

- If disclosure of a sexual abuse allegation by a parent or alleged victim is made to a class teacher, employee or volunteer in a school, parish or other Church institution, that person will immediately refer the allegation to the Chief Executive Officer or the Delegate of the SIRGQ .
- Pastoral action in response to the allegation will be collaborative. This action may, according to the circumstances of each case and the need to be involved, initiate dialogue with and among a number of interested parties.
- SIRGQ intervention should occur as soon as possible after the allegation is made and engage appropriate professional personnel to facilitate support, offer counsel and refer as appropriate.

Contact Names and Phone Numbers
SPECIAL ISSUES RESOURCE GROUP
QUEENSLAND

Archdiocese of Brisbane

Rev Dr James Spence (Chair) [07] 268 3040
 Mrs Myolene Carrick [07] 224 3343

Diocese of Toowoomba

Rev Dr Brian Sparksman [076] 32 7443
 Mrs Therese O'Brien [076] 32 3604

Diocese of Rockhampton

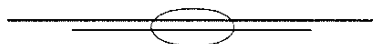
Rev Dr Noel Hynes [071] 52 7150

Diocese of Townsville

Deacon Jim Erskine [077] 71 3963

Diocese of Cairns

Sr Jude Freyne rsm [070] 52 5258



**QUEENSLAND CATHOLIC
 BISHOPS' CONFERENCE
 AND
 CONFERENCE OF LEADERS OF
 RELIGIOUS INSTITUTES,
 QUEENSLAND**

PROTOCOL

*Pastoral action in response to
 allegations of sexual abuse by
 people who work on behalf of
 the Church in Queensland*

INTRODUCTION

Sexual abuse against children and vulnerable adults is contrary to Christian values and cannot be tolerated or condoned in any circumstances. The Catholic Church recognizes that allegations of sexual abuse by people who work on behalf of the Church may occur, and that such actions create considerable suffering for individuals and communities. Allegations of sexual abuse of children and vulnerable adults therefore require pastoral action which is compassionate, professional, socially just and reflective of God's love for all.

The Church recognizes the complexity, sensitivity and significance of sexual abuse allegations and the necessity for careful and pastoral management of these. The clarification of an appropriate responsive structure and associated pastoral action is therefore important.

RESPONSIVE STRUCTURE

The Bishops' Conference of Queensland and the Conference of Leaders of Religious Institutes, Queensland has established a Special Issues Resource Group, Queensland (SIRGQ) whose primary functions will be:

- to protect and support the child or vulnerable adult in an allegation of sexual abuse
- to clarify the nature of an allegation
- to provide advice as required
- to facilitate support for all parties
- to consult with other interested parties
- to liaise with the media
- to ensure that the requirements of civil, criminal, industrial and canon law are respected
- to expedite pastoral processes that will enhance the lawful course of justice

PASTORAL ACTION

The procedures which follow identify the practical and necessary activities to be implemented following a sexual abuse complaint involving a child or vulnerable adult. **Particular care will be given to the gathering of information about the sexual abuse allegation.**

- The person who first receives the allegation hereafter known as the (notifier) will record the free and spontaneous account given by the alleged victim or complainant in relation to the allegations:
 - the notifier must not elicit information other than - parties involved, nature of complaint;
 - if a parent makes a complaint it is important that further information is **not** sought from the alleged victim once the initial report is made;
 - the notifier is not to contact the accused.

