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20th September, 2012

Dear Dr Bush,

**Re. Inquiry into the Handling of Child Abuse by Religious and other Organisations.**

Thank you for the opportunity for Broken Rites to provide this submission to this Inquiry that is being conducted by the Family and Community Development Committee of the Parliament of Victoria.

Broken Rites is a voluntary organization and its primary roles are to provide advocacy and advisory services, on a no-cost basis, to persons who have or may have experienced physical, psychological and/or sexual abuse by either ordained clergy, professed, religious, church members or church employees. In a number of situations, our services have to extend towards family members of victims, to persons who are working within community-focused, government agencies and non-government organisations, and to persons who may be legally representing victims and/or their families. These activities are carried out across Australia.

For nearly twenty years this organisation has been approached, on average, by 3-2 new contacts every week. In a busy week we can be contacted by up to 10 persons. As a consequence, we have been able to assist hundreds of abuse victims and therefore the organisation feels qualified to make this submission.

Representatives of Broken Rites will be willing to appear and give evidence at any public hearings and to provide, to the best of our ability, further written information or clarification should this be required.

Yours sincerely,

Chris McIsaac  
President

## **Broken Rites Submission to the Family and Community Development Committee of the Parliament of Victoria.**

Prepared by Dr Wayne Chamley.

Imagine a society afflicted by a scourge which struck down a quarter of its daughters and up to one in eight of its sons. Imagine also that this plague, while not immediately fatal, lurked in the bodies and minds of these young children for decades, making them up to sixteen times more likely to experience its disastrous long-term effects. Finally, imagine the nature of these effects: life-threatening starvation, suicide, persistent nightmares, drug and alcohol abuse and a whole host of intractable psychiatric disorders requiring life-long treatment. What should that society's response be?

The scourge that we are speaking of is child sexual abuse. It has accounted for probably more misery and suffering than any of the great plagues of history, including the bubonic plague, tuberculosis and syphilis. **Bill Glasser – Professor of Forensic Psychiatry.**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Members of the Committee, and the public, will be aware of the range of public and media comment about the limited scope of the Terms of Reference given for this inquiry and the adequacy of the parliamentary inquiry process itself. In light of our experience, we believe that the terms of reference will act as a restraint upon what the Committee may be able to find, may be able to report about, and what recommendations it may make. Be this as it may, we acknowledge that Committee members will conduct their individual and collective activities and inquiry with diligence and with respect for the courageous persons who will provide details of their individual experiences. In the conduct of the inquiry, Committee members will read about and hear in testimony, various “stories” from victims and other family members. Many will be expressions of great sadness, of anger, of despair and dismay, and some will be scarcely believable. As this information is received and assessed, layer upon layer upon layer, Committee members will gain some insights into what has happened in the lives of too many Victorians. It is to be hoped that members will also be able to gain an overview and an appreciation of what was allowed to, and enabled to, happen.

In this submission we record some of our member's observations and experiences in regard to how some faith and religious organisations have responded to allegations of child abuse and child sexual abuse in particular. In regard to specific institutions, religious orders and dioceses, we provide some general background to illustrate the patterns of abuse and their scale. Elsewhere we give detail in regard to the deviousness of offenders and church authorities, as well as the specific circumstances of some events.

We also point out some of the shortcomings and contradictions of current processes. We then make a number of recommendations that we would ask the Committee to consider.

Some readers may consider the views expressed in some places within this document to be extreme. We make no apology.

## **ABOUT BROKEN RITES**

Broken Rites is a voluntary organisation. It offers advocacy and advisory services to persons who have or may have experienced physical, psychological and /or sexual abuse by either ordained clergy, religious or church employees. It receives no financial support from any government and relies upon voluntary donations. Members of Broken Rites carry out the following activities:

- Operation of a dedicated telephone contact service.
- Receive complaints about alleged abuse.
- Provide advice to contacts about their legal rights.
- Provide advice to contacts about internal, government and civil law processes that may be accessed.
- Arrange for victims to make statements to police where it is judged that criminal activity may have taken place.
- Accompany victims to meetings with solicitors, police, and officials of the churches and/or persons working on behalf of any particular church or charitable organisation.
- Act on behalf of victims, as advocates at mediation and in other negotiations.
- On request review the progress of legal cases and give advice.
- Meet with the families of victims.
- Respond to media enquiries.
- Attend court cases.
- Carry out public speaking engagements.
- Liaise with other relevant organisations and persons in other states.
- Liaise with government agencies and statutory office holders.

During nearly twenty years we have been contacted by hundreds of persons and about half of these would be living in Victoria. More than 90% of the complaints received have been against members of the Catholic Church in Australia.

The organisation has also played a significant role in bringing nearly 150 paedophiles before the courts to face criminal charges and more cases are pending. In addition to these there are many more religious and clergy against whom, allegations have been made and accepted by the respective church authority and victims have received some form of compensation.

Members of our organisation are usually contacted an individual, who at the time will give some details about childhood/adolescent experience(s). Often these details will include allegations or suggestions of sexual, physical or psychological abuse.

Since these matters are usually deeply private and may have been kept as personal secrets for years, with many contacts, a complete and comprehensive “story” is only disclosed through a series of telephone conversations.

Our members act in an advisory and/or advocacy role, often working closely with the individual for periods of months to a number of years. At all times, we maintain total confidentiality with our objective being to obtain justice for the persons making the allegation(s).

Numerically, the complaints and allegations received by Broken Rites about sexual abuse, far exceed those relating to other forms of child abuse and because of this much of this submission will focus on this form of abuse and on matters relating to the response of the Catholic Church’s in particular.

### **The Child Abuse problem in Australia.**

*"all these grotesque and yet tragic incongruities [ **child molestation/ child abuse** ] reveal themselves as stamped upon the later development of the individual and of his neurosis, in countless permanent effects.... Sigmund Freud . 1875 +/-*

*"Because childhood abuse occurs during the critical and formative time when the brain is being physically sculptured by experience, the impact of severe stress can leave an indelible imprint on its structure and function. Such abuse, it seems, induces a cascade of molecular and neuro-biological effects that irreversibly alter neural development." Professor Martin Teicher . 2002*

Child abuse in all of its forms continues to be a major problem across Australia. All jurisdictions now have reporting mechanisms in place and a set of statistics and estimates is published each year as the Child Protection Australia reports. These reports compile data based upon notifications and they attempt to quantify, describe and assess child protection activities across the nation. In 2000-01 total notifications were 115,471. These rose to a peak in 2008-09 of 339,454 and they then dropped to a figure of 237,273 for 2010-11.

The sexual abuse of children is a major public health and social problem in Australia. It can take place within extended family units, community organisations and sporting clubs, government-funded services, work situations and within church and school communities. In a majority of cases the offender is a male who may be adolescent or any age beyond. In a majority of cases this male is known to, and trusted by the victim.

From time to time, church spokespersons have pointed out that that this form of abuse is happening within extended family units as it has within church and/or educational communities. This is true but these same persons consistently fail to acknowledge the serial pattern of the paedophilia in so many cases where the predator is a priest or religious.

Often these “men of the cloth” have been held high public esteem; in their daily routines they have not had other adults in intimate or even close proximity; children have been encouraged (and even instructed) to trust them totally and they have been able to exploit years of unquestioned and easy access to children. In too many situations offenders have been, and continue to be, protected by church authorities who, for whatever reasons, appear to have chosen to view acts of paedophilia as the commission of sin by a flawed character rather than a crime.

In this country there appear to have been four sets of circumstances which placed children at a very high level of sexual risk within church and/or educational communities. Thus Broken Rites can identify four streams of mixed-gender victims who were either:

#### “Homies”.

These were children placed into a Childrens’ Home or Orphanage either by parents, another family member or some other “well meaning” welfare officer priest, nun or vicar who will have known the child (children) and particular family circumstances. Often these young persons were judged to be “at risk” or “displaying rebellious behaviour” along with the fact that many were entering puberty. Often under these arrangements the organisation running the receiving institution was either paid by the family or received child endowment payments etc. These organisations were the Catholic, Anglican and Presbyterian churches, the Salvation Army and some UK-based charities.

#### Orphans and Wards of the State of Victoria.

These children were also sent to receiving institutions. Like the “homies” many of them experienced extremes of physical violence, starvation, child slavery, sexual abuse, psychological abuse, rudimentary or no education and childhood lives where terror had been substituted for human love and care.

In the 2004 report “Forgotten Australians”, a report of the Senate Inquiry into Children in Institutions, the Community Affairs Committee of the Australian Senate estimated that between 1900 and 1980, at least 500,000 non-indigenous, Australian-born children had been placed into situations of out of home care. We believe that the real figure is close to 640,000 and at least 300,000 were children born in Victoria. A majority of these children were “cared for” and raised in a range of large institutions that were operated by the Catholic, Anglican and Presbyterian churches, the Salvation Army, and by British charities such as the Fairbridge Scheme and Barnados.

#### Children sent to religious, day and boarding schools.

During the last century a system of religious schools developed in Australia that offered parents an educational alternative to the education system provided by state governments. By and large these religious schools were established by various Christian denominations with the largest of these being a system of primary and secondary day and boarding schools, owned and operated by the Catholic Church. While this educational system is now staffed with a majority of lay teachers, during most of the last century children were taught by members of catholic religious orders – nuns and brothers. These persons entered their religious calling, often for life, and were professed; taking vows of poverty, chastity and obedience.

In Victoria the religious orders that operated the schools were often the same ones that were operating the institutions that took in orphans, state wards and “homies”. An expression of Catholic faith that was enforced and was accepted within the Catholic lay communities was that any children born to Catholic parents, and even who were in a “mixed marriage”, would be educated within the Catholic system.

### **Child Abuse within the Catholic Church.**

*“Nothing strengthens authority so much as silence.”*  
**Charles de Gaulle.**

The sexual abuse scandal continues to embroil the Catholic Church across Australia and globally. Ten years ago the worst of the scandal was confined to Ireland, Australia, Canada and the United States. In the past five years allegations about numbers of paedophile priests have been made public in Germany, and in Belgium the whole of the church’s hierarchy is under investigation by police and government agencies. In this same timeframe, and following the conclusion of a Royal Commission in Ireland, a papal apology has been issued; bishops have been stood down, the Papal Nuncio was ordered to leave the country and the Catholic Primate is under pressure to resign. Now victims are beginning to go public in Mexico and Poland, two very Catholic countries. In the USA, the Catholic Church has paid out more than (US) \$2.0 billion for legal costs and compensation payments to victims.

Two common features of this worldwide phenomenon relate to the manner in which individual bishops have failed to deal with offending priests. The first feature has been determined in several criminal trials conducted in Australia and elsewhere. It is the fact that several Catholic bishops have responded to complaints about an active, paedophile priest either by doing nothing or by moving the person to some other location - another parish, another diocese and even to another country. Too often, this practice has enabled offenders to continue with their criminal predation upon children, sometimes for decades. The second feature is the fact that so few offending priests have been laicised and forced out of the church. This is particularly the case in Victoria and throughout Australia, despite the fact that Canon Law provides the powers for bishops to bring this about.

### **The Religious Orders.**

#### The (Irish) Christian Brothers.

The Order of the Christian Brothers has featured prominently in relation to the abuse of boys in orphanages and in parish schools in Victoria. Public knowledge about this has come about because of media coverage and also several books, and the recent film “Oranges and Sunshine” depicts, in a fairly sanitized way, what occurred in orphanages Western Australia. Relatively little has been written about the activities of the Christian Brothers in Victoria where they operated orphanages in Melbourne and in Geelong as well as a number of primary and secondary schools throughout Victoria.

Over the years we have been contacted by many men who had “educated” and/or “cared for” in Christian Brother’s orphanages and schools. They describe the orphanages as being “hellholes” and the schools as austere and rigid and having poor educational standards. Many of the religious brothers who were placed in charge of boys were totally unsuited to the task. Over the years, numbers of alcoholics, paedophiles and sociopaths had control of boys and many appear to have been able to move between locations. This meant that boys could be subjected to serial, sexual abuse for years.

A disturbing case, and an example of what occurred is the experience of “**H**”. By all accounts **H** was a very pretty boy with blond hair and blue eyes. He was placed into an orphanage after his mother died. While he did not like the place much, **H** really enjoyed school and learning. He received good marks in every test, and then in Grade 4 the abuse started, first by one brother and then by others. At the end of Grade 6, **H** thought that at last, he would be able to get away from them. But the brothers kept him back!

For decades, very few teaching brothers in boys’ schools had any teacher training and any ability to connect with children and so they maintained order by instituting a regime of fear. Individual boys were targeted, sometimes as a pretext to sexual abuse.

Bastardization by older boys was encouraged and private property was seldom respected. Widespread intimidation, physical violence and criminal assault took place and all of this was done within a philosophy of “preparation and toughening up”. In these respects, the Christian Brothers’ schools stand out. Indeed, the Irish Order of the Christian Brothers ought to be seen as a religious Order which was established according to generous and compassionate principles and later was allowed to evolve worldwide, into a barbarous, sadistic and abusive religious organisation.

What were state and catholic education authorities doing in allowing the members of this religious order to treat boys as they did?

### **The Salesians.**

The Salesians of Don Bosco is an order of priests and brothers whose mission is to teach and care for children who are under privileged. In Victoria it has operated as a teaching order operating boarding and day schools that catered for boys only. Currently the main school at Sunbury is co-educational. It too deserves mention, in particular because of the way that this Order has responded to persons who were sexually and physically abused by some of its priests. This matter will be discussed later in the submission.

### **The Hospitaller Order of St John of God**

This is a catholic, nursing organisation that operated institutions in Victoria and in New South Wales. Men and women profess to enter the Order and the genders work separately and independently.

In Victoria the St John of God brothers operated institutions that took in boys who were orphans or State Wards and boys with intellectual disabilities. In contrast to published Accounts of the practises of the Christian Brothers, the experiences of boys who were placed into the “care” of the Hospitaller Order of St John of God have not been detailed to any

degree. Broken Rites has had extensive contact over several years with a group of men who were raised in two institutions operated by the Hospitaller Order of St. John of God in Victoria. The Hospitaller Order of St. John of God operated institutions at Cheltenham and at Lilydale. For a time the Order also operated a holiday house at Sorrento.

Homes were operated at Cheltenham (1952-1968 approximate dates) and at Lilydale (1968 - 1986 approximate dates) and the Home at Lilydale included a large farm ("Yarraview"). It is possible that 300-400 boys passed through these institutions.

There were four broad groups of boys who entered the Homes:

- Orphans
- Boys either given up one or both parents
- Boys who had been made Wards of the State.
- Boys with moderate to severe intellectual disability.

The disability status of these persons ranged from boys with Down's syndrome to some requiring nearly constant support and supervision.

We have had direct contact with several men (now aged 50-60 years) who were in either of the first three groups and with some parents and/or guardians of persons in the last group. From stories and statements received and from allegations that have been made, it has been possible to build up a picture of what went on in these two homes at least.

Overall it is a story that is just as horrific as what has been put onto the public record about the Christian Brothers orphanages in Western Australia. It is a story about the operations of a ring of paedophiles. Initially the paedophile group established within the Cheltenham Home. When the property at Lilydale was acquired, some of the paedophiles were transferred to Lilydale and here another younger group of paedophiles was recruited. Eventually the Order sold the Cheltenham property to the Myer Pty. Ltd. and all remaining boys and staff moved to Lilydale. Towards the end of 1989, the Lilydale property was sold.

**We believe that throughout a period of 20-25 years, the number of paedophiles who were able to operate in these two institutions was at definitely nine, probably twelve and possibly fifteen! It is probable that scores of boys experienced serial sexual abuse and physical attack.**

This is a story about widespread sexual abuse, severe and unwarranted physical abuse, exploitation and unpaid child labour, starvation of boys, drugging of boys, provision of alcohol to juveniles and situations where intoxicated Brothers were in charge of boys. It is a story of near total failure on the part of the religious brothers and employed staff to ensure that boys with no intellectual impairment received a proper education.

When the Bracks government came to office, for the first time, the various facilities that were being operated by this Order became subject to independent inspection by the Office of the Public Advocate. It was too late.



The experiences of orphans and boys who never received any visitors at Cheltenham deserve special mention since they reveal the mindset of the paedophiles. These boys were always quartered in upstairs dormitories and away from any boys who would be visited by family or legal guardians. They speak about being given a red medicine that made them drowsy. Pack rapes took place and boys who resisted or attempted to fight off their attackers were beaten mercilessly. These were boys of 7-15 years up against adult males.

During each winter, boys were selected and taken to Melbourne on some Saturdays, to see a football match. Those not selected continued with the farm work. At the football matches the boys were provided with beer and encouraged to drink with the accompanying brothers. Often drinking would continue during the journey back to Lilydale. After these occasions, the paedophiles became hyperactive and overt – the evening meal followed by buggery and pack-rapes and the remainder of Saturday night spent, by many boys, crying and in fear, and then Mass on Sunday morning. During the summer, orphans were sometimes moved up to the farm at Lilydale for a “holiday”. Some were taken to the house near Sorrento for the same purpose. The paedophiles followed them. There was no escape for the orphans.

A common experience often experienced at the Lilydale farm was extreme hunger. From the stories told we estimate that boys were often doing about 30 hours per week of farm labour. Meals were inadequate and boys would often pilfer food and sometimes resort to eating food scraps etc. that were put large bins for feeding to pigs. Public beatings and floggings were carried out for such things as being late at mealtime, attempting to escape, pilfering of food. Sometimes boys were put into solitary confinement in cupboards and under staircases.

We are aware of at least two statements made by different, former inmates who allege that two different boys sustained injuries, as a consequence of beatings, that may have resulted in death. One of these boys was thrown down a staircase (according to the witness) soon after he had arrived at Lilydale. We are also aware of at least two boys who both experienced serial sexual and abuse and who were (as juveniles) certified under the *Victorian Lunacy Act (1915)* and then incarcerated within the Royal Park Asylum. This was the Order’s final response to each boy’s continuing efforts to abscond from the Cheltenham Home; his chosen strategy for escaping from his paedophile attackers. In one of these cases the brother who filled out and signed the committal request was the “alpha” paedophile! (see **Appendix 1**).

We consider that there are more contemporary matters that the Committee needs to be aware of. Some of the information that we wish to record may be judged to lie outside of the Terms of Reference given to the Committee. Be this as it may, the complete story is important since it illustrates what was allowed to happen. The matters may be historical but the Committee should appreciate that these victims are live and still trying to get justice.

We consider that there are matters and practises that may be continuing today, which warrant investigation by the governments of Victoria and Australia. This is because the persons who are the subject of possible exploitation have profound intellectual

impairment and cannot do anything themselves to demand their individual rights. The matters that we believe need to be further investigated by this committee are:

- The past investigations of members of this Order by Victoria Police.
- The current tenancy/rental arrangements for men in community residential units.

By now most of the alleged paedophiles are deceased and no members of the religious order are deployed in Victoria. Under current arrangements, the Order provides services to the Victorian government through its commercial business - St John of God Services, Victoria, a not-for-profit company that is limited by guarantee.

We are including in this present submission sections of a document that we prepared as the Broken Rites' submission to the Senate inquiry into Children in Institutions. Within the text, reference is made to a number of other documents and government agreements, and copies of these can be provided to the Committee if they are required.

### Criminal Investigations.

*Broken Rites maintained regular contact with the Victorian Police (Community Policing Squad, Knox) about many allegations concerning orphans and state- wards and police carried out investigations for about 8 years! In 1997 police were informed of fresh allegations of paedophile activity involving men with intellectual disability. Not a single person was ever charged! We are not making any criticism of the police. From the many discussions that we had with police it became clear to us that the resourcing of these particular investigations was spasmodic and never adequate. For several years we watched how representatives of the manouvered to keep most of this quiet. Individual victims received financial settlements with ridiculously small amounts of money being paid, and complainants being required to sign secrecy agreements. Some stories came to the surface however, although over the years the Order was astute, making sure that the media never put a complete picture together.*

### Financial Arrangements.

*From time to time our organization has received complaints from the parents of intellectually disabled men about financial matters. There was nothing specific. Usually parents recounted how in the past, substantial gifts had been given to the Order - donations of money, property and parts of family estates. Despite this financial support, few improvements at the Lilydale farm ("Yarraview") were apparent and the parents/guardians wondered where all of these contributions were going? In 2000 Broken Rites received a parcel of documents relating to some of the financial operations at Lilydale. We continue to believe that our analysis of some aspects of this information raises questions that still need to be followed up by the Government of Victoria.*

*In the past we have attempted to get interest here. In November 1999 the organisation approached the then Minister for Community Services, Hon Christine Campbell. A meeting and detailed briefing took place with the Minister about these matters and we were surprised when the Minister indicated that she saw no need to request any follow up about the matters in any way. Detailed information was then provided to the Department of Human Service. An officer's telephone response was that it was all very interesting.*

*Following our inclusion of some of the material and our concerns into a submission to a Senate Inquiry, we are aware that Senator Claire Moore wrote to the then Minister for Community Services , Hon, Sherrill Garbutt about the matter. Despite all of our endeavours, nothing was ever done!*

### **A Great Little Earner**

*A key arrangement appears to be the relationship between the Trustees of the Hospitaller Order of St John of God (NSW) – the religious Order, and St John of God Services, Victoria. This not-for-profit company is a major provider of training, accommodation and respite services for the intellectually disabled Victoria. We understand that it receives funding from the government of Victoria to allow it to provide community, residential services. Because of its provision of these services it appears to have enjoyed a particular relationship with successive governments in Victoria including the present one.*

*The closure and sale of Yarraview had to be linked to the movement of intellectually disabled residents off the farm and into residential accommodation in a number of outer suburbs around Melbourne. An initial trigger to this opportunity appears to be the offer and award of a grant in September 1988 from the Commonwealth Department of Community Services and Health to St. John of God, Yarraview Inc.*

*A Commonwealth grant of \$488,000 was to cover a range of things including purchase of houses that would be used to provide off-farm residential care for the twelve, last-remaining residents on the Lilydale farm. Thus those men living at the farm were distributed across a number of Community Residential Units in the outer north east of Melbourne.*

*Another key step appears to be the negotiation completed in June 1992 of a Commonwealth/State Disability Agreement. This agreement appears to be the mechanism by means of which the Government of Victoria took over from the Commonwealth of Australia, full responsibility for future funding of a range of accommodation services including some involving the Order of St John of God. It should be remembered that at the time that these financial arrangements between government and a charity/service provider were put into place, governments across Australia were implementing a broad policy of de-institutionalisation in relation to services for the mentally ill, disability services and some aspects of correctional services.*

*“Clause 16” of the Commonwealth/State agreement talks about equity. However, it is not known whether this means that the Commonwealth was maintaining a continuing interest in the properties given that the fact that it was providing 80% of the funds. Also it is not known whether, through the 1992 Agreement, the Commonwealth actually transferred any interest in these properties, to the State of Victoria? These two documents indicate that government provided substantial monies so that the St John of God Order could purchase and or set up residential accommodation for a number of men who had been cared for and accommodated at Yarraview. This movement of residents enabled the Order to sell the property for \$2.4 million. The property now exists as the Heritage Golf and Country Club, an up-market golfing complex.*

*We had always assumed that the Trustees of the Hospitaller Order must have been the owners of the properties because of the rental arrangement that was set up (see below). It is curious how such an arrangement could be set up given that for the six properties, the Commonwealth government appears to claim an 80% interest. When (out of interest) title searches were completed for two properties (#10 Songbird Ave, Chirnside Park and #17 The Eyrie, Lilydale) two matters became apparent as follows:*

***The two properties are owned by the Trustees for the Hospitaller Order of St John of God Yarraview Inc. Any interest by any government, either Commonwealth or State, is not recorded on the titles. Also, at the time that government funds were provided (to assist with their purchase), these two properties were already owned by the Trustees. The Trustees were registered on the title of #10 Songbird Ave on 12<sup>th</sup> December 1977 and #17 The Eyrie on 18<sup>th</sup> November 1983! Where did the \$488,000 go?***

*The September 1988 document lists as an “evidence measure” the purchase and occupancy of the three houses by 30/9/89. If the money granted in 1988 was for the purchase of the three houses to accommodate the remaining twelve residents on the farm what was then proposed as the funding need in 1992? Presumably all of the men were by this time already in residential accommodation.*

#### ***The Rental Arrangements for Current Tenants.***

*Included in attachment 1 is the Financial Report to 30 June 2001 for St John of God Services Victoria. Notes to this financial report show that although the Victorian operation provides care and accommodation services to people with intellectual disability, the properties are owned by the Hospitaller Order of St John of God. Because the Trustees of the Hospitaller Order of St John of God is the owner of the houses, the Order has been able to set itself up as a landlord with St John of God Services Victoria being the tenant. Now enter the disabled residents – as sub-tenants? We understand that each of these people receives a Commonwealth Disability Pension. Whilst we do not know the current \$ amount of this, at the time of our original analysis, a pension of this sort provided approximately \$440 per fortnight to the recipient.*

*We understand that from each of the residents, there are two major deductions taken each fortnight by St John of God Services Victoria. Each resident provides one:*

- ***Payment for rent and administration.*** This amount was approximately \$160 per fortnight. Following questions being raised by some legal guardians, we understand that the rents were reduced by about \$25 per fortnight at one point.
- ***Payment of approximately \$175 for living costs.*** These include the house account for food, utilities **and for maintenance of the property.**

*Thus if a resident was receiving say \$440/fortnight from his Commonwealth pension, he is paying out \$325 of it (approximately 75%) to St John of God Services Victoria which is in turn paying the Hospitaller Order at least \$160/resident/fortnight for the rent of the house. This is despite the fact that taxpayers provided a substantial amount of money for housing purchase. **Furthermore the landlord meets no maintenance costs!** The magnitude of this revenue stream might be very high. If say the average number of residents was forty across a ten-year period, then the rental income going to the could have been about \$1.664 million.*

*There is a second aspect to this matter. It is the scale of the rentals that are charged. We understand that each house accommodates either four or five men. The rent being received from a house that accommodated five men would be say, \$1600/month. These houses are in the outer suburbs of Melbourne where rents are in the mid to lower range for Melbourne and average monthly rentals are in the range \$800-1000 gross.”*

*Working arrangements for the residents.*

*We understand that the Trustees bought the Yarraview Property in 1956 for 46,000 pounds and sold it in 1992 for \$2.7million. Out of the proceeds of the sale they bought a nursery in Mt Evelyn for about \$880,000. Parents have said that they were never able to find out where the rest of the money went. We understand that a similar rental arrangement operated with respect to this commercial enterprise. St John of God Services Victoria occupied and operated the nursery as a tenant and paid rent of about \$80,000 per year to the Trustees plus an undisclosed “administration fee”. These matters are referred to in audited accounts.*

*We understand that when residents in the houses have worked in the Nursery the residents have been receiving \$30-40/week for their work with \$10/person being recouped for transport expenses. It is understood that sometimes the transport was by a bus that is operated by the St John of God Services and sometimes the men were transported by taxis.*

*We understand that the nursery freehold was sold to another party about two years ago. The proceeds of this sale also went to the Trustees of the Hospitaller Order of St John of God. When St John of God Services Victoria ran the nursery as a commercial nursery and a wholesale supplier of plants etc and it would have been competing with other wholesale suppliers who were paying appropriate wages to the staff.*

*Under the Commonwealth-funded **Supported Employment Program**, that government is providing money for the employment of persons with a disability to the extent that they should receive the legislated minimum wage. The arrangement is usually that the employer will pay the person a low wage and this will be topped up from the Commonwealth funds that are being provided to the Supported Employment Program. This top-up may be avoided if the employer makes an application to the Industrial Relations Commission for an exemption.*

*We understand that St John of God Services Victoria never applied for this exemption, although the new owners of the nursery did so make an application. We point this matter out because as a consequence of such an omission it is possible that other Commonwealth funds have been able to flow through St John of God Services Victoria and to the Hospitaller Order of St John of God.*

*Broken Rites has gone to some detail in regard to these financial matters because we believe that this is an area that needs better scrutiny by governments in their dealings with all parties that are providing services to government in the form of care, support, training and employment etc for persons with various disabilities and children who are outside of the parental home.*

*We believe that there is a set of questions that should still be asked about these matters per se and there may well be a set of more generic questions that should be asked about any commercial party that is providing these sorts of services to government. In respect of St John of God Services Victoria we believe that the following questions remain relevant.*

- *Does the Commonwealth of Australia or the State of Victoria have any interest in the properties and how is this being maintained?*
- *According to the 1992 agreement, did the Commonwealth government believe that it was providing moneys for the purchase and fitting out of houses additional to those already owned?*
- *If the relevant department believes that the Commonwealth's interest is maintained, how does this come about when the Commonwealth of Australia does not appear on the titles for the properties?*
- *Are the Trustees of the Hospitaller Order of St John of God Yarraview Inc. and the Trustees of the Hospitaller Order of St John of God NSW the same legal entity? If not in what ways are they different?*
- *If the Commonwealth government has provided 80% of the costs to enable accommodation of these people, how is the charging of full rent and at high rates justified.*
- *For how long have these rental arrangements been in place and when did the relevant department (Commonwealth or State), first gain knowledge of them?*
- *Will the responsible Minister in the Commonwealth government consider whether there is a case for restitution of the wages not paid to a number of intellectually disabled persons who worked in the nursery operated by St John of God Services Victoria?*
- *In general terms, what obligations do service providers have in terms of the employment conditions for disabled people?*
- *Who regulates and monitors these arrangements at either the state or commonwealth level so as to ensure that people are not being exploited?*

#### *Suicide amongst inmates.*

*A very noticeable and tragic phenomenon that is encountered within groups of adults who experienced an institutional upbringing is the frequent occurrence of a suicide. We are not aware of any forensic analysis that has attempted to define this in any way or to establish possible cause and effect situations.*

*From interviews with men who were in the Cheltenham Home it has been possible to get some rough calculation of the risk of suicide. There is one group of about 69 boys who would have been in the Home at the around 1960 and who were in the age range of 10-12 years at this time. The number from this group who have died as a result of probable suicide is at least seven. These figures can be compared with the male population in Victoria. The most recent ABS publication on suicides (Cat. No. 3309.0) gives a figure of 25 male suicides in the age cohort 50-54 years. The total number of this cohort in the Australian population was 611,864 males.*

*Since the exact year of death of the seven deceased is not known, a reasonable comparison might be say, three age cohorts, 40-44, 45-49, 50-54 years (an interval of 15 years in total). Using the relevant coronial figures, it can be calculated that the suicide rate of men who experienced a childhood spent in the Cheltenham Home is seventeen times that for age-matched men in the broad community. We acknowledge that because of the differences in the sample size, any absolute comparison may equate to a comparison of apples and oranges. However we do believe that the figures bear out the anecdotal observations of unusually high rates of suicide amongst persons, who as children had these terrible experiences.*

***We find it particularly distressing that for two children at least, paedophiles were even able to move their victims into the Victoria's mental health system where another abusive situation was encountered . One child at age 14 years was locked up for nearly two years and experienced repeated physical abuse by patients with mania and other psychotic disorders. The second person (now deceased) was subjected to regular treatment with Electro-Convulsive Therapy required supported care for all of his adult life.***

## **Orders of Nuns**

### Girls educated by or placed into the “care” of nuns.

Our impression is that girls, when placed into institutions, were dispersed a great deal more than boys. This may have been due to the existence of many more orders of nuns than orders of religious brothers. Most often complaints have been made about nuns in four Orders, the Sisters of Nazareth, the Sisters of St Joseph, the Daughters of Charity and the Sisters of the Good Shepherd, respectively.

Women have reported experiences of sustained psychological abuse and cruelty including separation of siblings, harsh beatings, false imprisonment, isolation and being assigned to extensive periods of hard physical work. This was often a response to what must have been trivial misdemeanours and even typical child behaviour. Often work took the form of kitchen duties, preparing food, sewing, cleaning the nearby church or chapel and working in laundries that appear to have operated on some commercial basis. Women have reported attempted and actual molestation by priests giving pastoral care to them as girl-inmates.

Rape by priests and other males employed with the institutions has been reported. There have been reports of nuns acting to procure girls for a particular priest and nuns failing to act in any way after they became knowledgeable about a particular priest's activities. In the section dealing with **The Melbourne Response** we give some details of one interesting incident involving “**Sister G**”.

## **Diocesan Priests.**

Complaints and allegation have been received about a significant number of diocesan priests who have been in numbers of Catholic parishes across Victoria. Broken Rites is aware that at least 36 priests have been convicted of criminal offences in Victoria's courts and for an additional 8, church authorities have agreed to civil compensation even though criminal charges had not been laid. With many of these priests the pattern of the paedophilia has often been serial, and some individual offenders are considered to have abused hundreds of children over periods of 20-30 years.

## **Get him out of here.**

In several criminal trials of paedophiles priests in Australia it has been established that time after time, when church authorities received complaints about a particular offender in a particular parish, the chosen response was to move him somewhere else – to another parish, another diocese or to another country!

The Salesian Order warrants mention here. Members of the Order known to be paedophiles have been allowed, encouraged or sent to other countries without church authorities in those countries being informed about any matter. One priest, who is a person of interest to the police in Victoria continues to be based in the Vatican. We understand that he is able to travel to countries in Europe to carry out educational activities with children.

## **Priests “just passing through”.**

A more recent phenomenon ( during the past five years) is the priest who has been educated and ordained outside of Australia, arrives or is sent to Australia to take up pastoral duties and then begins to target children. We are aware of three instances in Australia, one of these being in Victoria. The case is discussed in further detail in the section dealing with the church response to victims.

We will illustrate the issue with the case of **Father S**. Ordained on the Indian sub-continent he took up pastoral duties in a Melbourne parish. At about the same time a woman living in the parish area contacted the parish priest to enquire about her and her school-age daughter taking religious instruction as a precursor to their being baptised into the Catholic Church. This was encouraged and she was later contacted by **Father S**. As she was a working, sole parent, it was agreed that the instruction would take place late on afternoons and sometimes during evenings. On some occasions **Father S** stayed for an evening meal or a supper. It so happened that the woman's neighbour was a female police officer.

On one evening after the daughter had retired to her bedroom, **Father S** requested that he visit the bathroom. Soon after the woman heard her daughter's screams. She rushed to the bedroom to find **Father S** naked and in bed with the girl. He was ordered to leave and the mother and daughter lost interest in the Catholic Church. Subsequently the woman told her neighbour about this incident and she was encouraged to make a statement to police, which she did. Eventually charges were laid against **Father S** who had to appear before a magistrate who dismissed the case. Suddenly, **Father S** disappeared from Victoria and Australia?



In another case, **Father K**, a priest ordained in Hungary, arrived in Melbourne and was assigned to pastoral duties in a parish with a large Hungarian community. When parishioners started voicing their concerns and suspicions that **Father K** had a young girl living with him, the church authorities became interested. **Father K** disappeared.

These cases raise serious questions about the screening of priests (and persons claiming to be priests) who either visit Australia or are moved to Australia and take up parish duties. If the Australian church authorities are prepared to dump problem priests into other countries, why would authorities in other countries not be doing likewise? What is expedient for one gender may be expedient for another!

### **Clergy/religious of other denominations.**

Broken Rites has received a small number of complaints and allegations about persons belonging to other denominations. The largest number amongst these would involve members of the Salvation Army and these would be past officers and employees who “cared” for children in institutions that were operated in Victoria. There have also been allegations against Anglican Clergy and teachers in private Christian schools.

### **The Impacts of child sexual abuse upon the victim and the family.**

Child maltreatment has been called the tobacco industry of mental health. Much the way smoking directly causes or triggers predispositions for physical disease, early abuse may contribute to virtually all types of mental illness.

**Maja Szalavitz Health Editor, TIME – USA, 2012**

The past decade has seen major advances in Neuroscience and in Psychiatry. Investigations are beginning to be published that focus upon the broad issue of child trauma and child maltreatment and the consequences for the victim as a child and as an adult. Sexual abuse is included in the suite of negative childhood experiences included as forms of maltreatment.

Studies using Quantitative Positron Emission Tomography indicate that in many abused children, particular structures in the brain fail to fully develop. In many cases these effects are life-long. Thus the impacts of child sexual abuse are not just manifested in altered psychology; brain development and brain function can be altered. The author of this submission has prepared a summary paper that is also being submitted (see **Appendix 2**).

While child sexual abuse has been serious crime in Australia for decades, our society appears to have maintained a blind spot illustrated by our failure to recognise the full impacts of, and consequences for the victim. The published clinical data is overwhelming and some of it is summarised in **Appendix 3**. Commonly the victims’ responses have been considered in terms of psychological distress, altered behaviour, altered relationships, guilt and lowered self-esteem. Whilst all of these responses (and more) can be experienced by a victim, the new investigations comparing selected groups and appropriate control subjects, are beginning to reveal a great deal more about the impacts of child sexual abuse upon the development of the human brain.

## The Church response to victims.

*"Still there are any number of clerics who have been seduced into that club by delicious enticements and clerical rewards, and a subtle warranty against growing pains! They live in a theological climate characterised by an unspeakable lack of energy, profound prosaicness, offering a faded, dog-eared image of *ecclesia pro seipsa* -- A church for its own sake."*  
**Fr. Ted Kennedy.**

Any consideration of the response by the various churches and religious organisations when allegations of sexual abuse are brought to the attention of the religious authorities must go beyond the matter of financial compensation and a few "feel good" measures. The attitudes shown by officials in these large "Christian" organisations has always been curious to members of Broken Rites. In individual cases, officials have gone to "attack mode" or denial or "let's keep it a secret" or "let's accept the complaint on the basis of probability".

We consider that church officials are still failing victims in four serious ways

1. They consistently fail to seek independent, authoritative medical advice about the life-long effects of child sexual abuse.
2. At the commencement of any response process, they consistently fail to make some determination of a victim's needs.
3. They do not appear to appreciate the right of the victim (and family members) to seek justice.
4. Church authorities refuse to act as a "model litigants".

In looking at this question of the church response, there are a number of matters must be considered:

- The response process(es) exist, for the organisation in question.
- The level of compliance with the specific process(es).
- The organisation's response in cases where criminal matters become known to church officials.
- Transparency of the response process(es)
- Equity in the provision of financial compensation.

Broken Rites, along with other advocacy groups and many individuals, has been arguing for years about the need to improve victim's access to justice, to have transparent process available to victims and to offer outcomes that go towards meeting the needs of the victims or their families. Most of our dialogue and debate has been with the Catholic and Anglican Churches in Australia and with the Salvation Army. We consider that so far, only the Anglican Church has responded in any meaningful way. Various attributes of the response processes followed by these three religious organisations will be considered separately.

### The Anglican Church.

This organisation now has a set of protocols in place that are based upon a set of principals agreed to by the Anglican Synod of Australia. Our experience has been that there are minor differences in process between individual dioceses but these are minor. Complaints have always been responded to expeditiously and with genuine effort on the part of church personnel, to listen to the claimant and to get an outcome that is acceptable to the claimant. In cases where the alleged offender has been living, church authorities have always advised the claimant of their option to make an official complaint to police. Usually financial compensation has been offered and in some cases, church representatives have agreed to meet costs for extensive medical treatment. In most dioceses there is a cap on the financial compensation that is payable.

### The Salvation Army.

Victims have had, and continue to have, serious difficulties when they approach the Salvation Army. This religious organisation projects a public image that emphasises compassion and community service, and this is emphasised in its regular campaigns for financial support from the public. In our experience, its response to victims has often been secretive, uncooperative, mean-spirited and legalistic.

The Salvation Army appears not to have any response protocols and instead each claimant must resort to legal process. Many victims have been unable to get any documents covering their time in institutional “care”. Often the person is told that the documents cannot be found, do not exist or have been destroyed because of fires, floods etc. We consider the Salvation Army’s willingness to have claims contested in the courts is a ploy, with its representatives knowing that many people will not have the financial means to access the court system.

### The Catholic Church

As indicated early in this submission, the biggest proportion of the complaints that Broken Rites has responded to have involved persons in the Catholic Church. This has had a flow-on effect in terms of the volume of work involving advocacy, case review, mediation and direct representation to authorities within the Catholic Church.

Since 1996, in Australia, a person who experienced sexual or extreme physical abuse while in a catholic-run institution, school, parish etc, could seek redress by entering the church’s internal process(es) or by resorting to civil litigation. In 1996 the Catholic bishops and the Heads of Religious Orders in Australia released the document *Towards Healing*. This outlined a process which the Catholic bishops claimed was to be followed across the country.

Although the Bishops stated publicly that all Bishops and Heads of Religious Orders would follow the *Towards Healing*. Neither the Archdiocese of Melbourne nor the Jesuit Order were parties to the process. Eventually the intransigence and callousness of the past leadership of the Jesuits was exposed by both print and electronic media.

The bishops failed to mention that *Towards Healing* had no standing in a situation arose where allegations of abuse were made against a Bishop. This fact became evident after allegations against the then Archbishop George Pell (now Cardinal Pell) became public and had to be responded to by the church's National Office for Professional Standards. Cardinal Pell deserves another mention here. At the very time that he was been attending meetings of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference, to consider the details of this important protocol, he was developing his own internal response process specifically for the Archdiocese of Melbourne! Thus in Victoria, any person who making an allegation against a priest in the Archdiocese of Melbourne, is required to go to the **Melbourne Response** process and not to **Towards Healing**! In light of our direct and extensive experience of these two processes, some aspects are best considered separately.

### **The Towards Healing Process.**

- The matter of financial compensation within the **Towards Healing** process has turned out to be a lottery.
- Some Bishops and Heads of Religious Orders have refused to comply with the process.
- Claimants have been coerced and intimidated by aggressive lawyers representing the church authority.
- Church authorities have chosen to approach **Towards Healing** as a legal process rather than mediation. Information is never disclosed about the person accused. Instead, at mediations private matters about the victim, which have no relevance to the victim's complaint, can be presented! We see this as a deliberate tactic that is used by layers representing the church authority, to undermine the victim.
- In case after case, victims were required to sign confidentiality agreements until this was exposed on the TV program "60 Minutes". Church authorities then gave the ridiculous public explanation that there had been a failure in communication between their lawyers and themselves.
- There have been cases in Melbourne where conciliation has occurred and an offer of financial compensation has been made, without a single piece of paper ever passing between the parties. Thus there are no records of anything ever having occurred or being responded to.
- When a solicitor is present with church representatives, there is lack of clarity as to whether the solicitor is taking instruction from the church authority, the church people present on the day, or from Catholic Church Insurance Ltd.
- Psychiatric or psychological reports prepared at the request of the church authority, are not always made available to the victim. This is despite the fact that the report can contain highly personal information about the victim.
- In some cases, the advocate from Broken Rites has been given a copy of the report about twenty minutes before the mediation was commenced.
- At mediation, personal information has been introduced into the discussion that bears no relationship to the matter at hand -- a person having a history of bankruptcy, a person being unpopular with other pupils at a school, or a woman having had multiple partners. One claimant who was a solicitor, was accused of having falsified her own sworn affidavit.

- In one case, the complete process was conducted (over three years) without a single document or piece of paper being given to the victim. Everything was handled through phone calls to the advocate.
- In several mediations where the victim has been female, the process has failed to comply with Australian guidelines covering discrimination and equal opportunity provisions. Indeed, church personnel fail to be pro-active about these matters.
- Mediations have been conducted where the victim and an employee of Catholic Church Insurances Limited have been the only females present along with five or six males. In one mediation the female victim was present and alone with six men present at the mediation.

We have come to the conclusion that for many victims who enter mediation in good faith, the outcome is pre-determined because of private agreements that have been entered into by the Bishops and Heads of Religious Orders and their insurer Catholic Church Insurance Ltd. The arrangements are riddled with conflicts of interest with church authorities serving on advisory committees to the insurance company. For a time the nun in charge of the National Office for Professional Standards was also a Director of the insurance company! In a number of cases we have seen the same person engaged as a facilitator, then as the mediator, and then offering counselling services to the claimant following completion of mediation!

We have also been able to get feedback from victims about their own reactions to the Towards Healing process. It is a fact that a large number of victims have been so traumatised by their experience of abuse, that they cannot make contact with or participate in a church-run process. This means that they only have the option of civil litigation. Victims say they are deterred by the presence of priests and religious serving on the National Committee for Professional Standards and the state-based Professional Standards Resource Groups and in some situations, by the church personnel who are used by the resource groups. Victims often report that they left the meeting feeling re-abused.

The most constant complaints reported to Broken Rites by victims are:

- Lack of transparency.
- Victims are not told the contact person's qualifications or background.
- Victims being "grilled" by assessors.
- Suspicion of what has been reported back to church authorities.
- Victims being left with a feeling that the church authorities have been evasive and defensive.
- The lack of professionalism at the mediation meeting.

### **The Melbourne Response.**

As indicated already, the then Archbishop of Melbourne established a response process, separate and different from Towards Healing, and every person making a complaint against a priest in the Archdiocese is required to access this process (see **Appendix 4**).

The Melbourne Response is essentially a quasi-legal process. An independent “Commissioner” hears the claims and appears to come to his decisions on the basis of probability. Barristers can be engaged and they are able to interrogate both claimants and the respondent(s). Points of law can be discussed and argued, sworn affidavits can be presented, cross-examination of persons can take place, proceedings are recorded, transcripts are produced, records are kept. If the complaint(s) is upheld, financial compensation is offered and the amount is determined by an independent panel. Claimants can also gain access to psychological counseling. A number of victims are highly critical of this process. Victoria police have also been highly critical of the process and the Commissioner in respect of cases where possible criminal matters also need to be considered.

**This organization has always been uneasy about the way this process operates and we question where the process gets its legal authority from?** Indeed, our concerns are so serious that we have made a recommendation to the Committee about this situation

Broken Rites wishes to make the Committee aware of the curious case of **Sister G**. We draw attention to this case because it raises a question about whether authorities in the archdiocese and/or the Commissioner chose to use The Melbourne Response process as a way of restricting knowledge of the matters and minimizing publicity risk in regard to this bizarre case.

**Briefly, Sister G** was in charge of the “Young Street campus” of the Sacred Heart Primary School in Fitzroy. A second nun (Sister J) was the Principal of the whole school and located at the “King William St campus” and she appears to have been in regular contact with the parish priest (Father F) and with **Sister G**.

Five persons provided affidavits to the Archbishop of Melbourne in which they made allegations of sexual and physical abuse by **Sister G** and beatings and strappings by the other two persons. The events took place when the complainants were in grades 1, 2 and 3 at the school. Their complaints were fed into the Melbourne response process even though most of the allegations, and the most serious allegations, were about **Sister G**. One complainant did not go any further with the complaint as this person was not prepared to be cross examined.

**Sister G** appears to have had an obsession about boys and girls remaining separate. A series of school yard incidents occurred where boys were chasing and harassing girls around the toilets and boys may even have chased girls into the female toilets. The complainants were singled out about these incidents by the nun. They received regular punishment with **Sister G** making concerted suggestions to these small children that their activities were sexually motivated, that behavior was sexual. The nun made continual suggestions about sexual touching etc., and she became highly excited when sometimes, a boy might repeat these descriptive propositions back to her. When administering punishment, she required these small boys to remove their shorts. On occasions, individuals were interrogated “in a dark room” by **Sister G**. They also received beatings and strapping by the other nun and the parish priest.

On other occasions the same children were taken by **Sister G** to “a room at the top of the stairs”. In this room they were required to remove their clothing and then shown and encouraged to take up positions and activities that simulated sexual activity, mutually fondling genital areas etc. Being small children, none of them knew what any of this was about but it has left life-long effects and very painful memories. One person could recall instances where a man and an older boy were also present and watching.

## **Litigation**

Major legal hurdles exist for victims seeking financial compensation from the Catholic Church. There are three major hurdles. The first relates to the fact that claimants frequently encounter difficulties with a claim because of the impact of statute of limitations. The second comes about because of legislation like the *Roman Catholic Church Community Lands Act 1942* (NSW). Access to this legislation has enabled church property and assets to be hidden in such a way that it becomes very difficult to identify “the church” as a legal entity. The third relates to the question of the relationship between the clergy and religious and the church to which they belong. In law, they have not been seen to be employees in a civil sense.

When it comes to persons pursuing civil cases and these reaching the courts, church authorities certainly take the matter seriously. Where a civil claim is initiated outside of the Church's own process(es), the game plan appears to be one of protecting the church's estate and assets at any cost. Broken Rites is aware of a number of cases where the church has been prepared to pay massive legal costs in order to prevent the case ever going to a judgement, rather than meet the genuine needs of victims in a realistic way.

## **Recommendations.**

- The Government of Victoria must seek legal advice from the Solicitor General about the legality of **The Melbourne Response**. If the process has no legal authority, then the government should direct that it be shut down forthwith. All records should be placed with the Attorney General and should become subject to Freedom of Information legislation.
- The Order of the Christian Brothers should be required to provide money for the setting up of a redress fund, as it was in Ireland. The fund would be administered by government-appointed trustees who would be required to develop an appropriate redress process for victims and members of their immediate families.
- The government's requirements for mandatory reporting of child abuse should be extended so as to include all persons who are members of churches and religious organisations, and who hold an appointment at the level of a Bishop or the equivalent.
- All Catholic Bishops in Victoria should be required to develop a protocol for the screening of priests coming from other countries to take up duties in Victoria. The Bishops should be required to liaise with Victoria Police in the development of the protocol.
- The Government of Victoria must seek independent advice about the tenancy arrangement for men who are living in Community Residential Units in Victoria that are being operated by the Hospitaller Order of St John of God and/or St John of God Services Victoria.
- If it is found that these men have been, and continue to be, ripped off then we believe that the government should terminate all of its service agreements and funding arrangements with the two parties on the basis that they are not fit and proper organisations to be service providers to government.
- In relation to the **Towards Healing** process we believe that the Committee should request the relevant authorities in the Catholic Church to respond to the concerns relating to transparency, conflicts of interest, conformity with the law, appointment of independent mediators etc. If the Committee reaches conclusions that confirm our experiences, the church authorities should be required to amend their procedures in the appropriate ways.