

From: [Mandy Varley](#)
To: [Legislation Committee](#)
Subject: The Children and Community Services Amendment Bill 2019
Date: Saturday, 4 July 2020 7:11:26 PM

Dear Honourable Members of the Legislative Committee,

Regarding this bill that is seeking to make priests break the Seal of Confession and will make it a criminal offence for them to keep and safeguard that Seal.

Not only is this a direct attack on the Catholic Church, it is completely lacking in common sense! Whoever suggested this really hasn't thought it through!

If this law is passed, you will have closed the last door of possibility that a child abuser may admit what he or she has done!

If a predator knows that Priests will be informing the police, then that would stop them going and confessing to a priest in the first place!! (Why would they go to anyone who they know is obliged to then go and tell the police!!!!)

If however, the seal of Confession remains in tact, the offender will feel that they can actually go to someone and admit what they have done. This actually OPENS UP the pathway! It then gives the priest the golden opportunity to continue the dialogue, counsel the perpetrator and encourage them to take the next step in going to the Police. The very fact that the abuser has admitted it to another human being, is a huge breakthrough. It would then become easier to admit it again to another person afterwards. Once a person has admitted their sin to God, it then also opens the channel for God to work in that person too. Sadly, only Christians understand this.

Instead of destroying this incredible, powerful Sacrament of Reconciliation and Healing, which enables sinners to face their actions, realise their sin and seek forgiveness, you should be supporting it as well as all the honourable members of the Catholic Church who are working so hard especially in this area.

If you understand anything about the Catholic Church, you would realise the vows every priest takes are sacred promises, solemn oaths to God. If you know anything of the history of the Catholic Church, you will know what happens when the State tries to intrude. This isn't a threat, this is simply what would have to happen. China is a good current example too.

FYI: Archbishop Julian Porteous

"Confession Under Attack Down Under—Archbishop Julian Porteous (Free Version)" An interview with Patrick Coffin, on YouTube: (If you don't want to listen to the whole interview, then start from 12 minutes in.)

<https://youtu.be/46mlL0j6imM>

I pray that you will realise how wrong this move would be and how totally counter-productive the idea is.

Yours most sincerely

Amanda Jane Varley (Mrs)