

APOLOGY TO BYB

Before giving evidence to the Royal Commission today, I want to make a personal apology to BYB, and to all members of his family, for the way in which his complaint of sexual abuse against John Litton Elliot was handled when first referred to me as Archbishop of Brisbane, in August 1993.

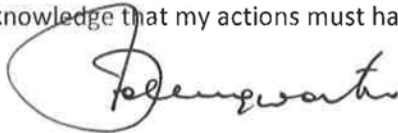
In April 2003 – following the release of the Board of Inquiry into Past Handling of Complaints of Sexual Abuse in the Anglican Diocese of Brisbane – I made a general apology to the people in the report who had suffered abuse. Today, I want to make a specific apology to BYB.

I want to take this opportunity to publicly – and in person – apologise to BYB and his family for my poor handling of the complaint. After a great deal of consideration over the past 22 years, I acknowledge, unconditionally, that my actions were misguided, wrong, and a serious error of judgement that I genuinely regret.

The fundamental mistake I made was failing to understand the long-term repercussions that arise from child sexual abuse. In that respect, I failed to make your needs my absolute first priority. Instead, I was overly concerned for the needs of Elliot's family and those of the parish. Instead of removing Elliot from his ministry, I took an approach I thought would ensure Elliot would not abuse again.

To BYB and your family, I am deeply sorry that I was not sufficiently sensitive to your needs, ignoring your plea for Elliot to be removed from ministry.

There is no doubt this has been a profoundly painful experience for you all. In particular, I acknowledge that my actions must have heightened your distress, and for this I am very sorry.



29. 1. 2016

Peter Hollingworth