



Anglican Church of Australia

General Synod

SEPTEMBER 4, 2017

ANGLICAN PRIMATE RENEWS APOLOGY OVER CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

The Anglican Primate of Australia, Melbourne Archbishop Philip Freier, has apologised for church failures that allowed child sexual abuse by people in positions of power and trust inside the church over the decades.

In his opening address to the General Synod, or national church parliament, Dr Freier said the church apologised “for the shameful way we actively worked against and discouraged those who came to us and reported abuse.

“We are ashamed to acknowledge that we only took notice when the survivors of abuse became a threat to us. We apologise and ask forgiveness for the Church's failure at many levels to listen to and acknowledge the plight of those who have been abused, to take adequate steps to assist them, and to prevent abuse from happening or recurring.”

Dr Freier was repeating the apology approved by the 2004 General Synod and given to the Royal Commission earlier this year.

The three-yearly General Synod, with nearly 300 delegates from the 23 Anglican dioceses in Australia, is meeting in Maroochydore this week, which is also Child Safety Week.

Dr Freier spoke on a number of social issues, including reconciliation, the Royal Commission, euthanasia, climate change, refugees, poverty, same-sex marriage, domestic violence, and the challenges facing rural and regional Australia.

The text of the address is attached.

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