

# Code of Ethics and Conduct

## For all Ministers, Employees and Volunteers Working in the Archdiocese of Montreal

**This Code of Ethics and Conduct** aims to define a general framework outlining the expected attitudes and behaviours of ministers, paid employees and volunteers working in the Archdiocese of Montreal. Under no circumstances should this replace other laws and regulations in force in Quebec, Canada, and the Roman Catholic Church. It serves as a complement to civil and canonical norms for the overall wellbeing of life in our Catholic Church.



# THE CODE OF ETHICS

## Ethics Towards the Church

**The Church is the entire people of God on the journey following Christ, inspired by the Holy Spirit, but it is also an institution with its own leaders, structure, and rules of operation.**

As a result, an ordained minister, a minister in formation, a consecrated person, or a member of a religious community, as well as an employee or volunteer working within the Archdiocese of Montreal:

- 1) Acknowledges their responsibility for how the Church is perceived by the public;
- 2) Acts as a disciple of Christ in service to the Catholic Church, treating everyone with respect, courtesy, openness, and integrity [\[1\]](#) ;
- 3) Integrates their faith [\[2\]](#) into their daily life;
- 4) Recognizes that they do not "own" their pastoral work and its outcomes;
- 5) Agrees to comply with the standards, policies and procedures established by the parish and/or diocese;
- 6) Maintains communion with the decisions or orientations made by those in authority.

[\[1\]](#) While some employees or volunteers may not share the Catholic Christian faith, it is expected that they adhere to the universal human values of respect and integrity towards others.

[\[2\]](#) This applies to all pastoral personnel.

# Ethical Guidelines for Ministry within the Church

**Ethical responsibilities towards individuals are rooted in principles that uphold the dignity of the human person, taking into account their physical, psychological, social and spiritual dimensions. At all times, pastoral personnel, employees and volunteers must prioritize the protection and safety of everyone they encounter, particularly minors and vulnerable adults entrusted to their care.**

We outline various aspects pertaining to the work, mission or commitment of those involved:

## Pastoral Dimension:

- 1) Those involved are expected to respect the different expressions of devotion and spirituality within the Catholic faith.
- 2) Recognizing varying levels of faith development, they acknowledge and respect the journey of those under their care, committing to accompany them on their personal faith journey.

## Principles of Human Dignity:

- 3) Every individual, by virtue of their humanity, holds intrinsic dignity bestowed by God as Creator and Jesus Christ as Saviour. Those involved in ministry are therefore called to meet, welcome, and listen to each individual with respect for their inherent value.
- 4) This involves welcoming individuals regardless of their age, gender, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, physical or intellectual disability, and facilitating their access to the services and resources they may need.

## Principles of Responsibility and Accountability:

- 5) In fulfilling their duties, those involved are accountable for the quality of their work and the professionalism they bring to their roles.
- 6) They are also accountable to their immediate superior or to the designated person in charge for the results of their activities, demonstrating an understanding and respect for the various levels of parish and diocesan authority.

### Duty of Confidentiality:

- 7) Those involved uphold confidentiality in their pastoral and/or administrative responsibilities.
- 8) When managing individuals' contact information, they respect the privacy of the individuals concerned, in accordance with obtained permissions and applicable laws.

## CODE OF CONDUCT

This code of conduct is a model that applies to every entity within the Archdiocese of Montreal but can be adapted to take into account the mandate and specific activities carried out by an entity (e.g., Pastoral Home Care/SASMAD).

**Priests, deacons, lay ministers, seminarians or aspiring deacons, paid employees and volunteers working within the Archdiocese of Montreal collectively form an organization committed to acting in the best interests of the members of the community, particularly minors and vulnerable adults. The safety, rights and well-being of every person to whom we bring the message of the Gospel are at the heart of our daily pastoral and administrative commitments.**

Below are the essential attitudes and behaviours that should be embraced and incorporated into our practices.

Those involved are expected to :

- 1) Avoid being alone with a minor, a vulnerable person, or an individual with an intellectual disability, unless in an open environment where another responsible adult is also present.
- 2) Exercise heightened caution and ensure the presence of a third party when ministering to a vulnerable person due to situational factors such as depression, bereavement, illness, isolation, or social abandonment.

- 3) Emphasize group activities; prioritize them to prevent individual encounters with minors or people with intellectual disabilities, especially in catechesis and sacramental preparation.
- 4) Conduct all ministry in an open space or within the view of others, including confession or spiritual direction.
- 5) Never substitute for parents or qualified professionals, such as psychologists, therapists or accountants.
- 6) Avoid any behaviours, gestures, or language that may be intimidating, harassing, violent, or of a romantic or sexual nature. Be aware of and respect boundaries that should not be crossed.
- 7) Never invite a minor, a person with an intellectual disability, or a vulnerable person—regardless of situational reasons—on a trip or vacation.
- 8) Avoid showing favouritism towards anyone at any time.
- 9) Never insist that a minor or accompanied person keep a "secret" about their relationships.
- 10) Exercise caution when using social networking technologies.
- 11) Never solicit gifts or donations from individuals or groups, except in a fundraising context and in accordance with Archdiocesan guidelines.
- 12) Adhere to the current archdiocesan regulations for reporting and handling complaints.