

# Pastoral Care for Parishes



Tim Dyer – The Johnmark Extension  
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[www.johnmark.net.au](http://www.johnmark.net.au)

# Understanding the wounded heart of a parish

- ▶ Shock, disbelief, sadness, loss, anger, hurt, frustration, anxiety, devastation
- ▶ The unique place of the church in the lives of parishioners
- ▶ Betrayal and the breach of sacred trust
- ▶ Conflict following disputed outcomes



# Key variables which impact the pastoral care needed by a parish

- ▶ Nature of the misconduct (5 levels)
- ▶ Number and vulnerability of the victims
- ▶ Time and place of the offence
- ▶ Seniority / staff position of the offender
- ▶ Personal context of the offender



# Theological Foundations of Pastoral Care for a Parish in Crisis

- ▶ Truth – telling
- ▶ Justice – seeking
- ▶ Grace – giving
- ▶ Peace (shalom) – making



# Seven things survivors tell us they need from the church

- ▶ Being believed and affirmed as doing the 'right thing'
- ▶ Advocacy and support through any investigative and judicial process
- ▶ Hearing the clear judgement of the church that 'what happened to you was wrong, you are not at fault'

# Seven things survivors tell us they need from the church

- ▶ An apology from the leadership of the church
- ▶ Compensation – Care and Assistance
- ▶ A faith journey of hope and healing
- ▶ Seeing preventative and responsive measures for safety implemented



# 4 things parishes tell us they need to heal

- ▶ Appropriate, timely and clear communication about process and outcomes which honours their trust placed in church leadership
- ▶ Opportunities to reflect on and share their own responses and concerns
- ▶ Ways to acknowledge the pain and seek healing within the processes of the faith community
- ▶ Change in the systems which failed

