

Message from the Archbishop to be read after the Prayer after Communion at all the weekend Masses October 23rd and 24th, 2021, and following the weekend Masses to be posted on parish websites.

Update from the Archbishop

Dear People of the Archdiocese of St. John's:

Further to my previous messages, I wish to provide you with an update with respect to how the Archdiocese is actively working to address the claims of abuse at the Mount Cashel Orphanage in the 1940s, 50s and 60s, for which the Newfoundland and Labrador Court of Appeal has held us vicariously liable.

The process in which we are currently engaged is complex, sensitive and not without significant challenges. There are three major components that we are working on.

First and most importantly, we are working with Counsel for the victims. At this time, we are aware of approximately 130 victim claims. There may be more victim claims coming forward and so we do not currently know what the final number or value of these claims will be. This is a major piece of information that we will need to have before we can effectively determine how to bring resolution to all the claims.

Secondly, we are continuing to work on an analysis of our assets and their value. As noted in a previous update, an appraisal process is underway. The value and the sustainability of all our buildings and properties, including the Basilica, is being considered. However, this process will take several more months to complete, as it is a major undertaking that involves a great deal of research. As such, we expect it will not be completed until the early part of 2022.

The third component of our work is planning for the future of the Archdiocese. This involves meeting and discussing with clergy and laity how to best ensure the ongoing practice and celebration of our Catholic faith. Until we are able to quantify the two components above, we will not know how best to proceed with our restructuring process. We are carefully considering the information that we do presently have available, including that provided by parishes, the advice given by our Organizational Review Committees and the input we received from parishioners through the survey we sent earlier this year.

As you can see, the claims settlement and Archdiocesan restructuring process is far from complete. It might still be quite a while before we will be able to make definitive and final decisions. In the meantime, we are monitoring closely the operating finances of the Archdiocese and the parishes, as well as our ability to continue full operations while proceeding through this process. It is not currently clear what, if any, decisions may be made in advance of the final restructuring but we want all parishioners to be aware that our situation is unpredictable and more immediate changes could become necessary.

I will continue to update you on the progress of this process as the information becomes available. In the meantime, I ask again that you please join with me in praying for God's guidance, healing for the victims, and understanding, compassion and patience for us all.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

+Peter Hundt
Archbishop of St. John's