

## *We proclaim a crucified Christ*

*1 Cor 1.23*

*Letter to the People of the Diocese of Broken Bay*

Saturday 16 December 2017

My dear people,

On Friday, the Final Report from the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse was presented to the Government. The very breadth of its scope indicates that it will take time to absorb its implications and recommendations, both as a nation and particularly for the Church. A joint statement from the leadership of the Bishops and Religious Institutes was released, and I draw your attention to it. But I also wish to speak with you directly at this time.

I recognise the dreadful wounds experienced when trust has been betrayed in our local faith communities. I am determined to right the wrongs for victims, survivors, families and faith communities and to work for their healing. And I acknowledge quite plainly my responsibility to do all that we can to ensure the safety of everyone in our Diocese. The recommendations of the Royal Commission will significantly aid me, and my key leadership team, in this task. A more earnest return to the ways of Jesus Christ will be essential for the future.

Our Diocesan Offices for Safeguarding and Professional Standards are already working diligently with our clergy, lay staff, and volunteers to support our parishes, schools and community in building an enduring responsibility to all our people, present and future.

The pain and complexity of the matters detailed by the Royal Commission have reached deeply into our lives in many different ways. I want to acknowledge one local situation which will enter a new phase next week. On Tuesday (19 December), Finian Egan, formerly a priest of the Diocese of Broken Bay, is to be released on parole from the Long Bay Correctional Complex where he has served four of his eight years' sentence for serious criminal offenses against children.

This development will occasion different reactions and emotions for many of you, even distress, especially for those who may have known Finian, and most particularly for those who have been offended against and hurt by him. Given the various reactions people will experience to this news, I wish to share with you some of the conditions that surround his return into society.

**Most Rev Peter A Comensoli**  
Bishop of Broken Bay

---

Caroline Chisholm Centre, PO Box 340, Pennant Hills, NSW 1715, Australia

• Tel: (+61 2) 9847 0214 • Fax: (+61 2) 9847 0201 • [bishop@dbb.org.au](mailto:bishop@dbb.org.au) • [www.dbb.org.au](http://www.dbb.org.au)

Prison authorities have arranged accommodation for him, initially in a location outside the territory of the Diocese of Broken Bay. We understand that the nature of his parole will also entail certain restrictions, particularly around matters of association.

Already permanently removed from ministry, as his Bishop I have also placed certain additional restrictions upon Finian:

- a. He is never to exercise any priestly ministry whatsoever;
- b. He is never to refer to himself as a priest, or in any way imply himself to be a priest;
- c. He is never to seek accommodation in any area in which he has ministered previously;
- d. He is never to present in person to any diocesan or parish site of the Diocese of Broken Bay, including any presbytery.

My restrictions will be clearly articulated to Finian with the expectation that he will comply during this time.


If any of these matters have raised concerns for you personally, or for someone you know, I urge you to be in contact with our Diocesan Office for Safeguarding and Professional Standards (Chancery): 9847 0212 or [safeguarding@dbb.org.au](mailto:safeguarding@dbb.org.au)

I would ask that you join me in keeping all those who have been so devastatingly impacted by the betrayal of innocence in your prayers.

May our Blessed Mother keep us under her loving care, now and into the future.

St Mary of the Cross MacKillop, Pray for Us.

Yours sincerely in Christ Jesus,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Peter A Comensoli', written in a cursive style.

Most Rev Peter A Comensoli  
Bishop of Broken Bay