



September 2018

Dear Parent/Guardian:

In recent weeks there has been considerable media coverage about sexual abuse and cover up in Catholic parishes and schools in the United States and other countries. This news is heart-breaking and very distressing to all of us.

The Archdiocese of Vancouver and the Catholic Independent Schools of Vancouver Archdiocese take child abuse extremely seriously. We highly value your concerns as parents and guardians regarding the protection of your children. We are writing to ensure that you are aware of the steps we take to prevent or address child abuse in our schools.

All school employees are subject to a criminal record check before being hired, and every five years thereafter. Every incident of suspected misconduct is acted upon quickly and professionally. Any suspected or disclosed abuse of a child enrolled in a CISVA school is reported to law enforcement and child welfare authorities; both school administration and the Superintendent's Office take swift and appropriate action to ensure student safety.


On the following page, you can find links to the relevant CISVA and RCAV policies that we follow, as well as a link to information on Child Protection Services in British Columbia.

With best wishes for a good school year and the assurance of our prayers for your families, we are

Sincerely yours in Christ,

+ *J. Michael Miller CSB*

✙ J. Michael Miller, CSB
Archbishop of Vancouver


Deacon Henk Luyten
Superintendent, CISVA

RCAV – Safe Environment Policies:

<https://rcav.org/policies-procedures/#safe-environment>

CISVA – Responding to Student Abuse and Neglect (PDF download):

<https://cisva.bc.ca/files/public/policy-manual/400-general-school-administration/405-Responding-to-Student-Abuse-and-Neglect.pdf>

CISVA – Criminal Records Review (PDF download):

<https://cisva.bc.ca/files/public/policy-manual/300-human-resources/303-Criminal-Records-Review.pdf>

Government of BC – Child Protection Services:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/public-safety/protecting-children>

Government of BC – Reporting Child Abuse:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/public-safety/protecting-children/reporting-child-abuse>



Statement on the Recent Revelations of Sexual Abuse in the Church

To the faithful of the Archdiocese of Vancouver:

Over the past few weeks, a number of very serious accounts of sexual abuse in the Catholic Church have become public.

Like you, I am devastated by these accounts of profound evil.

What the victims of sexual abuse have endured has shaken me and broken my heart. I grieve for what they have suffered at the hands of their abusers and by those who betrayed their spiritual fatherhood by failing to protect those entrusted to their pastoral care.

In addition to being sexually abused, many victims were treated very poorly by authorities in the Church. The failure of Church leaders to prevent the abuse, covering it up by moving abusers around, their lack of care and concern for victims: these were grave failures and terribly wrong. We are all rightfully outraged and discouraged by these actions.

As a bishop, I am especially upset with those bishops and priests who failed to protect the most vulnerable among us. They did not live up to their calling as shepherds and, even more, as spiritual fathers. What father would come to know that his child had been abused and do nothing about it? What father would cover up the abuse and tell his child to “get over it” in order to protect the family’s “reputation”? Would that they had acted like Jesus, who showed his anger towards those who defiled the temple!

If you are aware of any situation of abuse happening now, please immediately contact law enforcement authorities. If the abuse involves a member of the clergy or any person engaged in ministry in our Archdiocese, please also make us aware. You

may find our webpage on reporting abuse [here](#). If you know of any sexual abuse that occurred in the past, but have not reported it before, consider doing so now.

For a number of years now, the Archdiocese of Vancouver has had a robust abuse prevention policy in place. We report allegations of sexual abuse to law enforcement. We offer to pay for counselling for victims. We are looking at ways to offer other support as needed.

I call on the faithful of the Archdiocese of Vancouver to join me in doing penance in reparation for the grave sins committed within our Church against our brothers and sisters. In order to heal as a community of faith, we must first acknowledge our brokenness before the Lord.

Within the next few weeks, I will issue a pastoral letter outlining our plans, including prayer, fasting and services of reparation in all our parishes at a date to be determined. The pain inflicted on so many victims affects us all and compels each of us to offer our prayers for them and to do penance for the sins committed against them.

Most Reverend J. Michael Miller, CSB
Archbishop of Vancouver
17 August 2018