

Strategic follow up to Archbishop Comensoli

Slide notes from Clare Leaney's Presentation

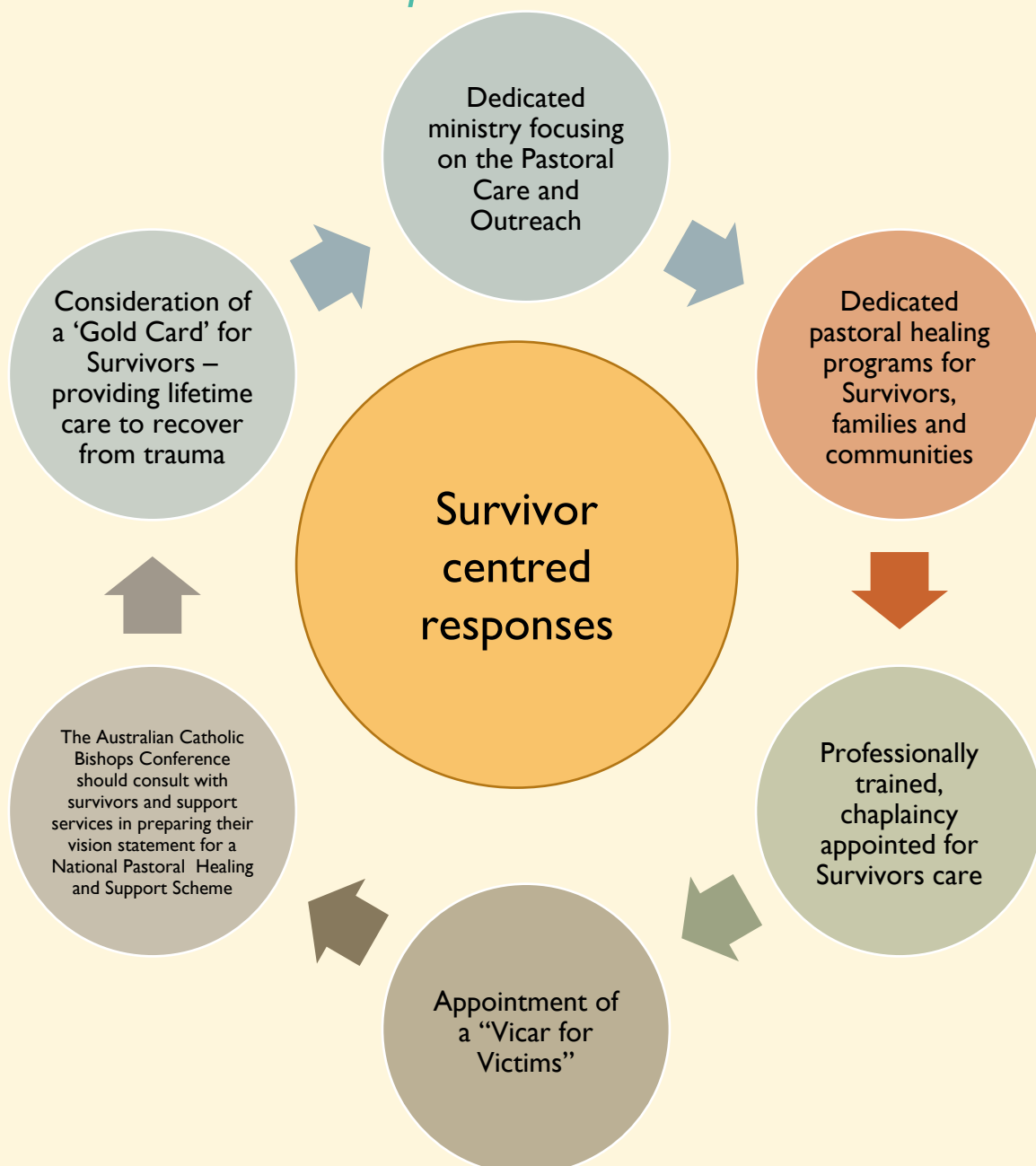
Improving Survivor Care and Support

Our Observation

The focus on safeguarding children into the future and **then** ensuring the care of victims/ Survivors is out of order.

The needs of existing Survivors should be prioritised with a focus on Survivor centric responses.

Suggestions for Practical Implementation

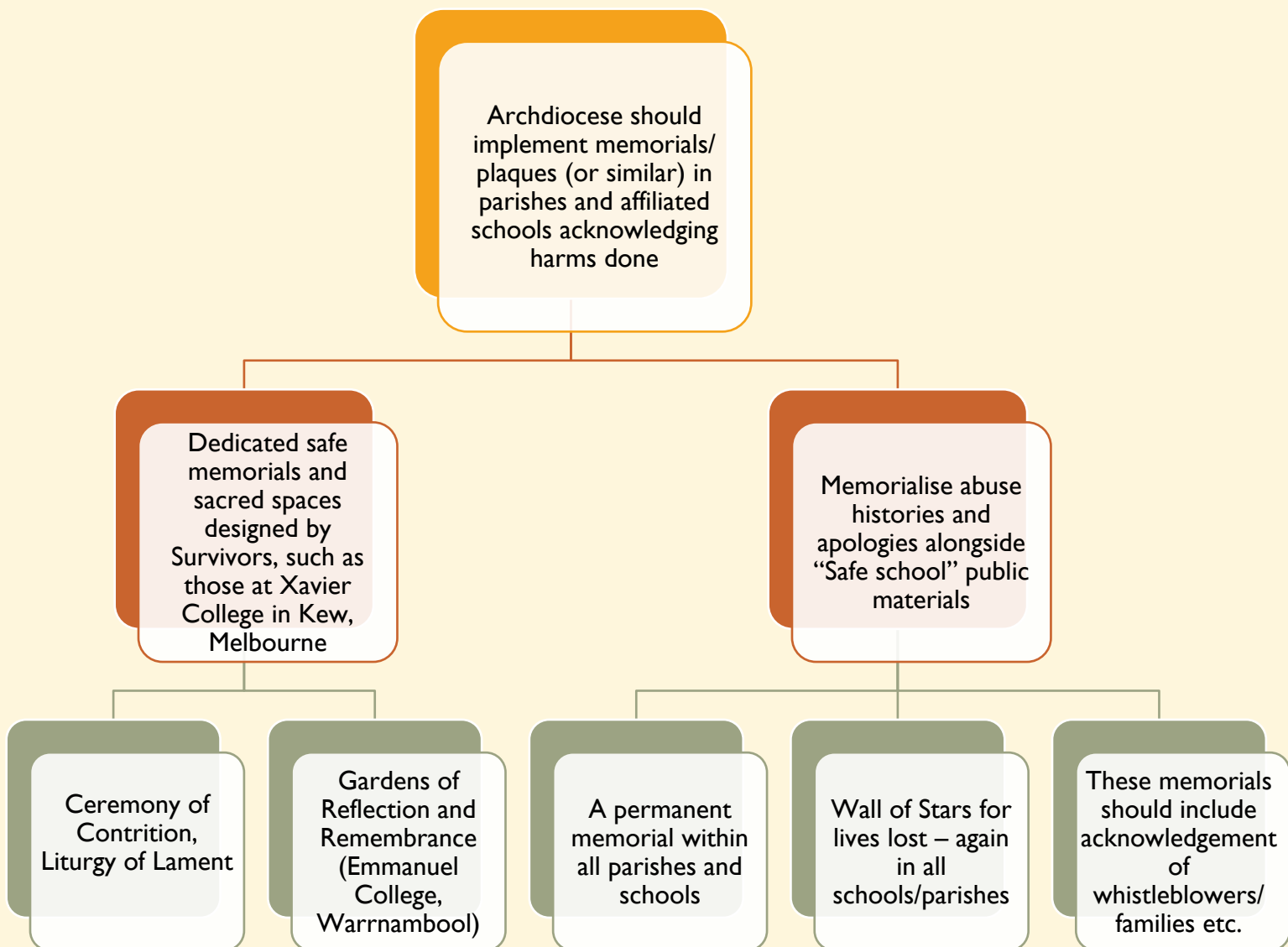


Improving Survivor Recognition

Our Observation

Although many schools and other institutions are seeking to acknowledge harms done through memorials, safe spaces or apology/ recognition ceremonies we have not observed any provision or plan for this in the Archdiocese.

Our Recommendation & Suggestions for Practical Implementations



Education and Awareness Raising

Our Observation

There are common misunderstandings about the trauma associated with institutional abuse in a religious context. For some clergy and other professionals this prevents engagement with a vulnerable community, often because they may fear saying the wrong thing.

Our Recommendation & Suggestions for Practical Implementations

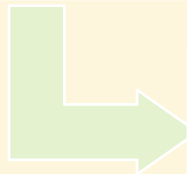
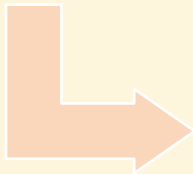
The Archdiocese of Melbourne should consider expanding the education of seminarians and existing clergy, religious and lay to include elements such as:

Understanding the impacts of institutional abuse

Effective ways to communicate with trauma survivors

Trauma Informed Care Models

Best practice guidelines for those who work with trauma survivors



Mandatory Reporting and Child Protection: Papal Directives

Our Observation

The church's current stance regarding disclosure in the confessional has set many Survivors at odds with their faith and further alienated members of the community

Our Recommendation

*SURVIVORS, THEIR FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES
HAVE GIVEN TESTIMONY TO NUMEROUS
GOVERNMENT AND OTHER INQUIRIES WITH A
SHARED GOAL OF ENSURING THAT SUCH ABUSE
NEVER HAPPENS AGAIN. WE RECOMMEND IN THE
STRONGEST POSSIBLE TERMS RECONSIDERING
THE OPPOSITION TO MANDATORY REPORTING IN
THE CONFSSIONAL.*

Mandatory Reporting and Child Protection: Papal Directives

Our Request

While we recognise that we may never achieve consensus there was significant discussion amongst members with the recommendation for further dialogue around a confessor's ability to refuse absolution unless and until there is self-reporting by the offender to authorities.

Suggestions for Practical Implementation:

Under our current laws, doctors, nurses, teachers, police officers, psychologists, school counsellors and youth justice workers who think a child is being abused are **required to report it.**

Ministers of religion are not.

We're changing that.



MVC Members noted some priests and Bishop have indicated that they would withhold absolution should an individual confess to child abuse unless and until they have contacted police.

Members have also discussed the possible issuing of a clear and accessible protocol around this.

MVC recommends that such leadership could be demonstrated by the Australian Bishops Conference with this advice given publicly to all confessors.

Melbourne Archdiocese should offer publicly available response to Papal Directive Vos Est Lux Mundi outlining the intention to comply and how this intention will be fulfilled.

The Melbourne Response and Carelink

Our Observations

Redress is an extremely changeable and challenging area for Survivors to engage with and significant legislative reform is being undertaken to improve redress options and accessibility for Survivors.

Many existing personnel from within the Archdiocese, Melbourne Response and Carelink are mistrusted by the Survivor community given experience to date.

For many Survivors there continues to be confusion and misunderstandings about individual roles, policies and processes within the Archdiocese with substantial concern expressed that any changes or future developments may have same 'secretive' nature as previous processes.

Suggestions for Practical Implementation:

Discussion of how much parishioner money has gone to supporting abusers compared to supporting victims?

Church must recognise it takes significant time for a person to disclose their abuse (est. 30 years on average).

Discussion of the extraordinary overhead costs of the Melbourne Response as revealed at the Royal Commission

To receive Carelink support survivors must commence a Melbourne Response process. Up to 12 sessions may be available prior to engaging in the Melbourne Response. We seek clarity around these processes/procedures

Specific recognition of the emotional toll of seeking assistance – care needed *before, during* and *after* compensation process

Specific need to acknowledge that the impact is intergenerational; on the whole family

The Melbourne Response and Carelink

Suggestions for Practical Implementation:



Several MVC members contributed in detail to Donnell Ryan QC's review of The Melbourne Response and remain disappointed that his report and recommendations have been almost completely suppressed per the document available through the Royal Commission.

Would the Archdiocese consider releasing this report?

Establishment of a Survivors' Advisory Group to the Archdiocese comprising of:

Survivors, their families and carers

Advocates and support services

Clergy who actively support Survivors, such as Fr Kevin Dillon, Fr Tony Kieran

Legal representatives, mental health practitioners and other support professionals

Responses to Government Inquiry

Our Observation

At present, we are unaware of any specific response from the Archdiocese of Melbourne to the individual recommendations made by the Victorian Parliamentary Inquiry and the recent Royal Commission.

Our Recommendation

Collectively, Members have expressed their interest in a formal response from the Archbishop. This could take a similar format to that of the responses issued by State and Federal Government; an acknowledgement from the Minister and then an itemised list of responses to recommendations.

Suggestions for Practical Implementation

