

Press Release 28<sup>th</sup> May 2014

## **JFM Research welcomes UN Report on the Holy See; calls for immediate State action on Magdalene Laundries restorative justice scheme**

JFM Research welcomes the news that the State is introducing legislation to preserve all material related to the Ryan Commission and the Residential Institutions Redress Board (<http://www.irishtimes.com/news/social-affairs/abuse-documents-not-to-be-destroyed-despite-assurances-1.1811692>).

This material is an invaluable contribution to the nation's heritage and in time will assist future scholars better understand Ireland's history of institutional abuse and child neglect. We hope that many survivors will welcome the news.

We urge the government to ensure that any future body of inquiry into the Magdalene Laundries or other institutions has access to this material, bearing in mind the overlap in the survivor populations.

The Irish Human Rights Commission and the UN Committee against Torture, repeatedly, have requested a statutory and thorough investigation into the Magdalene Laundries abuse. We support those calls. The McAleese Committee did not carry out a full independent investigation into allegations of abuse - its mandate related solely to state interaction and it did not have powers to compel evidence from the Religious Congregations involved. The McAleese Committee process was not transparent and it remains to be seen what, if any, material from the Ryan Commission and the Residential Institutions Redress Board it accessed in its deliberations.

The continued refusal of the Religious Congregations to apologise or provide redress to Magdalene Laundry survivors, and the continued difficulties survivors face in obtaining original records, underscore the ongoing need for a statutory investigation.

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