



# Catholic Archdiocese of Adelaide

## Apostolic Administrator

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31<sup>st</sup> July 2018  
18/752

### To the Catholic Communities of the Archdiocese of Adelaide and the Diocese of Port Pirie

Dear Brothers and Sisters

#### Concerning Resignation of Archbishop Philip Wilson

A televised interview was held this morning in which a panel of Mrs Pauline Connelly, Fr Philip Marshall and myself addressed the topic of the resignation of Archbishop Wilson as Archbishop of Adelaide.

Among the comments I made were that the Archbishop's resignation brings to a close a time of uncertainty and anxiety in the local Church. People have been experiencing sentiments of shock, anger and disillusion as the debate over whether or not the Archbishop should resign has been carried on. There has also been resentment expressed at the way in which the Archbishop has been portrayed.

There are varying levels of sadness we are dealing with. Firstly, that of the victims. The issues that were raised during the controversy of the past few weeks have stirred up feelings of pain and distress among people who have suffered abuse at the hands of Church personnel, and now have had to undergo the agony of reliving the recollections of those experiences.

Secondly, there is the level of pain experienced by the Catholic communities as the Church they love has been seen to be in such distress, even though often self-inflicted. Hence the feelings of hurt and anger, and the confrontation of their loyalty.

Thirdly, there is the pain of the Archbishop himself who has had to come to terms with this distressing scenario. His statement announcing his resignation focusses on the pain of the victims and expresses the hope that his resignation may be a catalyst for healing. We recall all the good he has done in this regard, with the Adelaide Archdiocese under the leadership of the Archbishop being the first to establish a Child Protection Council, and out of that the Child Protection Unit, and the Police Check Unit, following on from his experience as a reformer in the Diocese of Wollongong. Confronting and painful as it is for him, he has come to the determination that his resignation is the only appropriate course of action in order to strengthen healing.

As a Church we must listen and learn, acknowledge our deficiencies, and work to ensure the strengthening of our resolve to purify and improve the Church in its protection of people at risk, especially minors and the vulnerable.

The Holy Spirit is leading us in the listening and rebuilding, and adopting the outlook of transparency and accountability, while encouraging rightful lay leadership in the Church.

My position as Apostolic Administrator remains until the Holy Father determines otherwise, and that will in time involve the appointment of a new Archbishop for Adelaide. The Papal Nuncio will commence the process of enquiry and consultation.

Let us pray for each other, for those who have suffered abuse, for an open leadership of the Church, for our faithfulness in following the Gospel, and for the person of Archbishop Wilson as he faces a future hitherto not envisaged. We are earthen vessels, but the presence of Christ Jesus will continue to strengthen us.

In Him

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read '+ Gregory O'Kelly SJ'. The signature is written in a cursive, somewhat stylized script.

+ Gregory O'Kelly SJ  
**Bishop of the Diocese of Port Pirie**  
**Apostolic Administrator, Archdiocese of Adelaide**