

**AUSTRALIAN COUNCIL FOR THE DEFENCE OF
GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS
PRESS RELEASE 867**

**CORPORATISATION OF CATHOLIC EDUCATION :
KEEPING PRIESTS OUT OF SCHOOLS!**

Appearances mean everything for the private religious sector

The Catholic church has moved to make ‘Priests give up school control’ in an attempt to deal with the public relations fallout from the ongoing sex abuse of children by some parish priests. So they have set up a not-for-profit company chaired by a leading businessman, Gerard Dalbosco , to take control of the Melbourne Diocese Catholic Schools.

The company, called the **Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools Ltd** is set up under a restructure that will strip parish priests of key responsibilities.

We are told in *The Australian* of October 22 that this will mark a new era for Catholic education with this entity managing schools in Melbourne. It is has been done in response to the **acceptance by the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference of the recommendation of the sex abuse Royal Commission that Bishops ensure parish priests are not the employee of principals and teachers in Catholic schools.**

But there is another , very sensible and financial reason for this move. There is a question of payments amounting to millions of dollars to victims of sex abuse. The Church has played funny bugger legal games over the years. The employer of priests is God after all, so in spite of huge property assets and earnings in church trusts, there has been fierce resistance to payouts to victims.

The Victorian parliamentary inquiry into abuse however, included a requirement for organizations providing services to children to be appropriate insured and operate under an incorporated body. So the insurance companies, not the church will pay!

The Archbishop of Melbourne, Peter Comensoli has said that the new system with a total income of \$2.2 billion, ‘reflected community expectations.

The following is the report on the Catholic News website at <https://cathnews.com/cathnews/39451-new-governance-model-for-melbourne-catholic-schools>

The change in governance arrangements will see all 293 schools owned by the Archdiocese, its parishes or associations of parishes in the Archdiocese of Melbourne transferred to Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools Ltd (MACS).

“Building on the significant legacy of parish priest-led and governed schools, MACS will usher in a new era for Catholic education in the Archdiocese,” Archbishop Comensoli said.

“Education is integral to the mission of the Catholic Church to proclaim the Good News, and Catholic schooling forms our young people so they may be equipped with the knowledge, skills and hope to live meaningful lives and enrich the world around them.

“The establishment of MACS is a necessary and constructive change to the operations for schools that not only reflects community expectations about the operations of schools, but keeps our Christ-centred mission at the heart of all we do in Catholic education.”

Archbishop Comensoli has appointed former EY senior partner Gerard Dalbosco as the inaugural chair of MACS to lead this historic new path for Catholic education in Melbourne.

Mr Dalbosco said that he was honoured to be appointed as the inaugural chair of MACS.

“I am looking forward to MACS working closely with parish priests and parishes, which will continue to be central to the care and education of Catholic school students.”

Archbishop Comensoli announced that Catholic Education Melbourne will also move to MACS, with recently announced Executive Director of Catholic Education Melbourne, Mr Jim Miles, to serve as MACS Executive Director.

MACS will officially begin its governance responsibilities on January, 1 2021.

FULL STORY

[New era for Catholic education in Melbourne](#) (*Melbourne Catholic*)

RELATED COVERAGE

[Priests surrender school control in Melbourne](#) (*The Australian*)

Gerard Dalbosco has been or is:

1. a former Senior Partner EY, formerly known as Ernst & Young. This legal firm provides assurance, tax, transaction and advisory services. EY is headquartered in London, England.
2. Deputy Chair - Committee for Melbourne; and
3. the Chair of the Board of - Loreto Convent , Toorak,
4. Director – Melbourne Prize Trust; and
5. member of the finance Committee, Newman College, University of Melbourne.

DOGS make the following comments:

The Catholic Church may preach Christian values, but it is a powerful multinational corporation which is so powerful in Australia that it can demand billions of dollars annually from the Federal and State Treasuries. Priests may no longer hire and fire teachers, but the property and income of the church is held tightly in the ownership of the Church itself, even though substantial parts of it are now paid for by the taxpayer.

The move to a corporate rather than a trust structure is guaranteed to place the financial responsibility for sex abuse claims against the church in the hand of insurance companies. This will protect the enormous assets owned by the Church itself. But the figures released by the *Australian* for the Melbourne diocese are of interest. They are :

Assets :\$ 3.6 billion and

Annual Income: \$2.2 billion

The \$3.6 billion assets are owned by a not-for profit company and are therefore not liable to any tax and

The annual income of \$2.2 billion largely comes from the public purse and is not taxed. Whereas the public sector pays payroll tax, the Catholic sector pays not a cent.

So, there has been a change, a restructure if you will, but the Church, which is a multinational corporation will protect at all costs its wealth and political influence.

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