



We proclaim a crucified Christ
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MEDIA STATEMENT

7 April 2020

Archbishop Peter A Comensoli has today written to the laity, religious and clergy of Melbourne in light of today's decision of the High Court of Australia, which brings to completion the legal processes regarding the conviction of Cardinal George Pell [www.cam.org.au].

“This case has been an intense and painful time for all those personally involved, those who have experienced abuse, and for the Catholic community in Melbourne

“At the heart of this trial and appeal process have been the people involved. I want to firstly acknowledge the person identified through the Courts only as ‘J’, who brought forward his story of abuse for examination in the courts of law. This is a right we value and honour.

“I also acknowledge Cardinal Pell who has steadfastly maintained his innocence throughout. Rightly, he has been afforded the full possibilities of the judicial system. This decision means the Cardinal was wrongly convicted and imprisoned, and he is now free to live his life peaceably within the community.

“The sole matter for examination in this case was whether Cardinal Pell committed certain despicable crimes, of which he has now been acquitted, and not about the broader question of how Church authorities have dealt with sexual abuse. Yet, I fully appreciate that people have seen in this case another emblematic story of sexual abuse by a Catholic priest. And it has brought a deeper weariness of soul to people of faith.

“Healing the damage done to those who have suffered Church-related sexual abuse, and building a culture of life and goodness for all in the Church, is the task I lead, and is something in which we all have a part to play.

“As Archbishop of Melbourne I re-dedicate myself and the Archdiocese to listening to victims of sexual abuse and accompanying them on pathways to justice, redress and healing. I continue our Church-wide efforts to protect and care for our young people and our vulnerable people, and to make our faith communities safe, as Jesus Christ expects of us. And, I commit myself to encouraging and supporting the many faithful clergy, religious and lay ministers who currently serve in the Archdiocese of Melbourne.”

Most Rev Peter A Comensoli
Archbishop of Melbourne

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