



A Pastoral Letter from the Bishop of Tasmania

25 May 2021

ANGLICAN DIOCESE
OF TASMANIA

THE RIGHT REVEREND
DR RICHARD CONDIE
BISHOP OF TASMANIA

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I am writing to convey to you the decisions made at the Diocesan Synod last weekend regarding our funding of redress for survivors of historic child sexual abuse.

Last year our advisors updated us on their estimates of how much the Diocese is likely to need to pay in redress over the next ten years. A number of factors have contributed to a higher estimate of costs, including some changes to State legislation, an increased projection of the number of people coming forward, and more survivors making civil claims against us. The total estimate in 2018 was \$8 million, and that has now risen to \$23 million.

The Diocesan leadership has been considering how we might fund the additional \$15 million required. The Diocesan Council has adopted a plan, which has now been approved by the Synod. Contributions to the Redress Fund will be sourced from various Diocesan investments: from the Diocesan Trustees, The Montgomery Park Fund, Anglican Health and Welfare, and The Clarendon Foundation.

The Trustees of the Diocese manage all parish investments. Each year the Trustees pay interest on these investments to Parishes and Diocesan entities. Some of their retained earnings (which allow them to have confidence in guaranteeing investment return rates to Parishes) will be distributed to the investors, which will then (by the instrument of an Ordinance of the Synod) be redirected into the Redress Fund. They will contribute approximately \$5 million to the Fund.

Montgomery Park was a church owned campsite that was sold in 2010. The proceeds from that sale have been used in recent years to provide grants to trainee children's and youth ministers. The remaining balance of those sale proceeds, a little over \$800,000 will be directed into the Fund, with the remaining Diocesan contribution to come from a past property sale.

Anglican Health and Welfare, which was established from the sale of St John's Hospital, will contribute \$4 million to the Redress Fund. AH&W employs our chaplains in Hospitals, Aged Care Facilities and Prisons. Most of their funding comes through commercial contracts. The reduction of their investments could curtail some of their ministry, and the AHW Board is working on plans to replace lost income by raising support from donors.

The Clarendon Foundation was established from the sale of the Clarendon Children's Home and will contribute \$5 million to the Redress Fund. Clarendon gives grants to children's and youth outreach and support, including Safe Church Communities and the Children's Chaplain at the Royal Hobart Hospital.

These are all costly steps as they will have an impact on the ministry that we are able to do, especially in chaplaincy and outreach to young people in need. In these areas, we are working on plans to continue providing these ministries by locating alternate sources of income. At the same time, we are glad to make these decisions to provide justice and a measure of support for survivors of sexual abuse.

Some have asked why we didn't fund redress through these investments in 2018, when the Synod decided to sell properties including church buildings. All along we have been trying to balance the ability to fund redress, alongside the ongoing ministry of the Diocese. The decision in 2018 to sell surplus and underutilised property enabled us to meet our redress commitments as well as support the long-term reinvigoration of ministry, especially across rural Tasmania. The current decisions have more of an impact on the front-line work of our Diocese.

Would you join me in praying that the Lord will supply all we need to continue to do vital ministry at the Parish level, developing young leaders, chaplaincy and support of outreach to young people.

With warm wishes in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Richard". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style. Below the name, there is a short, horizontal, slightly wavy line.

The Right Revd Dr Richard Condie
Bishop of Tasmania