



Reflection on the Conviction of Cardinal Pell

Friday 1 March 2019

In the wake of the recent Royal Commission into institutional abuse and this week's revelation of the conviction of Cardinal Pell, all who have a connection with both our Parish and its Schools must feel utter despair at the total moral failure of those who have been called to positions of leadership and trust.

While we must respect the legal system and allow it to run its course, which will include the right to appeal the conviction, our hope will always be that through this process justice, for all who are involved, will be served.

Meanwhile we must support and pray for all those who have been abused and their loved ones and we must recommit ourselves as a Church, and as individuals, to doing everything possible to ensure that our community is a safe place for all, especially the young and the vulnerable.

In this weekend's Gospel we hear Jesus condemning blind guides and leaders bearing rotten fruit. In deep sadness we must acknowledge that within our community blind guides and leaders bearing rotten fruit have done immeasurable harm to the innocent and vulnerable, and undermined our faith, and the good news of Jesus in the gospel.

How we speak about these issues to our children is a two edged sword and an invidious position for parents, teachers and indeed for any adult, to be in. The last thing we will want to do is further destroy innocence with information, discussion or argument which is inappropriate for our children and opens up dark issues of which they have neither awareness nor questions.

On the other hand, many of our children will be very aware of this deep crisis, may be very distressed by it, and have questions that need answers. These children must be encouraged and supported in their questioning and we must somehow reach into the very depths of our wisdom to answer their questions honestly and appropriately, without leading them into areas they have no wish to venture or are beyond their capacity to process in a safe and healthy manner.

In our discussion with our children we need to honestly own the reality that sometimes our leaders and guides, the people whom we most trust in our lives, betray our trust, make terrible choices and bring pain and hurt to others. And if they are ever aware of this breach of trust they need to confide in their parents, teachers or other trusted adults.

Most importantly care for each other. Be the good fruit that Jesus praises and allow our children to experience the good things that so many people can bring to their young lives so that together a light can shine in the darkness.

Fr. Bill Edebohls

(Written for our Parish School Newsletters)