

Beginning in late 2018, the Archdiocese of Vancouver — working with victims/survivors and independent investigators — conducted a thorough review of historic files relating to sexual abuse by clergy. Our aim was to reach and help more victims/survivors, address past wrongs and to show more transparency. To the extent permitted by Canadian law, we have shared this journey with the public.

One of the main reasons we have spoken so publicly about sexual abuse by clergy is our desire to reach out to victims/survivors. Our message has been delivered at Masses, in the Church's newspaper, on our website and through other media. The reason we have pushed forward with publication of names and photos of perpetrators, where permitted by Canadian law, is to reach out to other people who have suffered sexual abuse.

When the specific person named in this court case contacted us, in January of 2019, our immediate concern was twofold: to offer help and to protect other people. They received a prompt response from us and immediate counselling as well as the suggestion that they make a report to the police.

To protect other individuals, we also sought immediate assurances from the accused priest's Order that he was no longer in ministry. The Order advised that the priest was infirmed and not active in any ministry work. They also confirmed that there had been no complaints ever received about him, including the incidents from the 1970s reported in this court case.

At the end of the review process, in November 2019, we hired two non-Catholic lawyers, to conduct a legal review of any and all sexual abuse by clergy in Vancouver. As well, we have instituted a 24-hour/7-day per week phone line ([604-363-7338](tel:604-363-7338)) to an independent counselling service, to give victims/survivors access to more rapid and complete support services.

We cannot make any further comments about this case as it is now before the courts. But we hope the attendant publicity will help give any other victims/survivors the confidence to come forward and get the help they deserve.