



**Joint statement
of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCCB)
and the Canadian Religious Conference (CRC)**

The news story produced by ARTE entitled *L'autre scandale de l'Église*, to be broadcast in the *Les Grands Reportages* series on RDI 25 and 26 April 2019, presents facts and allegations concerning the reality of triple abuse – sexual, conscience and power – and financial intimidation committed by clergy against women religious. This is a worldwide tragedy acknowledged by Pope Francis and the International Union of Women Superiors General. This report, like other media reports, highlights the particular vulnerability of young religious women in the Western world, but most importantly in the Global South.

The Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCCB) and the Canadian Religious Conference (CRC) unreservedly condemn these wrongdoings and insist that the perpetrators must be investigated and judged by appropriate civil and ecclesiastical authorities.

According to the report, some dioceses and institutes of consecrated life were slow to react and even covered up facts and allegations. These painful truths can only encourage us to do everything in our power to ensure that such crimes and sins will not happen again.

As Bishops and as men and women Superiors Major, our first concern goes to the victims. We encourage every person in Canada who may have suffered from such actions to contact trustworthy people. As leaders of dioceses and institutes of consecrated life in the Catholic Church, we will listen respectfully and answer with compassion to the sufferings that are shared.

The CCCC and the CRC are aware that such abuse can happen anywhere in the world. In Canada, we are committed to implement the protocols found in the document *Protecting Minors from Sexual Abuse: A Call to the Catholic Faithful in Canada for Healing, Reconciliation, and Transformation*.

As we live in this solemn Easter time, may we redouble our efforts so that the Church becomes an ever more visible sign of justice, compassion, and true holiness.

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