



**24 November 2016
Embargoed 4:30pm**

MEDIA STATEMENT – Bishop Greg Thompson

The ongoing work of the Royal Commission has been a watershed for survivors and their families, and for the church's commitment to face its past and shape a healthy future. I want to thank the Royal Commission for its diligence, compassion and insight into one of the greatest health crises of our time – the harming of children in our care, the response to the lived trauma of survivors and the ongoing work of reformation in our society and institutions in order to have a child safe community which has the wellbeing of children as its highest endeavour.

As Bishop I have not done this alone without the important work of staff and advisors, and survivors who have courageously come forward. They have been inspirational and have committed with me in this important work of bearing witness to the sorrow and harm done to children and the ongoing work of help and recovery underway. Courage does not come in bucket loads, but in handfuls to do what is right for the vulnerable and to say to another that 'we are not alone' as we speak the truth and bind the wounds before us.

The Royal Commission will be the basis for the ongoing work of ensuring good and effective decision-making within the leadership and committees of our Diocese, and for implementing best practice for the Professional Standards and Redress policies of our Diocese. I have the commitment of Diocesan Council to commission independent reviews of present policy and practice in these critical areas to ensure health and transparency in our life, and restoring confidence and trust in our church's mission.

With the knowledge of the public hearings and the report on the findings and recommendations of the Royal Commission, I have set in motion a review by KPMG's Mark Jones AM, into the present governance practices of our Diocese. We are also working to appoint a former NSW Police Commander to undertake an independent review into our present policies and practices of child protection, church discipline and redress of survivors.

These reviews will provide a transparent investigation and assist in developing leading policies and practices for our Diocese.

I also advise that I will be taking undertaking leave to manage my health and find recovery from the impact of working in the area of child abuse in this Diocese and of bearing public witness to my own story.

Attribute all of this statement to Bishop Greg Thompson.

<Ends>



Facing the past Shaping a healthy future



MEDIA ADVISORY

1. We would ask that in reporting on this matter you remind people that they can contact Lifeline on 13 11 14, the NSW Police on 1800 333 000, and the Diocesan Director of Professional Standards on **1800 774 945**.

Media Contact

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