureaucratically complex at a time when the need to act is urgent. But it is required if we are to adhere to the whole-of-Church approach we have adopted. So too it is to listen to voices like yours that speak with clarity and compassion from the heart of the Church.

Yours sincerely in Christ,

Archbishop of Brisbane

cc Vicar General



## CATHOLIC ARCHDIOCESE OF SYDNEY

15 June 2015

Mr Robert Munro et al  
"For the Innocents"  
Po Box 2412  
Mount Waverley VIC 3149

Dear Mr Munro et al

I am writing on behalf of the Archbishop of Sydney, His Grace Anthony Fisher OP and our Vicar General and Chancellor to thank your team for their very positive work in preparing the submission, "Restoring the Face of Jesus".

Please be advised that the Archdiocese of Sydney will soon be establishing a new office for the protection of vulnerable people. We will pass on your suggestions.

Also, you may wish to know that Very Rev. Dr Gerald Gleeson is now our Vicar General and Mr Chris Meney is Chancellor following Mgr John Usher's decision to concentrate his workload on the role of Parish Priest.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mike Bailey".

Mike Bailey  
Executive Officer to the Vicar General and the Chancellor



James Goold House  
PO Box 146  
East Melbourne Vic 8002  
Australia

26 May 2015

Mr B J Mithen  
P O Box 2412  
MOUNT WAVERLEY Vic 3149

Dear Mr Mithen,

I write to acknowledge your recent correspondence with suggestions for ways of working towards those who have suffered so terribly at the hands of Church personnel. Thank you for sending the material to me which will be among the proposals considered by my advisers and myself.

With prayerful good wishes,

Yours sincerely in Christ,

ARCHBISHOP OF MELBOURNE



# CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF DARWIN

26<sup>th</sup> May 2015

Mr. B.J. Mithen  
PO Box 2412  
MOUNT WAVERLEY VIC. 3149

Dear Mr. Mithen

## HEALING FOR THE INNOCENTS

Thank you so much for your correspondence and for the document enclosed.

As I'm sure you are aware this matter is an absolute priority for me and for our Diocese.

We are always open to anything that might add to what we consider to be best practise.

God Bless,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bishop E. Hurley", with a small cross symbol above the first letter.

Bishop E. Hurley.



## Bishop of Wagga Wagga

just as the Son of Man came not to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many. Mark 10:45

12 June 2015

For the Innocents

Attn: B J Mithen

P O Box 2412

MOUNT WAVERLY VIC 3149

Dear B J Mithen

At the outset I apologise for the cold manner of the appellation but your correspondence does not permit me to do otherwise.

I acknowledge with thanks the helpful material you have supplied on behalf of "For the Innocents". Your document is timely as we struggle to address the consequences of incompetence and failure on the part of Church Authorities in particular relation to the sexual abuse of young people and vulnerable persons.

To begin with, every Bishop and those with leadership roles in the Church should regard as "required reading" the recently released "Child, Arise" (Jane N Dowling) (see attachment). Further, I believe so much suffering could have been avoided if the designated authority was required to seek advice and direction from the Council of Priests or appropriate body. To this end, in my own diocese, the matter is being discussed with the Council seeking the intended outcome of creating a committee comprising priests/lay persons; it will comprise persons with a range of expertise for professional guidance. Your material will prove an excellent resource and provide a way forward.

Your material sits alongside "Restoring Trust Together" a programme (for want of a better term) being prepared for the Australian Bishops Conference by the Truth, Justice and Healing Council. The document is in its final stages prior to acceptance.

While recognising the value of all contributors to a strategy to address the issue at hand, the last thing we need is a torrent of paper that will work against the desired outcomes of our efforts. The focus must remain clear; in your words, to promote: "the spirit of Christian healing and as a sign of our continuing commitment to the Church and to the abused and their families who desire to experience the Gospel message of love and care from the Church founded by Jesus."

Thank you very much. Your prayerful support is deeply appreciated at this time.

In Domino

\*Gerard Hanna  
Bishop of Wagga Wagga

Most Rev Gerard Hanna DD, Bishop, Diocese of Wagga Wagga



Bishop's Office, 205 Tarcutta Street, Wagga Wagga NSW 2650  
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◆ Ph: 02 6937 0003 ◆ Fax: 02 6921 5157 ◆ Email: ghanna@wagga.catholic.org.au





## **CHILD, ARISE!**

**The Courage to Stand  
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**JANE N. DOWLING**

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**Rev Dr David Ranson**

**Senior Lecturer, Sydney College of Divinity**

*My journey from childhood to maturity, through being an altar boy, the shame of sexual abuse, to the seminary, then nursing with disabled children, marriage and fatherhood, to legal practice and finally my present life's work as an advocate for other survivors would not have been possible without my mentors: people who shared their wisdom distilled from the pain and joy of life and who showed me courage in the face of pain. I share a vision that no one should journey in sorrow without hope. 'Child Arise!' offers hope: it lifts the shame of child sexual abuse from 'victims' and presents practical encouragement for ways to access light, vitality and insight in the darkest of times, when suffering seems unending.”*

**John Ellis, lawyer and survivor**

*“As a lawyer and psychotherapist advocating for sufferers of childhood sexual abuse, I was delighted with the reflectivity encouraged by this beautiful book. An emerging capacity for reflection is integral to trauma recovery. 'Child Arise!' uses biblical language to anchor reflection and yet its genesis in lived experience renders it potentially useful even to those whose faith has been devastated by abuse by clergy.”*

**Nicola Ellis, lawyer / psychotherapist**

*“This spiritual handbook is welcome, constructive and unique. Here we have a broad range of specifically chosen, biblically based, powerful prayerful reflections enabling the survivor, of any age and circumstance, to tap into their spiritual selves, perhaps long muted.”*

**Dr Jennifer Herrick**

**sexual abuse survivor and theological scholar**

*“This is a book by a victim of sexual abuse for other victims, someone who has spent countless hours meditating on the scriptures and applying them to her situation. It is an abundant source of consolation and inspiration, not just for victims but for the whole community.”*

**Bishop Geoffrey Robinson**

**author of For Christ's Sake: End Sexual Abuse in the Catholic Church ... for Good (2013)**

This practical handbook invites the reader to embark on a journey of healing by taking a guided walk through the Scriptures where they will learn to listen to their personal story narrated by a loving God. As this transforming journey unfolds, the reader will be amazed as they discover the presence of an all-loving and compassionate God who walks with them and extends a healing hand. It is a practical handbook that also offers insight to spiritual and pastoral care workers accompanying survivors of sexual abuse, family and friends and other supporters. Interwoven within the scriptural reflections is the story of the author's own journey from trauma to healing. It is a powerful and moving narrative that serves as a model for other survivors.



**David Lovell Publishing PO Box 44 Kew East VIC 3102 tel +61 3 9859 0000  
email publisher@davidlovellpublishing.com**

## The Author

**JANE DOWLING** has spent twenty-two years as a consecrated member of an international Catholic missionary community facilitating retreats and providing guidance on how to pray with the Scriptures. As a survivor of sexual abuse, she experienced the transformative power of God's word in her own healing journey. Witnessing this transformation in others prompted her to write this book. In late 2012, she appeared before the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. 'My decision to tell my story to the Royal Commission', she says, 'not only initiated a personal journey of deeper healing but also provided the raw material for God to work with and what I needed to begin writing this book.'

## Distinctive features of this book

- The author writes as a survivor of abuse speaking to other survivors of abuse (particularly sexual abuse).
- It is a practical handbook that invites the reader to participate by walking their own spiritual journey.
- It acknowledges the deep spiritual wounds of survivors by dealing with the big existential questions that arise.
- It deals with the distorted image of God that victims often cannot escape.
- While focusing on the spiritual, it is also integrates the practical issues faced by survivors and their supporters.
- It is written in a gentle and non-imposing manner.
- It is gently introduces the readers to a technique and step-by step-guide on how to encounter and listen to God through the Scriptures and how to experience the transforming power of Scripture at work in their life.
- It reveals how healing can be achieved through spirituality and shows how God works through the Scriptures with the power to transform and integrate the physical, emotional, psychological and spiritual effects of abuse.
- Offers insights to spiritual and pastoral care workers accompanying survivors of sexual abuse.

***'What I attempt to do in this book is invite survivors not only to connect with their stories but to listen to their own story being narrated by a loving God who speaks to them personally through the Scriptures. I accompany them in this process of journeying through the Scriptures. My reflections are an invitation to the reader to personalize his or her own experience of God's love by giving them step by step guidance on how they can apply the Scriptures to their own survivor context so that they can experience the power of it in their daily life. My hope is that by the end of the book the reader will be left with a technique for reflecting upon and praying with the Scriptures and that this will serve as a means for their continued healing and transformation from the effects and issues of sexual abuse.'***

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25 May 2015

Mr B J Mithen  
For the Innocents  
PO Box 2412  
MOUNT WAVERLEY VIC 3149

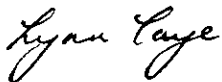
Dear Mr Mithen

Thank you for your recent letter to the Very Rev Peter Williams.

Your letter has been forwarded to Fr Williams along with the accompanying document for his consideration and interest.

With all good wishes,

Yours sincerely,



Lynn Taye  
Executive Assistant to the Diocesan Administrator of Parramatta



3 June 2015

Mr R Munro  
For The Innocents  
PO Box 2412  
MOUNT WAVERLEY VIC 3149

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Dear Mr Munro,

Thank you for your letter and the enclosed material which was received in my office on 26 May 2015 while I was absent from the diocese. I am grateful to you for sending this to me.

Your letter expresses a deep concern and compassion for the victims of sexual abuse. The concern is shared by the vast majority of people in our Church community and wider society.

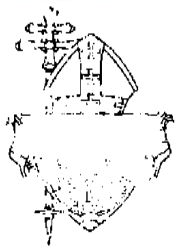
I would like to review the proposal in detail and discuss it with my advisors. Once I have been able to do that I will contact you further.

I do appreciate your concern and your compassion in writing to me about this extremely important issue that our Church is facing. I share this concern and am determined to find a way to respond to these urgent needs for healing and hope.

Yours sincerely in Christ

*+ Timothy Costelloe SDB*

Most Rev Timothy Costelloe SDB DD  
Archbishop of Perth



## Catholic Archdiocese of Adelaide

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June 9, 2015  
Ref No 15/0886

Healing for the Innocents  
PO Box 2412  
Mount Waverley VIC 3149

Email: [fortheinnocents@prejagnant.org](mailto:fortheinnocents@prejagnant.org)

Dear Coordinators of the "Restoring the Face of Jesus" initiative,

I write on behalf of Archbishop Wilson in response to your letter received on May 26, 2015.

You may be aware that Archbishop Wilson is presently on leave. Archbishop Wilson shares your profound concern for the care of all those who have survived clerical child sexual abuse. Since his installation as Archbishop of Adelaide a great deal of the resources of the Archdiocese have been directed to the establishment of a Child Protection Unit, Police Check Unit, the formation of clergy, employees and volunteers. I know that the Archbishop will be very keen to read your proposal and to give it his most sincere consideration once he is in a position to do so.

In the meantime with your permission I will forward your document to our Child Protection Unit and to our Archdiocesan Leadership Team for their consideration at this early stage.

Thank you again for this initiative and for your concern for those who have experienced such terrible offenses against Christ.

Yours sincerely,

**Fr Philip Marshall**  
**Vicar General**

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Catholic Diocesan Centre, 39 Wakefield Street, Adelaide SA 5000  
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## CATHOLIC ARCHDIOCESE OF SYDNEY

29 July 2015

Mr Robert Munro et al  
"For the Innocents"  
PO Box 2412  
Mount Waverley VIC 3149

Dear Mr Munro et al

Thank you for your further correspondence regarding the report "Restoring the Face of Jesus".

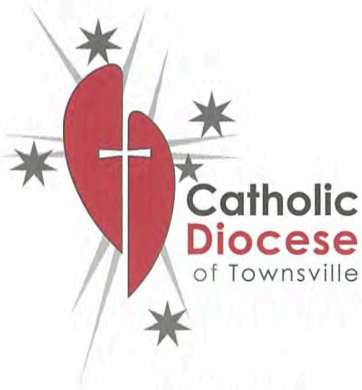
As you were advised previously, the Archdiocese of Sydney is working towards establishing a new office for the protection of Vulnerable people and your work will be passed on to that body for further consideration when it is operating.

I appreciate your enthusiasm to pursue this issue and have noted that the work has been placed on your website.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gerald Gleeson".

Very Rev. Dr Gerald Gleeson  
Vicar General



28 July 2015

Mr Robert Munro  
For the Innocents  
[fortheinnocents@prejagnant.org](mailto:fortheinnocents@prejagnant.org)

Dear Robert

Thank you sending me a copy of your committee's comprehensive document, *Restoring the Face of Jesus*, which I received on 27 May 2015. I apologise for not replying when I first received the document as I did not think you were seeking any response.

This document has been passed on to our Diocesan Coordinator for Professional Standards, Mrs Geraldine O'Brien.

Many of the strategies outlined in your document have been on-going in our diocese for some time now. We continue to review these strategies in line with legislative, regulatory, community and Church developments and requirements, especially in the area of protection of children and the vulnerable, and responding to the needs of victims.

Our **primary** concern is re-creating an environment of trust and awareness, in the hope that those who have been harmed and abused in the Church will be empowered to go to the Police and/or other appropriate authority, including the Church, and seek assistance in moving towards healing.

Your focus on a restorative, healing strategy, very much reflects what we are continually working hoping to achieve with both primary and secondary victims, and our Church in the Diocese of Townsville.

Once again, thank you for your comprehensive document and offer of assistance. We especially join with you in praying that the whole Church will once again be worthy of the trust of the most vulnerable in our society.

Yours sincerely

**REV MICHAEL LOWCOCK**  
Diocesan Administrator

Dear Robert and other members of the For the Innocents group,

Thank you for your email and the copy you attached of "Restoring the Face of Jesus". Thank you also for the letter and the printed copy of the document that you sent by post.

It was good to read of your concern to promote a more complete and community-based healing strategy for those who have been abused and their families and the community as a whole. I commend you on the broad-based group you have gathered together to form For the Innocents. I am also grateful for your reflections in the document "Restoring the Face of Jesus". You have provided some helpful observations on the present situation and made some valuable proposals for developing a restorative healing strategy.

I noted your references to trauma-informed care. This was an area spoken of by Dr Carolyn Quadrio during the recent Royal Commission hearing in Ballarat. I also noted the encouragement of cooperation between diocesan leadership and support groups. We have made some progress in this in discussions between the Ballarat-based Moving Towards Justice group and diocesan representatives but more needs to be done. You referred to professionals who could facilitate the healing of victims. We have developed some cooperation with the professionals at the Ballarat Centre Against Sexual Assault and Relationships Australia but again more could be done in this line. I thank you for these and for all your proposals for strategies, both at a diocesan level and a parish level. I also appreciate your suggestions about an Australia-wide outreach.

I will forward your document to the members of our Diocesan Professional Standards Consultative Panel and discuss your proposals with them.

I'll attach a copy of a letter I have written recently to the people of our diocese following the Royal Commission hearing in Ballarat. This will give you some points about our current approach.

Thank you for your good wishes and prayers. I offer my good wishes and prayers for you in all you do to promote the much needed healing.

God bless you all.

Paul Bird CSsR

Bishop of Ballarat