



CATHOLIC ARCHDIOCESE  
OF MELBOURNE

# statement

**2 October 2021**

**Re: Government's proposal to remove exemptions for religious organisations**

Victoria, like all other Australian states, is a pluralist society, that celebrates and protects diversity.

The recent announcement by the Government to further limit employment freedoms from discrimination law for religious providers weakens this simple but important protection.

People of faith want to emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic free to shape their communities in accord with that faith, rather than finding themselves further restricted.

The proposed changes mean that various faith-based ministries and services will be impacted, such as education and social services.

In a Catholic context, our schools are known for being inclusive and welcoming, but they need to be allowed to give an authentic witness to our faith.

If the Government values fairness to people of faith, we ask that it pause a head-long rush to legislate, sit down with faith communities, and talk it through properly.

The Archdiocese of Melbourne looks forward to engaging in constructive discussions with the Attorney General on this important matter.

***Statements attributable to the Catholic Archbishop of Melbourne,  
Archbishop Peter A Comensoli.***

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