



Monday, 15 December 2025

Queensland Elder Abuse Report reflects frontline warnings, Archdiocese says

Elder abuse in Queensland has been exposed as a systemic failure requiring urgent and coordinated reform, with the Final Report of the Parliamentary Inquiry affirming the seriousness, complexity and moral weight of the issue. The Archdiocese of Brisbane has welcomed the report, saying it validates long-standing concerns raised by frontline services and community advocates about the risks faced by older people behind closed doors.

The Inquiry's findings echo what Centacare staff, parish communities and service providers see every day: elder abuse is often hidden, frequently occurs within trusted relationships, and is enabled by gaps in legal safeguards, fragmented services and social isolation. The Archdiocese says the report marks an important turning point in recognising elder abuse not as an isolated problem, but as a failure of systems designed to protect dignity and autonomy in later life.

The Archdiocese of Brisbane welcomes the release of the Final Report and strongly supports its call for coordinated, system-wide reform to better protect older Queenslanders. The report reflects many of the recommendations made in the Archdiocese's submission earlier this year, which drew on extensive frontline experience through Centacare and was grounded in principles of dignity, justice and care for the most vulnerable.

The Archdiocese is particularly encouraged by the Inquiry's focus on strengthening safeguards around Enduring Powers of Attorney, improving adult safeguarding arrangements, expanding access to specialist legal and support services, and investing in community education to address ageism and social isolation. These priorities closely align with the reforms proposed by the Archdiocese to address financial exploitation, coercive control and systemic gaps that leave many older people unprotected.

The Inquiry explicitly referenced the Archdiocese of Brisbane's submission in its consideration of Enduring Powers of Attorney, acknowledging the evidence provided about inadequate oversight and the risks of misuse within family and trusted relationships. The Archdiocese welcomes this recognition and sees it as confirmation that lived experience and ethical leadership have an important role in shaping effective public policy.

The Archdiocese's submission emphasised that elder abuse is not only a legal or service delivery issue, but a moral and ethical responsibility that reflects how society values older people. As Pope Francis has said, "the elderly are a wealth not to be ignored." The Inquiry's report affirms this perspective by recognising the importance of autonomy, respect and supported decision-making, rather than responses that rely solely on crisis intervention.



Through Centacare, the Archdiocese of Brisbane supports older people across Queensland through aged care, counselling, housing, legal referral and community support services. This frontline work continues to highlight the complexity of elder abuse, particularly where housing insecurity, carer stress and family dependence intersect.

The Archdiocese remains committed to working with the Queensland Government, statutory bodies and community partners to ensure the Inquiry's recommendations are implemented in a way that is practical, culturally responsive and centred on the lived experience of older people.

The Archdiocese thanks the Inquiry Committee for its work and all those who shared their expertise and experiences. It looks forward to ongoing engagement as the Queensland Government develops its formal response and implementation plan.

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