

Results of the Historical Case Review Committee

SUMMARY

As a result of a commitment made in the March 2020 *Safer Churches, Stronger Communities* Safeguarding Action Plan, the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon undertook a review of historical cases involving serious misconduct reported in the diocese. This review involved only those complaints where the investigation of the file was concluded. (*Note: There were no Indian Residential Schools located within the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon.*)

The Historical Case Review Committee included lay (non-clergy) members with a range of professional competencies, including legal and police investigative experience.

Note on Definition of Terms and Parameters identified by the committee:

Under accepted investigative procedures, a file is “**concluded**” when all available investigative avenues have been pursued. A “concluded file” may involve criminal charges, internal discipline by the bishop, or the file being concluded due to insufficient evidence. The file may also be concluded if the complaint is determined to be unsubstantiated.

In some cases, due to the passage of time, there were very few sources of information (for instance, witnesses or subjects may have died). There was insufficient investigation or documentation on some of the historic files. This creates difficulty in determining whether an incident or allegation is substantiated or not.

Conclusions are made where the investigator ‘reasonably believes’ something, based on the evidence. Each alleged violation is separately addressed and assessed using the ‘Balance of Probabilities’. Matters being investigated are to be concluded as Substantiated (probability greater than 50 per cent), Unsubstantiated (probability less than 50 per cent) or Undetermined (50/50). “Credibly Accused” is the term used when, in assessing the balance of probabilities, it is determined that the complaint is substantiated. If an accusation is made there should be an opportunity to rebut by the subject of the complaint. If the subject of the complaint is incompetent due to age or is now deceased, there must be corroborating evidence to substantiate the complaint.

Of the concluded files that exist, where allegations of sexual abuse or serious misconduct were made to the diocese of Saskatoon, there were nine cases involving alleged serious misconduct by persons in service of the church within the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon. This summary also includes two “additional disclosed cases” not examined by the Historical Case Review Committee, but which are nevertheless included in this report to meet Commitment # 12 of the *Safer Churches, Stronger Communities* Safeguarding Action Plan.

Seven priests are alleged to have committed serious misconduct or sexual abuse. Two laypersons (employees or volunteers of the diocese) are alleged to have committed serious misconduct or sexual abuse. One of those laypersons was a church employee who allegedly accessed pornography in the workplace.

The review process found ten known victims in these cases of serious misconduct or sexual abuse. One was a male youth under the age of 13 years. Five were teenage males. There was one adult male and three adult females.

CASE-BY-CASE ANALYSIS

(Note: These cases are not in any particular order, and are not listed chronologically or alphabetically)

Case 1 – This case involved a priest, Fr. William Hodgson Marshall, CSB, who committed serious misconduct involving two teenage males during his time teaching at St. Paul’s High School in the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon. Now deceased, Marshall was a Basilian priest and teacher who also taught in Sudbury, Sault Ste. Marie, Toronto and Windsor. He was convicted in 2011 of abusing 17 young people in Ontario, and sentenced to two years in prison and three years probation. In February 2012 charges were laid relating to indecent assault of two Saskatoon boys in 1959 and 1961 (who came forward as adults), to which Marshall pleaded guilty in 2013. He was sentenced to another six months of house arrest for the charges out of Saskatchewan. Marshall died in 2014 at the age of 92.

Case 2 - This case involved a diocesan priest, Fr. Ephraim Mensah, who was found to have committed serious misconduct pursuant to the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon’s Code of Conduct. No minors or children were involved. This case has been made public and was reported by the diocese in accordance with Commitment 12 of the March 2020 Safeguarding Action Plan. This disclosure was publicly communicated throughout the diocese to parishes March 16, 2020, and through posting on the diocesan website, and in response to news media inquiries. ([Bishop’s Statement March 16, 2020 – LINK](#))

Case 3 – This case involved a priest who reportedly committed serious misconduct with an adult (no minors or children were involved). The name of this alleged perpetrator is not being disclosed as it was determined that there was not sufficient evidence to support a credible accusation (*See note about Terms and Parameters, above*). The priest is now deceased and the investigation conducted at the time of receipt was insufficient to constitute a credible accusation.

Case 4 - This case involved a priest who reportedly committed serious misconduct with a male youth under the age of 13. The name of this perpetrator is not being disclosed, as it was determined that there was not sufficient evidence to support a credible accusation (*see note about Terms and Parameters, above*). The priest is now deceased and the investigation conducted at the time of receipt was insufficient to constitute a credible accusation.

Case 5 - This case involved a priest who reportedly committed serious misconduct with a teenage male. The name of this perpetrator is not being disclosed as it was determined that there was not sufficient evidence to support a credible accusation (*see note about Terms and Parameters, above*). The priest is now deceased and the investigation conducted at the time of receipt was insufficient to constitute a credible accusation.

Case 6 - This case involved a priest who originated from outside of Canada, who made an inappropriate advance towards two women. Following an investigation of the allegation, the priest was promptly removed from the parish and was recalled to his home country. The bishop in his home diocese was advised of the reason for the removal from Canada. The perpetrator's name is not being disclosed because the complainants are strongly opposed to any public disclosure. **Out of respect for the victims' wishes, the diocese will not be releasing any details of this case.**

Case 7 – This case involved a priest who committed a series of sexual assaults on a teenage male within a span of three years. The perpetrator's name is not being released because the victim (who is now an adult) did not wish to contact the police and is strongly opposed any public disclosure. **Out of respect for the victim's wishes, the diocese will not be releasing any details of this case.** The priest who committed the serious misconduct is elderly and is no longer active in ministry.

Case 8 - This case involved a volunteer layperson, who sexually abused a teenage boy. The perpetrator met the victim in the context of volunteering at a local parish. The sexual assault occurred at a later date. Mr. Harold Jones was charged, convicted, and sentenced to eight years imprisonment (reported March 15, 2008 in the media).

Case 9 - This case involved a parish employee alleged to have accessed pornography on a computer at the local parish, which is a Code of Conduct violation under the diocese's safeguarding policies. The employee's name is not being released as he concluded his employment with the diocese shortly after this incident of serious misconduct, and he is now deceased.

Additional Disclosed Cases not examined by the Historical Case Review Committee

Two additional cases were not examined by the Historical Case Review Committee, as they were deemed not yet historical. These two cases are disclosed publicly according to commitment #12 in the diocese's *Safer Church, Stronger Communities* Safeguarding Action Plan.

Case 10 - This case involves a priest, Fr. Anthony Atter, who was charged with sexual assault, sexual interference, and sexual exploitation. According to the RCMP, the alleged abuse occurred between Sept. 1 and Nov. 4, 2020. Formerly pastor of St. Ann, Annaheim, SK, St. Gregory, St. Gregor, SK, and St. Anthony, Lake Lenore, SK, this priest is unassigned and is awaiting a hearing in the Humboldt Provincial Court. ([Bishop's Statement Dec 16th, 2020 – LINK](#))

Case 11 - This case involves a priest, Fr. Michael Yaremko, who has been found to have committed “serious misconduct” pursuant to the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon's Code of Conduct. No minors or children were involved. Fr. Yaremko was formerly the associate pastor of St. Augustine's Parish in Humboldt, Saskatchewan. He has been removed from active ministry. This disclosure was publicly communicated throughout the diocese to parishes March 16, 2020, and through posting on the diocesan website, and in response to news media inquiries. ([Bishop's Statement March 16, 2020 – LINK](#))