



Br Peter Horide, Provincial Delegate Aotearoa New Zealand Statement on Corrective Measures, Safeguarding and Redress

Today is a day of humility, shame and recognition of dark history for the Marist Brothers in this country. We do not seek to minimize, explain away, or distance ourselves from this history. What I share today I say in total humility, admiration and respect, for the courage and resilience for the Survivors of abuse perpetrated by our Brothers.

I recognise that today may feel especially vulnerable for many Survivors and their whanau who are with us. At times, particular moments, places or circumstances can bring feelings of vulnerability that were never chosen.

It's likely for many, being here today will have required significant courage and trust. I want to acknowledge the lack of trust you may be sitting with today and I hope that we may be able to begin to rebuild trust with the actions we intend to take in the future by being responsive to your needs.

I want to acknowledge that; we honour the strength it has taken to be present and sincerely thank you for being here.

I know that many of you here listening may still feel disappointed. I see this, we want to get this right and we sincerely hope that some healing comes from this today.

How might we begin to correct and rectify all this? How do we form a culture that effectively prevents harm to, or does no further harm to, you as survivors of the abuse perpetrated on you by our brothers and to the good people in our care who are totally entitled to be kept safe?

It is obvious that we, the Marist Brothers, failed to act and speak with love and kindness. We failed to attend to suffering, and to proactively prevent further suffering. We failed to deeply listen, which could have helped to mitigate suffering. We didn't understand that survivors' lives were going to be punctuated by moments of traumatic pain and fear and many would be left with lasting damage.

For many survivors, disclosure felt unsafe. Even when survivors did come forward, they were often met with denial, silencing, and delays. Inconsistent responses compounded the harm and reflected a lack of

survivor-focused practice. We failed to understand how different persons' trauma, harm and depression might be expressed.

There was injustice in our way of seeing things. Our reactions have at times impeded or blocked survivors' difficult pathways to recovery. There were inconsistent responses to survivors. Their compounding experiences of suffering demonstrates how the Marist Brothers' responses should have been more survivor-focused.

At times when the brothers decided what survivors needed, this was paternalistic and not as survivor-focused as it should have been. Things needed to change. Actions needed to be taken in face of the question, *what must be done so that never again will an abusive member of our organisation have access to children and to the vulnerable?*

Whatever measures that ought to have been, and needed to be, done, can't be avoided. It is necessary to ensure that the safety and vigilant care of our children and young people, survivors and our vulnerable is achieved.

What also needed to be done, was to ensure that any Marist Brother who has harmed any person is followed up with appropriate action. It is to be dealt with, to ensure they cause no further harm.

In the early 2000's the Marist Brothers in Aotearoa established their Professional Standards Committee, for overseeing investigations and educating the Marist Brothers in matters of safeguarding. What has evolved since then is a more developed approach where independent entities manage the assessment and investigation of complaints, and the Marist Brothers have developed their own Professional Standards Office to offer our response.

Since 2019, The Marist Brothers have taken the approach to employ lay and independent professional staff to work alongside survivors, facilitate support and assist with redress and healing. This creates a pathway for survivors to raise a complaint, to seek support and access redress without engaging with the Marist Brothers directly, if they do not want to.

Over more recent years, as appropriate, I myself, along with our Professional Standards Office and other Marist Brothers have met with individual survivors, many of whom may be here today, who have shared their anger, their frustration, their pain and their disappointment. All of this has been possible through your bravery, and possibly a great deal of trust, and in the face of your vulnerability. These conversations will not have been easy, but they have given us an opportunity to listen to survivors, to your needs, and to respond to the opportunity for the Marist Brothers to change our approach. I offer my thanks to each of you who have given us these opportunities to date. Thank you.

We are continuing to develop a survivor-centric approach to ensuring decisions around survivors are being guided by those with lived experiences. An example of this is the event held here today and the hugely appreciated support from the Survivors Public Apology and Redress (SPAR) committee who helped shape and advise on how to recognise and respond to survivors' needs.

The more recent processes established by the Catholic Church have developed wider safeguarding education for all members of the Church. The Marist Brothers have built on these strong foundations with external and independent groups educating the Order, improving safeguarding policy and practices, and developing a culture within the Marist Brothers' institutions that work with and for Survivors to protect children and vulnerable people within our care.

I share with you some of the commitments we have made to prevent further harm to children and vulnerable.

All staff and members of the Marist Order participate in National Office for Professional Standard safeguarding trainings. We further develop and provide training opportunities for our staff and members specific to their roles and centred around safeguarding. These trainings enable participants to recognize, report and respond to signs of harm and abuse.

We cooperated with all external reviews of our ministries to improve our safeguarding practices, allowing us to remain transparent and up to date with best practices. We have taken an active approach to ensure more professionals outside of the Marist Brothers are providing us with survivor-focused and trauma-informed support and advice.

Safeguarding will remain a prominent discussion point central to all current ministries and future initiatives ensuring policies in areas of safeguarding, privacy, safe recruitment and training remain current and widely known.

An important review of honorifics was conducted to identify past honorifics for Brothers who had abused. Sadly, honours of abusers have been placed and kept where they shouldn't have been for too long. We recognize this and have developed procedures to ensure honorifics of Marist Brothers are decided appropriately and with care.

The New Zealand Marist Brothers and I are fully committed to supporting those who have been so wrongfully hurt. I honour the courage it takes to come forward, and I recognize that each person requires an individual and personal response. Anyone raising a complaint will be treated with dignity, care, and respect, with their wellbeing placed first at every stage.

Survivors have the right to be supported by a person of their choice, to receive clear information, to ask questions and receive compassionate support throughout the reporting, investigation, and response process.

We ensure that our Professional Standards Office is survivor focused, trauma-informed and transparent. That we listen, allowing Survivors a voice, recognize and take accountability for each person who has been impacted by abuse.

We are committed to ensuring all complaint assessments are conducted professionally and independently to the Marist Brothers. In support of what Br Darren previously shared; The Marist Brothers are committed to holding abusers and enablers accountable, supporting Marist International Safeguarding Policy.

At the Royal Commission I acknowledged, the previous ex-gratias offered by the Brothers were inadequate and lowest on average of any Catholic group. We recognised this and have taken measures to rectify this to assist with the healing of Survivors. We are determined to better support all survivors.

This year, a series of actions has been prioritized, including a Catholic-wide approach to redress. The Marist Brothers will support any wider Catholic Church redress once available.

The Marist Brothers currently offer redress which has changed over recent years. Since early 2025 and following careful engagement with survivors, average ex-gratia to a survivor of sexual abuse has been \$50,000 and we continue to honour this commitment, by regularly reviewing the Marist Brothers Aotearoa New Zealand redress guidelines.

We also support that those who have previously settled complaints can revisit their ex-gratia with a view to matching the monetary redress being offered here today.

More information and details about redress and the holistic approach being taken is available online on our website including our Province Safeguarding Policy and relevant content.

To the survivors who are here and who are with us online.

I want to close by saying that we welcome every Marist Brother Survivor who chooses to come forward. We recognize that for many, speaking up or stepping forward can involve great vulnerability and immense courage. We honour the strength it takes to share experiences that may be deeply painful and personal.

Our commitment is to pursue meaningful, Survivor-focused redress. We are committed to responding in ways that feel right and appropriate to you.

I conclude by acknowledging and once again your vulnerability and courage. Your voice matters. Your experiences matter. Your courage matters. You will be listened to, honoured, and met with respect, dignity and care that should always have been yours.

I hope and pray that this statement has communicated the deep respect and aroha that I know you all fully deserve.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Br Peter Horide". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Br Peter Horide
Provincial Delegate, Aotearoa New Zealand

09 May 2026