

- MEDIA RELEASE -

Audit supports deepening efforts as safeguarding matures in Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne

26 March 2026

The Archbishop of Melbourne, Peter Comensoli has praised and thanked the clergy, parishes and personnel for their commitment to safeguarding, following the recent safeguarding audit undertaken by Australian Catholic Safeguarding Ltd (ACSL).

“This Audit marks a significant milestone for the Archdiocese and has provided us with valuable insights—affirming areas of strength while also highlighting where we might continue to grow. We welcome these learnings, as they help guide us in building a culture where Safeguarding is deeply embedded in every aspect of Church life. I am deeply grateful for the engagement and dedication shown by our parishes, Clergy, staff, and people. Their commitment to Safeguarding is evident, and it is through their everyday actions that our communities become safer and more respectful places for all.” Archbishop Comensoli said.

At the request of the Archdiocese, ACSL invited three independent auditors – Prolegis, Safeguarding Central and Workplace Resolutions Services to form the audit team and work with ACSL in auditing the Archdiocese. These auditors provided additional external and interstate oversight of the Archdiocese’s safeguarding compliance, both with the Victorian Child Safe Standards and the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards.

ACSL Chief Executive Officer Dr Ursula Stephens acknowledged that the Archdiocese has made commendable progress in implementing the NCSS which reflects strong leadership and governance.

“Effective leadership is about facing up to hard issues associated with safeguarding within the Church and the community. Without clearly defining why and how we need to change our culture whilst creating supportive, safe environments and processes there will be no change to culture. Change and reform does not occur in our comfort zones”.

“The Audit report includes recommendations to further improve its processes to ensure safeguarding is deeply embedded across the many ministries of the Archdiocese. Safeguarding is not a task that can ever be considered complete.”

In accepting the recommendations, Archbishop Comensoli said the outcomes of the audit are encouraging, but they are not a reason for complacency.

“Rather, they point clearly to the direction we need to take—one with vigilance, accountability, and ongoing formation” he said.

The report is available on ACSL’s [website](#).