

## APPENDIX 3

### RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTION POINTS

The following sixty-nine recommendations and action points relate to Part I, Chapter One where they are presented in relation to the lessons learned by bishops and major superiors in the experience of dealing with sexual abuse of minors perpetrated by clerics. In this appendix, they are presented again as an ensemble with the original accompanying endnotes in order to enable bishops and major superiors to consult and examine them as a complete set.

#### LESSON ONE:

#### THE NEED FOR A PASTORAL ENCOUNTER WITH VICTIMS OF CLERGY SEXUAL ABUSE

*Bishops and major superiors will endeavour*

- 1) to ensure that victims coming forward for the first time are received in a non-judgmental pastoral encounter where they are welcomed and commended for their courage;
- 2) to see that each encounter with a victim conveys the respect, compassion, and solicitude proper to pastoral leadership;
- 3) to ensure Church leaders or those appointed to receive complaints on behalf of the bishop/major superior are properly sensitized to the nature of sexual abuse and its effects;

- 4) to manifest readiness to accompany the person coming forward on the journey toward healing, helping to identify and address any spiritual and mental health needs;
- 5) to continue forming Church leaders in learning to walk and work with victims;
- 6) to pray in the community for victims of clergy sexual abuse and for all those affected by abuse (e.g., a prayer service, an annual day of prayer for survivors, a monthly inclusion in the Prayers of the Faithful of a petition for victims of clergy sexual abuse).

## LESSON TWO:

### THE NEED TO UNDERSTAND SEXUAL ABUSE PROPERLY

*Bishops and major superiors will endeavour*

- 7) to be well informed on the nature and effects of sexual abuse by drawing from the experience of victims and from the growing field of human, psychological, and social sciences in this area, making good use of peer-reviewed literature, seminars, courses, professional expertise, and other resources (see Part III, **Resources**, [102]);
- 8) to provide the members of a diocese/eparchy or institute, including lay staff and volunteers, with ongoing training on the nature and effects of sexual abuse with a view to fostering compassion for victims, correcting myths, and overcoming the stigma associated with being a victim of sexual violence;

- 9) to implement safe recruiting procedures for all pastoral staff and volunteers, including identity verification, criminal record check, background check (e.g., contacting referees or previous superior/ employer), interview and assessment, as well as psychological evaluations for prospective candidates to ordained ministry or consecrated life prior to entering a formation program;<sup>85</sup>
- 10) to improve communication across diocesan boundaries to ensure that Church leaders are apprised of the necessary information to make prudent decisions about pastoral work assigned to clergy, religious, and lay associates who are being transferred, with similar procedures applying to seminarians and religious;
- 11) to engage wider efforts which promote understanding of sexual abuse, the destigmatization of victims, and safeguarding (e.g., the Annual Anglophone Safeguarding Conference<sup>86</sup>);
- 12) to remain fully informed concerning the latest requirements of the applicable federal and provincial/territorial laws;
- 13) to support the mandate and efforts of the Canadian Centre for Child Protection.<sup>87</sup>

**LESSON THREE:**  
**THE NEED TO RESPOND MORE EFFECTIVELY**  
**TO ALLEGATIONS**

*Bishops and major superiors will endeavour*

- 14) to implement reporting mechanisms and ensure they are easy to understand, accessible, and clearly publicized (e.g., to provide on the diocesan website the contact information, such as a dedicated phone number, of the person responsible for receiving allegations or complaints);
- 15) to implement a clear process for responding to allegations in a timely manner according to the established protocol of the diocese/eparchy or institute and the requirements of canon and secular law;
- 16) to institute an interdisciplinary advisory committee (consisting of a victim, psychologist, spiritual director, canonist, lawyers, insurance broker, law enforcement officer, social worker, communications professional, etc.) in order that the response and follow-up are comprehensive and fully compliant with the norms of the Holy See, the present **Guidelines** of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCCB), the local diocesan protocol, the relevant federal or provincial/territorial statutes, insurance requirements, and best practices;
- 17) to inform the alleged offender of the preliminary investigation and of his/her right to legal counsel (both canonical and secular) and the opportunity to

- seek guidance during the preliminary investigation from a spiritual director and psychologist;
- 18) to ensure full cooperation with the civil authorities;
  - 19) to take appropriate measures to respect the basic presumption in law of an accused person's innocence until proven otherwise with due regard for public safety;
  - 20) to keep the community informed in a timely manner of developments during the preliminary investigation while observing the obligations of due process and confidentiality.

#### **LESSON FOUR: DEALING WITH OFFENDERS**

*Bishops and major superiors will endeavour*

- 21) to identify and address public safety concerns vis-à-vis an offender;
- 22) to tackle as best as possible the complex issue of pastoral and canonical responsibility toward offenders;
- 23) to extend appropriate pastoral assistance as much as possible with due regard for justice and public safety;
- 24) to respond with transparency to appropriate requests for information about an offender.

**LESSON FIVE:  
THE NEED FOR BETTER SAFEGUARDING  
PRACTICES AND TRAINING**

*Bishops and major superiors will endeavour*

- 25) to take all necessary steps to ensure that safeguarding is prioritized in the diocese/eparchy or institute;
- 26) to implement/update a diocesan safeguarding policy conforming to the highest standards of responsible ministry, including instruction on appropriate boundaries in pastoral relationships (e.g., through a code of conduct);
- 27) to ensure that the safeguarding policy of the diocese/eparchy or institute is easy to understand and readily accessible to the public, e.g., posted on the diocesan website, printed as a booklet, etc.;
- 28) to support fellow bishops and major superiors in their safeguarding efforts;
- 29) to submit all policies, protocols, and practices to third-party auditing at least once every four years;
- 30) to ensure that all pastoral staff receive proper safe environment training, including how to recognize the signs of abuse and how to report suspected sexual abuse;
- 31) to seek the input of parents, civil authorities, educators, and community organizations in crafting diocesan policies and providing appropriate training for all pastoral staff;

- 32) to see that the **Guidelines** included with the present document together with the policies and protocols of the diocese/eparchy or institute form the basis of any safe environment training program;
- 33) to ensure safeguarding policies are regularly updated, taking into account any new needs and circumstances;
- 34) to recommend that each of the institutes situated within the territory of a diocese/eparchy have their own up-to-date safeguarding policies and that a copy be provided to the local bishop for his records.

## **LESSON SIX:**

### **THE EFFECTS ON CLERGY, MEMBERS OF INSTITUTES, AND LAITY: COPING WITH SHAME**

*Bishops and major superiors will endeavour*

- 35) to acknowledge and address the spiritual and emotional impact of the sexual abuse crisis on the vitality of the Church, helping clergy and laity to overcome their shame, confront negative images and stereotypes, and ultimately serve with joy and serenity;
- 36) to ensure that communities affected by abuse are offered adequate accompaniment, support, and encouragement on the journey toward healing;
- 37) to ensure clergy and pastoral staff who have been affected by a sexual abuse scandal receive adequate support;

- 38) to work toward a new understanding of the role of clergy in society and the spiritual underpinnings necessary for healthy ministry;
- 39) to encourage life-giving pastoral commitments despite challenging conditions for ministry and evangelization;
- 40) to promote and encourage ministry to children and youth with proper safeguards in place;
- 41) to expand on new forms of ministry which rely on greater collaboration with the laity in the spirit of mutuality and coresponsibility;
- 42) to invest time and effort in healthy, wholesome friendships, and regular prayer;
- 43) to ensure particular issues which affect the mental health of clergy and lay pastoral associates, such as isolation, burnout, pornography, and alcohol, to mention a few, can be addressed with professional and spiritual help.

**LESSON SEVEN:  
THE NEED FOR BETTER INITIAL  
AND ONGOING FORMATION**

*Bishops and major superiors will endeavour*

- 44) to place greater emphasis on the human dimension within initial formation programs, ensuring its integration with the spiritual, intellectual, and pastoral facets of *Pastores dabo vobis*, the *Ratio Fundamentalis* (2016), and the directives of this Episcopal Conference;<sup>88</sup>



- 45) to provide opportunities within the diocese/eparchy or institute for holistic ongoing formation – spiritual, intellectual, human, and pastoral – based on an informed assessment of the new and increasingly complex needs of clergy and religious; and, to make a personal commitment as leaders to the same, guiding by way of example;
- 46) to ensure that specific training is offered to address matters such as the experience of victims, the impact on families and communities, detection of abuse, ministry to survivors, and relevant laws (canon and secular);
- 47) to ensure initial and ongoing formation to address the attitudes and behaviours necessary for long-term safeguarding;
- 48) to encourage and further develop different ways of fostering and growing a sense of community, friendship, and solidarity among clergy and religious (e.g., study days, times of recollection, annual retreats, etc.);
- 49) to implement adequate procedures for screening candidates for ministry, which may include a multi-disciplinary selection committee;
- 50) to assess screening procedures regularly for their effectiveness and adequacy;
- 51) to evaluate regularly programs for personal and human formation in light of the highest standards of safeguarding in ministry;

- 52) to address with candidates for ministry the topics of psychosexual maturity, interpersonal boundaries, leadership and service in ministry, and the abuse of status and authority;
- 53) to ensure that all clergy and religious who have been invited to serve the Catholic faithful in Canada are fully updated on local policies, protocols, and practices, as well as expectations regarding interpersonal boundaries.

## **LESSON EIGHT:**

### **LEARNING ABOUT THE LEGAL PROCESS**

*Bishops and major superiors will endeavour*

- 54) to seek out the services of expert legal counsel (both canonical and secular);
- 55) to remain up-to-date on the relevant canonical and secular legislation as well as the **Guidelines** of this Episcopal Conference;
- 56) to root the victim's legal rights in the need to redress injustice and to foster Christian charity and the expression of compassion in the interests of healing and reconciliation;
- 57) to withstand pressures which may allow legal methods or financial repercussions to interfere with a genuinely pastoral response, ensuring that any advice received remains at the service of the Gospel;
- 58) to cease requiring confidentiality clauses in settlements of cases of sexual abuse and to waive those given in the past;<sup>89</sup>

- 59) to strive for an outcome which satisfies the desire for accountability and transparency, and which enables all parties to achieve a sense of closure;
- 60) to address any feelings of betrayal and disappointment on the part of the faithful with respect and courage.

## **LESSON NINE: A CALL TO GREATER AUTHENTICITY**

*Bishops and major superiors will endeavour*

- 61) to recognize that the sexual abuse crisis is a symptom of a disorder in a Church called to undergo a profound pastoral conversion and purification in order to accomplish its mission with greater transparency and accountability;
- 62) to work toward a culture of dialogue at every level of a diocese/eparchy or institute;
- 63) to continue to pursue institutional practices which foster accountability, transparency, and responsibility;
- 64) to model through words and actions a pastoral attitude rooted in repentance and conversion;
- 65) to collaborate with fellow Church leaders, especially on a regional basis, in implementing effective mechanisms of accountability;
- 66) to include in the guidelines of the diocese/eparchy or institute a commitment to article 3 and

article 19 of the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of a Child*;<sup>90</sup>

- 67) to invest time and create opportunities at the local level, involving the Catholic faithful who are ready to minister in a spirit of coresponsibility, in order that shared concern for all in the name of Jesus Christ produces a more responsible environment for everyone and particularly for the protection of minors;
- 68) to establish practices where clergy, religious, and laity can be mutually accountable to each other for their actions and attitudes;
- 69) to exercise their ministry as pastors collaboratively and in communion with those entrusted to their care.