

New book looks at Christian Brothers

A NEW book has been launched detailing the Christian Brothers' involvement in child care in Western Australia.

The history, entitled *The Scheme*, was written by Dr Barry Coldrey, the author of 20 books, several on related subjects, particularly child migration to Australia.

The Scheme was commissioned by the Christian Brothers in response to criticism of the Brothers and their childcare institutions at Clontarf, Castledare, Bindoon and Tardun.

The Christian Brothers Provincial in WA, Br Gerry Faulkner, said the book placed a clearer perspective on claims and allegations which had created a "distorted and unfair" public perception of the Brothers' work.

Br Faulkner said Dr Coldrey was a professional historian and researcher who had taken an objective approach to a very complex subject.

"Dr Coldrey has not shied away from the difficult issues and many people may be surprised at the details of history uncovered," he said.

The issues of child slavery and exploitation, discipline and sexual abuse, raised in several allegations, had been researched and evaluated, he said.

"The facts are presented in a way that is fair to the thousands of boys who passed through the institutions over many years, to the Brothers themselves and their co-workers."

Br Faulkner said *The Scheme* had not been written in an attempt to sweep allegations of misconduct by Brothers under the carpet.

"On the contrary, the Christian Brothers have acknowledged that some abuses took place," he said.

"A public apology has been made to the men who suffered and programs of counselling and other assistance have been initiated."