



## **Resources to Respond to Questions around Sexual Abuse and the Catholic Church**

### **Bulletin Announcement – feel free to use anytime**

#### **Abuse and the Catholic Church**

Recent reports of clergy abuse in the Church, most notably through the release of the Pennsylvania Grand Jury Report, have prompted numerous questions. To access letters from Pope Francis, Cardinal Collins, the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops and other resources regarding this issue, please visit: [www.archtoronto.org/about-us/safe-environment](http://www.archtoronto.org/about-us/safe-environment). You can also access policies outlining how the Archdiocese of Toronto responds to any allegation of misconduct by a member of the clergy or lay staff.

### **Prayer of the Faithful – for use weekends of August 25/26, September 1/2, 2018**

*“We pray for all victims of abuse, especially those betrayed by the Church and other institutions. May God grant wisdom and compassion in our leaders and those who have care for the young: that they will do all in their power to protect children and always keep them from harm. We pray to the Lord.”*

Additional resources to assist in educating parishioners regarding these stories:

#### **Letter of the Holy Father, Pope Francis to the People of God – August 20, 2018**

<http://press.vatican.va/content/salastampa/en/bollettino/pubblico/2018/08/20/180820a.html> - letter from Holy Father addressing recent reports of clerical abuse.

#### **Statement from the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops on the findings of the Pennsylvania Investigating Grand Jury – August 21, 2018**

[http://www.cccb.ca/site/images/stories/pdf/CCCB\\_statement\\_-\\_Findings\\_of\\_Pennsylvania\\_Investigating\\_Grand\\_Jury\\_-\\_EN.pdf](http://www.cccb.ca/site/images/stories/pdf/CCCB_statement_-_Findings_of_Pennsylvania_Investigating_Grand_Jury_-_EN.pdf)

#### **Safe Environment Policy of the Archdiocese of Toronto**

[www.archtoronto.org/about-us/safe-environment](http://www.archtoronto.org/about-us/safe-environment) - The Archdiocese of Toronto has implemented a series of policies and procedures to foster a safe environment for all those who interact with the Catholic Church in the Archdiocese of Toronto. Those we serve include young people, adults and seniors who all make up the body of Christ among us. Information includes our procedure for cases of alleged misconduct, screening for lay volunteers and an overview of requirements for candidates to the priesthood and permanent diaconate.

## **Statements from Cardinal Thomas Collins**

August 2018 Statement on Clergy Abuse – [www.archtoronto.org/about-us/safe-environment](http://www.archtoronto.org/about-us/safe-environment)

April 2010 Statement- <https://www.archtoronto.org/Documents/abuse-april10eng.pdf>

April 2010 Chrism Mass Homily - <https://zenit.org/articles/archbishop-collins-chrism-mass-homily/>

## **Background for clergy – to help address personal questions/inquiries**

### **Q. What is the Pennsylvania Grand Jury Report on clergy abuses?**

A. The report, released on August 14, 2018, investigates clergy abuse dating back to 1947 in six Pennsylvania dioceses. The graphic nature of the report, which highlights the abuse of more than 1,000 victims by more than 300 priests, has garnered significant media attention both in North America and around the world.

### **Q. Some people have mentioned a Toronto connection to the Grand Jury Report. Is this true?**

A. A number of priests mentioned in the report (less than 10) were sent to the Southdown Institute in Aurora, Ontario. The facility has worked, since 1966, to address the needs of religious and clergy around addictions and mental health issues. None of the priests named in the Pennsylvania report were in active ministry placements in the Archdiocese of Toronto. The Southdown Institute is also independent of the Archdiocese of Toronto.

Reports do suggest some of the crimes of abuse were committed while the perpetrators and their victims were visiting the Archdiocese of Toronto and other Canadian dioceses. No crimes referenced in the report related to priests in ministry in the Archdiocese of Toronto.

### **Q. How does the Archdiocese of Toronto handle accusations of misconduct by a priest or member staff member of the archdiocese?**

A. The Archdiocese has a Safe Environment Policy that has been in place for almost 30 years. The policy was first introduced in 1989 and was revised most recently in 2010. The policy outlines the steps taken when an allegation of misconduct is brought forward. The full policy is accessible on at the bottom of every page of the Archdiocese of Toronto's website: [www.archtoronto.org](http://www.archtoronto.org). This website space also provides information on our Volunteer Screening program as well as formation criteria for candidates to the priesthood and permanent diaconate.