

**PRESS RELEASE**  
**For immediate release**

**Abuse of Minors:**

**The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Montreal commissions  
The Honourable Pepita G. Capriolo to conduct an external investigation  
regarding Brian Boucher**

Montreal, November 25, 2019 — The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Montreal has commissioned The Honourable Pepita G. Capriolo to conduct an independent external investigation regarding Brian Boucher, a diocesan priest found guilty of sexual assault of minors.

“We want to get to the bottom of things to uncover the truth regarding how the concerns and complaints about Brian Boucher were received and handled. Ms. Capriolo’s mandate is twofold: first, determining ‘who’ knew ‘what’ and ‘when’, and then making recommendations to ensure that our policies and procedures improve, thereby avoiding that such crimes would occur again,” stated Archbishop Christian Lépine.

Ms. Capriolo will be provided with all the resources needed to conduct a thorough investigation. The Archdiocese will make the results public once the investigation is completed.

“The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Montreal has taken on the important task of shedding light on the factors that may have allowed Brian Boucher’s behaviour to go undetected,” said Ms. Capriolo. “I am pleased to be invited to undertake this important work and grateful for the commitment of full independence and the support that has been assured to me”, she added.

**History**

Brian Boucher was sentenced on March 25, 2019 to an eight-year prison term for sexual assault involving two minors, who are now adults. Representatives of the Archdiocese took a lead role in the process that resulted in his arrest and laud the courage of the victims.

In rendering Brian Boucher's guilty verdict, Judge Campagnone applauded the collaboration of the Archdiocese, stating in her sentencing comments: "It is with relief that the Court finds the Church, through Bishop Dowd's actions, investigated the allegation of the accused's abuse of his power in sexually assaulting young boys (...)." However, she underlined that more is required: "When a wolf is in sheep's clothing, what can be done to detect or deter him? The Church certainly has a lot of reflection to do regarding this."

In a related initiative, five Quebec dioceses announced last March 27<sup>th</sup> that they had commissioned retired Justice Anne-Marie Trahan to conduct an audit of their archives to assess the number and the nature of sexual abuse allegations made against Catholic clergy and mandated staff, from 1950 to the present. The Honorable Trahan was also separately commissioned by the Archbishop of Montreal to investigate "who" knew "what" and "when" regarding events involving Brian Boucher. The untimely death of Ms. Trahan in July 2019 has, as a consequence, delayed commencement of the audit. The Archdiocese, in collaboration with the four other dioceses, is in the process of engaging an appropriate successor to fulfill the mandate, so that the audit can be completed by spring 2021. However, so as not to delay further the external investigation regarding Brian Boucher, this task has now been entrusted to Ms. Capriolo.

### **Lead Investigator**

Ms. Capriolo holds a law degree from McGill University (Civil Law) and a Master's Degree (Common Law) from Oxford University. She was appointed to the Superior Court of Quebec in 1999 from which she retired in July 2019.

The Honorable Capriolo started her legal career as assistant professor in the Faculty of Common Law at the University of Ottawa. She then acted as legal consultant to the *Commission des droits de la personne du Québec*, was legal counsel to Loto-Québec and director of policy development for the Montreal Jewish Community Services. She has also served on the *Comité de la protection de la jeunesse du Québec*. Immediately preceding her appointment to the bench, she had served for ten years as a commissioner for the Quebec Ministry of Labour's *Commission des lésions professionnelles*.

Throughout her career, she has been active in many charitable organizations, including several in the Jewish community, of which she is a member.

**For more information or an interview with Archbishop Lépine, who will be available today between 10:30 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. at our offices or by phone, please contact:**

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