



*Speaking the truth in love*  
Eph 4:15

**STATEMENT OF BISHOP ANTHONY FISHER OP**  
**26 September 2013**

My dear people,

Today Br Martin Harmata, a former teacher at Patrician Brothers' College, Blacktown, received a lengthy jail term after pleading guilty to a number of serious historical offences against students of the College in the 1980s. I hope and pray that this will provide some measure of justice for all those who are the victims of such crimes.

I wish to express my deep sorrow for the pain and suffering this has caused to the victims and their families. Sexual abuse is a crime, a grave sin before God and to be condemned in the strongest possible terms. We are ashamed of past failings and determined to do better.

Foremost in my thoughts are our former students and their families. Together with the Executive Director of Schools, Greg Whitby, the Parish Priest of St Patrick's Parish Blacktown, Fr Peter Confeggi, and the Principal of PBC Blacktown, Santo Passarello, I extend our deepest sorrow and regret to those whose trust and innocence were so grievously violated.

The safety and wellbeing of young people in our care is our highest priority and we take very seriously any breach of trust by employees and other Church personnel.

The Diocese has in place rigorous processes for dealing with complaints of sexual abuse and we work closely with police and other authorities in the management of these matters. I urge and encourage anyone who has concerns or allegations of a criminal nature to take them directly to NSW Police. Our support services include:

**Child Protection Information Line 1300 661 015, [www.parra.catholic.edu.au](http://www.parra.catholic.edu.au)**

The Catholic Education Child Protection Information Line provides information to families to locate appropriate support and advice and provide help to take allegations to the police.

**CatholicCare Social Services Helpline (02) 9933 0233 (extended hours), [www.ccss.org.au](http://www.ccss.org.au)**

CatholicCare provides a range of counselling and support services for victims and families.

**Diocesan Response to Child Sexual Abuse (02) 8838 3400, [www.parra.catholic.org.au](http://www.parra.catholic.org.au)**

The Professional Standards Office of the Diocese can provide or refer for a range of support services for people who have been affected by sexual abuse and can help people bring information forward to the police.

With my prayers for all those affected by this terrible news.

Yours sincerely in Christ,

Most Rev Anthony Fisher OP  
Bishop of Parramatta