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MEDIA STATEMENT

Progress made by Catholic Religious Institutes to enter National Redress Scheme

On Thursday 28 February, the Department of Social Services (DSS) published a list of religious institutes which have not yet been declared in the National Redress Scheme (NRS).

“We support transparency in providing information to those who have suffered institutional sexual abuse,” says Monica Cavanagh rsj, President of Catholic Religious Australia (CRA).

“Sixty religious institutes and dioceses with the highest number of claims according to Royal Commission data, have demonstrated a high level of commitment to the NRS: they have either been declared as participating institutions, submitted their documentation and are awaiting a Ministerial declaration or are preparing documents for submission,” added Sr Monica.

It is expected that most redress applicants will make claims against these institutions, which represent thousands of individual schools, orphanages and parishes where most of the abuse occurred. Those dioceses and religious institutes which have been declared by the Minister as having joined the Scheme include the largest religious institutes and dioceses.

Parliament provided a two-year timeframe within which to enter the NRS, recognising the complexity of the conditions set for entry into the NRS.

“Participating Institutes and dioceses have had to prove they could meet these conditions in order to join the NRS: some have done so in the first eight months.” said Sr Monica, “This is positive in light of the Government’s statement that entry into the NRS can take three to six months.”

“Entry into NRS has not occurred as quickly as we would have liked, but religious institutes where abuse has occurred have joined and are in the process of joining, as quickly as possible, working through the numerous elements of the process and working closely with the DSS,” said Sr Monica.

“Nothing we can do now will right the wrongs inflicted on children, families and communities,” said Sr Monica, “but religious institutes remind survivors that they can continue to make claims directly to the institute, through civil litigation, through Church processes such as *Towards Healing* or through the National Redress Scheme.”

MEDIA ENQUIRIES

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