Archevêque de Montréal

Montreal, October 30, 2025

Message from:
Archbishop Christian Lépine of Montreal

SUBJECT: APPOINTMENTS EFFECTIVE OCTOBER 7, 2025

Me Gabrielle Bélanger, Director, Diocesan Office of Ethics

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Over the past several years, our Church in Montreal has been engaged in a demanding yet vital journey of prevention, transparency, and accountability—to ensure that all may find within our Church a safe and healthy environment. Since the promulgation of the *Responsible Pastoral Ministry* decree in 2016, we have established firm foundations: the prevention of abuse, the promotion of ministry conducted with integrity and respect, and the ongoing formation and awareness of our Christian communities.

Today, I am pleased to announce the creation of the new **Diocesan Office of Ethics**, to be led by **Me Gabrielle Bélanger, attorney-at-law**. She has been a member of the Quebec Bar since 2007 and obtained her master's degree in canon law from Saint Paul University in Ottawa in 2021.

This new office brings together the *Responsible Pastoral Ministry Office*, the *Canonical Disciplinary Committee*, and the *Advisory Committee*, chaired by the Archbishop's Delegate, **Mr. Denis Bérubé**. It will also serve as the liaison with the Ombudsman.

Two new collaborators will join this office: **Ms. Joanne Bazinet**, appointed Coordinator of Responsible Pastoral Ministry, and **Ms. Stéphanie Woo**, Assistant Coordinator.

This restructured service strengthens our collective commitment to professional ethics and pastoral responsibility. It now encompasses prevention, the implementation of the *Code of Ethics and Conduct*, support for responsible pastoral practice, and the improvement of the complaint-handling process.

The new office also continues the work of the *Focus on Victims of Abuse (VVA)* program, dedicated to forming and equipping all who serve in the Church—priests, pastoral workers, employees, and volunteers—to understand the impacts of abuse and to assume personal responsibility in prevention and reporting.

We humbly acknowledge the deep wounds caused by abuse and the loss of trust it has brought upon our Church. Remaining attentive to those who carry these sufferings, we are convinced that prevention and vigilance are essential paths forward. They safeguard the dignity and integrity of every person, allowing us to proclaim Jesus Christ with greater authenticity and to let the light of the Gospel reach and heal hearts. This new office is part of that same movement of truth and hope—so that our communities may increasingly be places of safety, welcome, and life.

I extend my sincere gratitude to **Me Gabrielle Bélanger** for accepting this mission, and I invite all of you to collaborate with her and her team in a spirit of shared responsibility. Together, let us continue to uphold the dignity and integrity of every person, *created in the image of God* (Gen 1:27).

May the Lord, source of all light and consolation, guide us on this path of truth, justice, and healing.

With the assurance of my prayers, I extend to you my heartfelt blessing.

† Christian Lépine
Archbishop of Montreal