

**The Partnered Catholic Parishes of:
Sacred Heart Diamond Creek, St. Mary's Greensborough &
St. Thomas the Apostle Greensborough North**



3 June 2022

Proposal for a statue in the grounds of St Patrick's Cathedral Melbourne

Concept

We believe that the statue should represent the pain and profound hurt experienced by the victims/survivors of abuse and the sorrow and grief of the people of the Church that this has occurred.

There may be many ways to depict this in sculptural form and the description below is one example. We anticipate that the Archdiocese would follow a process whereby, working with representatives of survivors/victims, proposals would be called for from the artistic community and through synodal discernment, a decision would be reached.

Example image: To epitomize the life trauma experienced by the victims

Consider a child/children/ person of indeterminant age or gender, standing with head(s) bowed, hand reaching up to God's hand reaching down. Betrayed by members of the clergy, religious and others associated with the Church and by those who turned away and did not help.

Wording for statue

We propose the following wording to explain that the Catholic community stands in profound sorrow with those hurt, and to indicate this is a visual prompt for all to reflect on the importance of humility and respect for human dignity when relating to all God's creation.

“Raised by the people of the Archdiocese of Melbourne as we stand in unity with those betrayed and harmed by the abuse of trust and power.

We are deeply sorry.

Rationale for Statue

As many have stated, we must resist the temptation to just move on, as if the matter is now resolved.

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To come together as a community, to begin the process of rebuilding trust, it is important not to shy away from participation in community discussion about the restorative work required, and there is desire to do this in a supportive and positive way. The process of commissioning a statue is one avenue of beginning this work.

The world is fully aware of the actions and omissions in governance and pastoral care seen in the Catholic Church and other organizations, with consequent loss of trust and credibility, which undermines its evangelizing mission, rendering a misalignment in the search for God and the Church as a perfect place to find God. It is imperative that the Catholic community enacts, through this statue, a visible, community based, lasting act of atonement on a profound scale as one step in this journey of reparation.

The presence of a physical symbol standing for all the world to see, in a place being the heart of our Archdiocese, would act in some way to portray to all the depth of sorrow and resolve the people of the Church have over all this. It may or may not be a place for victims/survivors to visit or reflect at but it is a communal response that we stand in sorrow, with those hurt, and a reminder for all passing of the fundamental need for humility and respect of human dignity which Pope Francis has stated many times.

A statue residing in the grounds of the cathedral would be a permanent reminder of God's love for all humanity and a recognition of the necessity to rebuild relationships.