



**Statement by the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops  
on the Implementation of the *Cannabis Act***

Canada's new legislation on the recreational use and sales of cannabis (marijuana) comes into effect today with the implementation of the *Cannabis Act* (formerly Bill C-45) at the federal level. At the same time, provinces, territories, and municipalities are working on their own regulations and schedules to govern the drug's accessibility across the country.

The Catholic Church for its part continues to underline the ethical problems involved with the recreational use and abuse of this drug: the negative risks that impact on psychological and physical health, the growing problems of a society more and more dependent on drugs and alcohol, the possibility of brain damage especially to those under the age of 25, the negative repercussions on families and local communities, and unfortunately the willingness of businesses and governments to exploit the drug for commercial interests and as a source of tax revenue, thereby even further jeopardizing the pursuit of the common good.

This coming 29 November to 1 December 2018, the Holy See's Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development is hosting an international conference on "Drugs and Addictions: An Obstacle to Integral Human Development". Quoting Pope Francis, the concept note for the conference refers to addictive drugs as "a worrisome problem in the world today" which is "fuelled – not without concessions and compromises on the part of institutions – by 'a shameful market that crosses national and continental borders', intertwined with organized crime groups and drug trafficking."

The "scourge of drug-trafficking" favours violence and sows the seeds of suffering and death, Pope Francis has noted several times, to which the response of society should be acts of courage and the resolve to fight against all narcotics.

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President of the Canadian Conference  
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Suggested resources:

- June 2018 Message of the Prefect of the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development for the International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking [in English]  
<http://press.vatican.va/content/salastampa/en/bollettino/pubblico/2018/06/26/180626a.html>
- June 2018 Statement by the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops on the Legalization of Cannabis/Marijuana for the Recreational Use [in English and French]  
[https://www.cccb.ca/site/images/stories/pdf/CCCB\\_statement\\_on\\_Cannabis\\_with\\_endorsement\\_-\\_en\\_-\\_29\\_June\\_2018.pdf](https://www.cccb.ca/site/images/stories/pdf/CCCB_statement_on_Cannabis_with_endorsement_-_en_-_29_June_2018.pdf)
- June 2017 Message of the Prefect of the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development for the International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking [in English]  
<http://press.vatican.va/content/salastampa/en/bollettino/pubblico/2017/06/26/170626d.html>
- April 2017 Statement by the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops on Canada's Opioid Crisis and Drug Addiction [in English and French]  
[https://www.cccb.ca/site/images/stories/pdf/Statement\\_on\\_drugs\\_-\\_EN.pdf](https://www.cccb.ca/site/images/stories/pdf/Statement_on_drugs_-_EN.pdf)
- Pope Francis, Address to participants in the 31<sup>st</sup> Drug Enforcement Conference, 20 June 2014 [in French]  
[http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/fr/speeches/2014/june/documents/papa-francesco\\_20140620\\_drug-conference.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/fr/speeches/2014/june/documents/papa-francesco_20140620_drug-conference.html)