



CONCERNED CATHOLICS CANBERRA GOULBURN MEDIA RELEASE

Australian Catholics demand change

11 March 2020

CCCG Chair John Warhurst said there's a mood for change in the Catholic Church in Australia, and that the Church leadership must listen.

Speaking about the submissions received by the Church in the lead up to the 2020 Plenary Council, Professor Warhurst said active Catholics who are very much inside the tent are voicing their views loud and clear.

'The summary of the submissions shows there are enthusiastic calls for reform including voluntary celibacy and women priests and a whole range of issues that would help curb the clericalism that is crippling the Church.

'But many Catholics feel that their voice is not being heard by Church leaders in Australia.

'People want humble, servant leadership, in line with Pope Francis's call. They want leaders who will listen. The clerical, hierarchical leadership that is stifling the life of the Church must end.

'The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sex Abuse revealed crimes and cover ups that shocked Australian Catholics. They expect the bishops to take the bit between their teeth and get on with the reforms outlined by the Royal Commission.

'The wider Australian community holds dear the principles of transparency, accountability and inclusivity. These are the values that Australian Catholics want implemented in their Church.

'For the past 18 months people have enthusiastically involved themselves in the consultation process in the lead up to the 2020 Plenary Council in Australia.

'That enthusiasm is still strong.

'We're never sure, in politics, or religion, whether the leaders have got their listening ears on.

'But come October, when the Plenary Council begins in earnest, lay Catholics, ordinary Catholics will be in the minority at that historic meeting.

‘We’re reliant on bishops and other clergy and religious leaders to hear what’s been said in this consultation process and to approach this significant event in Church history with prayerful integrity.

Terry Fewtrell prepared the analysis of the Plenary Council’s summary of submissions. It is available on the Concerned Catholics Canberra Goulburn website [here](#).

Concerned Catholics Canberra Goulburn is a group in the Canberra-Goulburn Archdiocese concerned about a number of governance, cultural and structural issues arising from the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. We seek an effective voice for lay people in the administration and direction of our church.

Concerned Catholics Canberra Goulburn Submission to the Plenary Council is available [here](#).

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