

# Report on Clergy Sexual Abuse Update



If you or someone you know has experienced clergy sexual abuse, we encourage you to report it and take a step towards the healing and care you deserve. Our primary concern is your well-being. We are here to support you in any way we can with your mental, relational and/or spiritual needs.

While an accurate and transparent reporting process of abuse is important, our top priority is that you receive the care and support you deserve.

No matter how long ago the abuse may have occurred, we encourage you to come forward.

If you want to speak with an independent social worker, please call (604) 363-7338. The people providing this service will compassionately listen to you and outline some possible options for care.

We are aware that many victims/survivors and their families have little or no connection with the Catholic church. But for those who choose

to approach us, we are committed to offering you the compassion, respect and path towards the deeper healing that you deserve. You are not alone and people within the Catholic community deeply want to help. We understand how much courage it takes to report your experience and we sincerely hope that each victim will consider coming forward.

## Introduction

In late 2019, the Archdiocese of Vancouver published a report on the historical cases of clergy sexual abuse in the archdiocese. While the subject and findings are troubling for many, the response received was positive overall, and much good has come from the steps taken. Subsequent to the Report, 13 previously unknown victims/survivors have come forward and reported their experiences. In most cases, meetings with representatives of the Archdiocese have taken place and support services, including counselling, have been offered.

We understand that some people think that we should speak less about this issue because it may seem that it feeds into an “anti-faith” narrative. Moreover, the vast majority of reported abuse cases occurred between the 1960s through the 1980s. Others, including some victims/survivors, think that we are still not doing enough to address the issue and they remind us that recent and future cases may yet come to light.

We believe that greater transparency allows us to reach and care for more victims/survivors while increasing vigilance and safe

environments within our parishes. Catholics are called to accept the hard truth of clerical sexual abuse and to live lives of charity and mercy, especially reaching out to the most suffering among us. We ask for your prayers and patience as the Archdiocese does its best to address this painful issue effectively and with compassion. Archbishop J. Michael Miller stated, “We again want to acknowledge the deep suffering of the victims and their loved ones and I apologize to each of them for the trauma caused by the abuse by a priest. They are in my prayers.”

## UPDATE

The Implementation Working Group (“IWG”) was formed to assist in the development and application of solutions proposed in the Case Review Committee’s (“CRC”) final report, dated Nov. 25, 2019. (The report can be found online at [rcav.org/abuse-crisis/abuse-report](http://rcav.org/abuse-crisis/abuse-report)).

A number of the 31 recommendations were already implemented by that date; many are still in progress. Below is a list of three categories:

1. Objectives with significant progress made.
2. Objectives that are mostly still outstanding.
3. Additional updates.

## Progress since the November 2019 Report on Clergy Sexual Abuse

1. An independent Intake Office has been established. See Recommendation #1.
2. The Review Board has been reconstituted to have a lay chairwoman and a lay majority. See Recommendation #2.
3. Updated policies are almost finished and will encourage and protect people bringing allegations forward. See Recommendation #5.
4. All known memorials honouring priests known to have abused, have been removed. In several cases, victims/survivors found and reported memorials the Archdiocese had missed. See Recommendation #8.
5. All known online/public references and celebrations of priests known to have abused have been removed, but with more than 100 years of newspaper coverage and more than 30 years of online material, we are aware that more may exist. See Recommendation #9.
6. An ad hoc seminary committee has been formed and is meeting regularly to recommend improvements to the seminary application and formation process. See Recommendation #19.
7. The Archdiocese appointed its first female Chancellor and hired several other women in leadership positions. See Recommendation #26.
8. The Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCCB) established the Standing Committee for Responsible Ministry and the Protection of Minors and Vulnerable Persons to oversee the improvement of Safe Environment policies, work towards a national response to clergy sexual abuse, and establish systems to increase accountability for bishops. See Recommendation #27.
9. This CCCB committee has selected a national system for reporting sexual abuse by bishops and has committed to improved information sharing nationally. See Recommendation #28.
10. The Archdiocese has contacted all religious orders and communities who have sent clerics to work in Vancouver. The majority have responded and provided the information requested and the remainder will not be able to send a cleric until the information is received. See Recommendation #29.
11. The Archdiocese has shared all available information with religious orders who have members accused of clerical sexual abuse in Vancouver. See Recommendation #30.

## Objectives Still Outstanding

1. Archdiocesan employees are still filling this role while a full victim/survivor support system is being developed. See Recommendation #4.
2. The two independent investigators are working through the files of accused clerics and can bring in other support resources as needed. See Recommendation #10.
3. The pandemic has delayed parish-based training but remote education and tracking has continued. See Recommendation #14.
4. Several priest performance review programs have been analyzed but none have yet been implemented. See Recommendation #15.
5. Priests have been identified for training to become “trauma-informed” resources for any victims/survivors who wish to connect with a priest, but this system is not yet in place. See Recommendation #18.
6. A process for supporting admitted abusers yet to be finalized. No priest has volunteered to receive such support. See Recommendation #22.
7. No parish-based clergy abuse response events have occurred in 2020 but post-pandemic events are being planned based on the listening session model established in Victoria. See Recommendation #23.
8. The first All Survivors Day prayer service was held on November 3rd at Holy Rosary Cathedral. Unfortunately, the event was planned late and had insufficient victim/survivor input. Planning for a more effective 2021 event will begin in the spring. See Recommendation #24.
9. A committee to explore ways to address the problem of clericalism has been discussed but has not yet been formed. See Recommendation #25.

## Additional Updates

1. Policy regarding clerics who father children. The decision was made that any policy would apply only to future cases in which clergy members have fathered children. For past cases, support and obligations have already been established. From 2019 on, the review board will determine the degree to which such priests should be restricted from active ministry and whether they should be encouraged to seek laicization. This has been a difficult decision to reach but was done so after speaking with people directly affected by these situations. See Recommendation #11.
2. In the November 2019 Report, recommendation #31 was accidentally misstated. The full recommendation should read, *“As a ‘bold step’ in the interest of the ‘greater transparency’ that you [Archbishop Michael Miller] wrote about in your letter of February 20, 2019, with the goal of ‘foster(ing) greater trust’ and ‘invit(ing) more input for change’ this Committee proposes a group that will meet quarterly whose responsibility it is to review and report on Archdiocese progress in responding to the abuse crisis. These reports will be made public. For the sake of continuity, members of that committee should include (but not be limited to) some representatives of this Clerical Sexual Abuse Case Review Committee.”* While three members of the IWG were selected from the former Case Review Committee, the IWG is committed to increasing input from independent sources, including other members of the former CRC.

# Priest Sexual Abuse Update



**Fr. John Edward Kilty** was born in 1919 and ordained in 1945. He served at the following parishes in the Archdiocese of Vancouver:

1. Holy Rosary Cathedral, Vancouver: 1945 - 1946
2. Stella Maris Missions: 1946 - 1948
3. St. Edmund's, North Vancouver: 1946 - 1948
4. Holy Trinity, North Vancouver: 1948 - 1982
5. Sts. Peter & Paul, Vancouver: 1982 - 1983

Fr. Kilty died in 1983. Twenty years later, in 2003, an allegation of sexual assault of a minor was received from a man and another allegation by a different man was received shortly after. The families involved received counselling and a financial settlement was reached with one party. Another allegation was brought forward in 2013 by a family who believed that their son had been abused, but the person involved decided not to proceed with a claim. In November of 2019, after the publication of the Report on Clergy Abuse, another man came forward with an allegation of sexual abuse when he was a minor in the 1970s. Representatives of the archdiocese met with the man, heard his personal story, and offered him counselling services and other support. In October of 2020 a new allegation was brought forward in a lawsuit alleging sexual abuse of a minor in the 1970s.



**Fr. Johannes Holzapfel** was born in Germany in 1916, ordained in 1953, and served at the following parishes in the Archdiocese of Vancouver:

1. St. Patrick's, Vancouver: 1955
2. St. Joseph's, Powell River: 1955 - 1956

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He left the archdiocese to go to Mexico.

3. St. Margaret's, Ocean Falls: 1958 - 1960
4. St. Patrick's, Vancouver: 1960
5. Our Lady of Good Hope, Hope: 1960 - 1963
6. St. Joseph's, Squamish: 1963

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He took medical leave after refusal of assignment.

7. St. John the Apostle, Vancouver: 1965 - 1966
8. St. Margaret's, Ocean Falls: 1966 - 1967

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He requested a leave of absence and release from his priestly vows in Jan 1967. The leave of absence was granted.

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He worked at St. Mary's, Vancouver, and at Youville Residence, Vancouver, from 1967.

9. St. Ann's, Abbotsford: 1972 - 1974

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He returned to Germany in 1974 and was then incardinated in the Diocese of Aachen. Fr. Holzapfel died in early 1997. Shortly after, the archdiocese received an allegation of physical and sexual abuse of a minor. A financial settlement was reached.



**Fr. Armand Frechette** was born in 1916 and ordained in 1945. As a Franciscan priest, he served at the following parish in the Archdiocese of Vancouver:

Our Lady of Lourdes, Coquitlam: 1953 - 1970

Fr. Frechette died in 1971. In 1999, a complaint of "improper sexual behaviour" against an unnamed Franciscan priest resulted in a financial settlement. It is now believed that this settlement involved abuse carried out by Fr. Frechette. In early 2020, the archdiocese received an allegation of abuse of a minor by Fr. Frechette. The abuse of the then 9 or 10-year-old boy was believed to have occurred in the mid 1950s. The reporting person has been offered counselling and has received a financial settlement to his claim.

## Conclusion

Some past accusations have been very difficult to assess based on several factors but we will continue to work towards clarity and justice for victims/survivors. Currently, remaining cases fall into the following categories.

1. Some clergy files, mostly from the 1960s-80s, have been referred to independent investigators for further review.
2. Victims/survivors with settlement agreements must give permission before publication can occur. Some are still being contacted and other discussions are on-going.

3. Several other cases from 40-50 years ago are in legal processes so we are unable to comment further at present.

This year, the pandemic negatively affected our schedule for investigations, meetings, and other in-person events that assist in making progress towards fully implementing the recommendations. We hope that 2021 will offer the opportunity to make better progress and engage more fully with victims/survivors and others within the Church and the broader community.