



Archbishop of Montréal

August 15, 2023

Dear People of God of Montreal,

On the occasion of this great celebration of hope which is the Feast of the Assumption, and as we prepare to enter a new pastoral year, I am writing to share with you the news of an event of great importance that took place this summer.

On July 7, 2023, the Superior Court of Quebec approved the proposed settlement agreement in the matter of the class action suit against the diocese.

An application for authorization to institute a class action suit was submitted to the Superior Court on April 3, 2019. The suit cited instances of abuse dating from 1940 up to the present.

An agreement in principle for a settlement was reached in May 2022 in the course of our proceedings, and this was finalized on March 8, 2023. The purpose of the settlement is to provide compensation to victims of sexual abuse committed by priests, ministers, pastoral staff members and lay employees of the Archdiocese of Montreal.

On May 2, 2023, the class action suit was authorized by the Court.

Following the Superior Court's approval of this out-of-court agreement, we hope that the victims will now be able to embark on or continue the difficult journey towards healing with more peace of mind.

The most important consideration at this time is that we have reached an amicable agreement that can now begin to restore hope. The Archdiocese of Montreal will disburse an amount of money in compensation to the victims of abuse. In order to be in a position to pay that amount, various avenues are under consideration. No churches will be sold to achieve this objective.

Upon his arrival in Portugal on [August 2](#) for the celebration of World Youth Day, the Pope said of the Church: "scandals [...] have marred her face and call us to a humble and ongoing purification, starting with the anguished cry of the victims, who must always be accepted and listened to."

I am deeply grateful to those who took part in this class action suit and who are helping us to move forward on the path of restorative justice. Indeed, faith is a path and a way of living, a path in the footsteps of Jesus Christ, a path of love and truth, a path of justice and mercy, a path of life and of peace.

For Jesus' warning is very strong: "If any of you put a stumbling block before one of these little ones who believe in me, it would be better for you if a great millstone were hung around your neck and you were thrown into the sea" (Mark 9:42).

In our quest for justice, may God in his mercy bring consolation and healing to the victims and to all who have been affected, both directly and indirectly, by the tragedy of abuse.

On this day of the Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, I ask Mary, the Mother of Jesus Christ and our Mother in heaven, to watch over every one of us, and to protect our hearts from evil.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "+ Christian Lépine". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small cross at the beginning.

† Christian Lépine
Archbishop of Montreal