



For all things give thanks.

1 THESS 5:18

Pastoral letter from Bishop Brian Mascord on the sentencing of Cardinal Pell

My Sisters and Brothers

Conscious of the decision given today in Melbourne, I write to you amid the hurt, confusion, anger and other emotions that we may all feel at this time. As you would be aware, Cardinal George Pell was given a six-year custodial sentence relating to five charges of child sexual abuse.

Uppermost in my mind is the concern for those who have been abused. Recovery from such trauma can take a lifetime, if at all. As disciples of Jesus Christ, we need to give support to those who have been abused and ensure, in very practical ways, that our children and vulnerable people are safe in our communities.

At this time, I recognise the pain this whole matter has caused you as fellow members of the Catholic community. The abuse of minors by those ordained to represent the love and mercy of the Good Shepherd, Jesus Christ, is a profound betrayal of people entrusted to their pastoral care.

I am also aware that Cardinal Pell has lodged an appeal against his conviction, as he has every right to do under Australian law. Therefore, it is not appropriate for me to make any further comment that could be seen to prejudice the outcome of the appeals process.

This is a difficult time for everyone as the pain of today is being felt by so many—it is a shared pain. Let us reaffirm our desire, broken as we are, to become the Church that Jesus calls us to be.

I offer my continued support, and if you desire any assistance, please contact the diocesan director of professional standards and safeguarding, Ms Asante Viswasam, on (02) 4222 2405. If you would prefer to speak to an external organisation for support, LifeLine is available on 13 11 14.

Yours in Christ

Most Rev Brian G Mascord DD
BISHOP OF WOLLONGONG

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