



Catholic Diocese of Victoria

Office of the Bishop

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August 6, 2010

Dear Friends in Christ,

I write to you regarding the very serious matter of criminal charges being laid against a member of our clergy who has been inactive as a priest since 2002 when he resigned as Pastor of St. Joseph the Worker Parish. This past week he was arrested when he arrived in Victoria and charged with a number of counts of abusing minors.

I wish to say first of all that sexual abuse of minors is not only a crime but like all forms of abuse, goes directly against what the priesthood is and stands for. Such activity is totally inappropriate and cannot be tolerated and the news of these criminal charges is both sad and difficult for our Catholic Community and the Community at Large. It is particularly difficult for those who are affected on a personal level – our prayers and support are with them.

The Diocese has met with the police and is fully cooperating with the police in this matter. I would encourage anyone with relevant information to contact the police.

Needless to say, this news may be the cause of great stress and frustration among our Catholic Community, but we are a Community of Faith – a praying Community filled with the presence of Jesus Christ who often spoke of difficulties to come. The Lord asks us to remain trusting in him in spite of the challenges that life offers.

With God's help, we will move forward together and do our part in building up a more purified, trusting and loving Community.

I ask for your prayers for all concerned in this situation that justice be done and those possibly harmed and affected by this situation may receive the help and assistance they require.

Yours in Christ

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads '+ Richard Gagnon'. The signature is written in a cursive style.

+Richard Gagnon
Bishop of Victoria