



**COPTIC ORTHODOX  
PATRIARCHATE**



**DIocese of MISSISSAUGA,  
Vancouver and Western Canada**



**In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, One God. Amen.**

**Date:** October 20<sup>th</sup>, 2020

**Subject:** Updates about abuse prevention policies

Dear beloved,

Peace and Grace to you from our Lord.

I write today to update you on the progress we have made thus far in our efforts to enhance our abuse prevention policies. I want to assure all of you that this matter remains a high priority for us and all those involved have not spared time nor energy to ensure the safety of our parishioners as they participate in the various services offered at all our Churches across Canada.

Since we first spoke to you on July 24, 2020, the “Safe Ministry Planning Committee” was formed of priests from across the diocese to study and propose the updated policies. This effort has evolved and we are proud to be working closely with our sister Coptic Orthodox dioceses in Canada; the Diocese of Ottawa, Montreal and Eastern Canada as well as the Archdiocese of Toronto to develop a unified policy that will be implemented at every Coptic Orthodox Church across Canada to ensure consistency across Canada.

As result of the national effort, a committee was formed that consists of six individuals with two individuals representing each Diocese; one clergy and one lay person with significant relevant experience. Two of the three lay people are female members.

The committee has been meeting regularly and has contracted with the most recognized consultant in the development of such policies for places of worship in Canada. A contract was signed in late August and the consultant, in working with the committee members, started the process of drafting the policy for the Canadian Coptic Orthodox Churches (the “Policy”). Input from each diocese has been collected, consolidated, discussed, incorporated and provided to the consultant as part of the initial information gathering process. The committee will continue to collect, consolidate and provide input to the consultant for the next phases of the development of the Policy. Once the policy has been finalized and the implementation program outline is agreed to, we will begin the rollout of the program implementation.

To ensure that the Policy is effectively implemented, each Church across Canada has nominated a lay person from among their congregation members to act as the Program Coordinator overseeing the implementation of the Policy once it is finalized. Training modules will be available and will be mandatory for all clergy, and all volunteers serving with children, youth and the vulnerable adult groups within each Church. In the meantime, if you have any concerns please continue to reach out to our beloved clergy at your respective church or feel free to contact me.

We raise our hearts and hands in fervent prayer that God may protect each and every one of us from all envy, all temptation, all the work of Satan, the counsel of wicked men and the rising up of enemies, hidden and manifest, fill our hearts with joy and gladness, instil in our hearts His peace, and focus our spiritual vision towards our salvation and eternity.

May God Bless you in all your ways and grant you His Peace,

His Grace Bishop Mina