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### MEDIA RELEASE

**19 August 2020**

#### **Historic review of Catholic Church governance finalised**

A key report on a historic review of the Catholic Church's governance practices in Australia was finalised on 15 August 2020. The report was originally delivered to the Australian Catholic Bishop's Conference (ACBC) and Catholic Religious Australia (CRA) on 1 May 2020. The final iteration corrects typographical and factual errors that were drawn to our attention and makes other minor changes that do not affect the substance of the discussion or recommendations.

*The Light from the Southern Cross: Promoting Co-responsible Governance in the Catholic Church in Australia* was prepared in response to recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse and other relevant inquiries.

The ACBC and CRA entrusted the conduct of the review to the Implementation Advisory Group (IAG), which in turn established the Governance Review Project Team.

"The impact of governance failures on victims, survivors, their families and the faithful has been critical to the thinking in this report," Mr Jack de Groot said, Chair of the IAG.

"Nine questions focusing on the nature of the Church; renewal and change; governance and management structures; and culture inform the report's narrative."

At its core, the report addresses opportunities for increased lay participation and levels of co-responsibility.

Eighty-six recommendations cover a wide range of governance and management questions confronting the Church, both locally and globally. Some are more complex and require legislation, but many can be implemented by Church authorities immediately.

"The result of the governance reform indicated in this report will be a better Church, truer to its mission, fairer to all, and recognising the gifts and contribution of all the People of God," explained Mr de Groot.

Several significant documents relevant to the review have been released publicly since 1 May 2020 as follows:

1. Congregation for the Clergy, Instruction "*The pastoral conversion of the Parish community in the service of the evangelising mission of the Church*". Issued 20 July 2020. Vatican website found [here](#)
2. Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Vademecum "*On Certain Points of Procedure in Treating Cases of Sexual Abuse of Minors Committed by Clerics*". Issues 16 July 2020. Vatican website found [here](#)
3. A new report by Leadership Roundtable recommending the establishment of national standards for financial management for dioceses across the United States found [here](#)



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“While the report itself was prepared for the ACBC and CRA, it should now be made freely available so that public discussion can occur.”

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