



COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE

Vancouver Catholics calling for prostitution law

Postcard campaign, pastoral letter urge federal government to pass legislation

VANCOUVER, May 23 – Catholics in the Lower Mainland are urging the federal government to enact prostitution legislation to help girls, youth and women victimized by trafficking.

Catholics in 78 parishes are mailing [postcards](#) to Justice Minister Peter MacKay, urging him to pass a law in the wake of last year’s Supreme Court decision to strike down Canada’s prostitution laws.

Archbishop J. Michael Miller also wrote a [pastoral letter](#) to 450,000 Lower Mainland Catholics saying the absence of a law is “a serious threat to the moral fabric of Canadian society” and the Catholic community must work to “answer the needs of girls, youth and women who are prostituted.”

Archbishop Miller said treating prostitution like “a commercial business reduces human sexuality to a mere commodity. That is morally unacceptable” and will encourage “sexual exploitation through prostitution by its buyers and profiteers.” The Archbishop called on Catholics to “urge the Federal Government to pass a law that respects the dignity of every human person.”

In February he called on the B.C. government to reconsider a decision not to prosecute prostitution-related offences following last year’s court decision. The Archbishop noted that Pope Francis, in his recent apostolic exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium* (The Joy of the Gospel), condemned the horror of human trafficking and prostitution and accused those who look the other way of being complicit.

The Archdiocese also formed a special committee from various parish groups to assess the legal vacuum. The committee hosted information sessions on the topic, and the pastoral letter/postcard initiative is the first result of its work. The committee will regroup in early June to identify other opportunities to educate and create a greater awareness in the Archdiocese.

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For more information contact Paul Schratz 604-683-0281; 604-505-9411 (cell);
communications@rcav.org