



VICTORIAN
WOMEN
LAWYERS

SEXUAL ABUSE WITHIN RELIGIOUS ORGANISATIONS:

RESPONSES AND RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

Each year, VWL's Justice Committee holds a sexual assault forum which focusses on topical legal issues relating to sexual assault and abuse.

This year, our focus will be Victoria's Parliamentary Inquiry into the Handling of Child Abuse by Religious and Other Organisations. This is a particularly timely discussion, as the Inquiry Committee is due to release its report in November.

Our panel will share their thoughts on the Inquiry process; how the upcoming report will affect victims and institutions; the ongoing Commonwealth Royal Commission into institutional child sexual abuse; and the next steps for those seeking justice.

DATE

Thursday 31 October 2013

TIME

5:30pm for registration and refreshments

6:00 – 7:30pm forum

LOCATION

Leo Cussen Centre for Law
Level 1, 360 Little Bourke Street,
Melbourne

COST

Gold coin donation to Broken Rites
Australia

REGISTRATION

www.vwl.asn.au/events

FACILITATOR:

DR VIVIAN WALLER

Vivian is a solicitor and the principal of Waller Legal, a legal practice that is dedicated to looking after victims of crime and those who have endured sexual assault or child abuse.

Vivian is known for her determination and compassion in representing victims of institutional abuse.

SPEAKERS:

JENNY HARDY



Jenny is the Executive Officer of Knowmore, a national independent legal advisory service which provides legal advice and assistance to people who are engaging with, or are considering engaging with, the Commonwealth Royal Commission into institutional child sexual abuse.

CHRISSIE FOSTER



Chrissie lived a happy life until she discovered that two of her three daughters had been sexually assaulted by her parish priest. The assaults took place over a number of years while they were in primary school, but she didn't know until March 1996. Now, 16 years later, Chrissie is still fighting for justice, accountability and honesty.

CHRIS MACISAAC



Chris has been with Broken Rites Australia since its early days, and is the organisation's President. Over the years has seen a huge change in the Catholic Church's approach to allegations of abuse. As a committed advocate, she still sees a great need for victims to be supported in their fight for justice.

PATRICK FERDINANDS



Patrick has been a member of Victoria Police for 23 years, and is an Acting Inspector. He joined the Commissions and Inquiries Division of Victoria Police's Legal Services Department early in 2013, in order to work on Victoria Police's response to the Parliamentary Inquiry.