



To the Clergy and People of the Diocese of Broken Bay

Thursday 9 April 2020

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

The acquittal of Cardinal George Pell by the High Court of Australia on Tuesday 7 April has been greeted by many mixed reactions which we have seen played out across the media over the last day or so. On the eve of the Sacred Triduum and the celebration of Easter, I wish to share with you my own understanding of these complex responses. I am with you in my prayer during these momentous developments.

For me, and for our Catholic community, the acquittal by the Court comes as a great relief. It is assuring for us as a Catholic people, especially as we enter these holy days. We are grateful that Cardinal Pell will now be able to celebrate the Easter mysteries in freedom, with his family and friends. Above all, we rejoice with him and are united with him as he celebrates Mass once again. He has always maintained his innocence and it is assuring to us that the full judicial process has given him vindication. He will require our prayers even more now as he faces the future.

We are also deeply mindful of the man who brought his complaint forward. To him, Cardinal Pell bears no ill will. We, too, must hold him in our prayers. His own acceptance of the determination by the High Court has been considered and measured. He, too, does not bear destructive anger and his resolve not to be defined by events is indicative of the possibility of healing, even in the midst of what has been a most traumatic experience for him and his family. They too need our prayer as they begin a new chapter in their journey.

The last five years have left a great scar on our lives as members of the community of the Church. The criminal activity that we have witnessed over many years does not negate the good we witness on a daily basis. Most often this is hidden. Yet, it is undeniable. Though it may not be acknowledged often in public ways, I assure you of my esteem for all that you do, and I take this opportunity to thank you all profoundly – priests and people – for the extraordinary exercise of care for children and vulnerable adults in our community and to whom the love of Christ always impels us. This love leads us to be conformed evermore deeply to Jesus, who is “the way, the truth, and the life.”

MOST REVEREND ANTHONY RANDAZZO BISHOP OF BROKEN BAY

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As a community of faith, Safeguarding is not just something we do, it is central to our identity. With the matter of Cardinal Pell's appeal now resolved in his favour, we must take this occasion to recommit ourselves yet once again to the protection of others, and to the growth of a culture of safety, care, and truth within our own Diocese. At all levels of our life together we must keep working to ensure that the sacred dignity of every person is always respected and promoted.

We are about to proclaim the Risen Life of Our Lord. May this life always urge us forward to give it witness by the quality of our love and care for one another.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "+ Anthony Randazzo". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Most Rev Anthony Randazzo DD, JCL
Bishop of Broken Bay