



WILLIAM T. MCGRATTAN

BISHOP of CALGARY

May 6, 2021

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Greetings of Peace.

“You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden’ (Mt 5:14). Our Lord Jesus Christ calls every believer to be a shining example of virtue, integrity and holiness. All of us, in fact, are called to give concrete witness of faith in Christ in our lives and, in particular, in our relationship with others.” - Pope Francis, Vos Estis Lux Mundi

This is the opening paragraph of *Vos Estis Lux Mundi*, the Apostolic Letter from His Holiness Pope Francis, which was released exactly two years ago tomorrow. These words remind us that when our lives as Christians are in direct contradiction to who we are called to be as light of the world, the Body of Christ suffers. The gravest contradiction and betrayal is when those who act in the name of the Church, in the exercise of ministry or service, and are in a position of trust and authority commit the crime of sexual abuse.

One of the changes that was directed by Pope Francis in this *Motu Proprio* was the establishment of a reporting mechanism for the reporting of bishops and their equivalents who have committed sexual abuse or who have covered-up reports of sexual abuse. Dioceses have been given until June 1, 2021 to establish such a reporting mechanism in the spirit of accountability and transparency.

Today, the Bishops of Canada are launching a national, bilingual service for reporting by phone 1-866-892-3737 or online www.bishopreportingsystem.ca The reporting system for Bishops introduces an additional level of accountability for Church leadership in Canada, alongside our existing *If You Choose to Talk About It* toll-free number of for the Diocese (1-833-547-8360) which was launched in 2018 for those reporting sexual misconduct or abuse committed by priests, deacons, religious, lay personnel, and volunteers.



Note: *In order to ensure transparency and compliance with civil law, it is the policy of the Diocese that when a report involves minors and/or vulnerable adults, victims-survivors are strongly encouraged to report to the Alberta Children’s Services and/or to the police. Assistance is also offered in reporting if necessary.*

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The Diocese of Calgary is also releasing today the following documents to further the efforts of preventing sexual abuse and of responding to reports of sexual misconduct and/or abuse in the Diocese.

- Code of Pastoral Conduct and Accountability
 - For Clergy and Religious
 - For Lay Employees
 - For Volunteers
 - For Youth Working with Younger Children
- Policy and Procedures for the Prevention and Management of Sexual Misconduct and Abuse
- The Mandate of the Advisory Committee for the Prevention and Management of Sexual Misconduct and Abuse

These documents last revised in 2011 have now been updated to reflect the 2018 document of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCB), *Protecting Minors from Sexual Abuse*.

The Code of Pastoral Conduct and Accountability embodies the professional and pastoral expectations for those who act in the name of the Church and standardizes personal and professional boundaries to not only protect those we serve but also those who serve in the Church. It takes the entire diocese and each parish faith community to create safe and accountable environments conducive to the life of grace, dignity, and respect for every person.

These updated documents promulgated and released today will inform a series of educational seminars for clergy, religious, lay employees and volunteers which will take place in the Fall. The Diocese is committed to the full implementation of the Codes of Pastoral Conduct and Accountability by the end of this year.

The light of Christ is the true light which must be reflected in our lives and in the Diocese. First, through a commitment to personal holiness and to the life of grace, in being responsible in maintaining personal and professional boundaries through ongoing education and formation; secondly, clear and accessible reporting systems, policies and procedures for the prevention and management of sexual misconduct and abuse; finally, an Advisory Committee of qualified lay professional who are responsible for assisting the Diocese in responding to allegations and dealing with cases of sexual misconduct and abuse. Through such steps the Diocese is committed to the building of a society with faith communities that are vigilant, responsive, and caring especially of the vulnerable.

In this Year of Saint Joseph, we commend these protective efforts of safety to his intercession.

Sincerely yours in Christ,



†William T. McGrattan
Bishop of Calgary