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## NOTICE OF AUTHORIZATION OF A CLASS ACTION IN QUÉBEC AGAINST THE ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESAN CORPORATION OF GASpé AND THE ROMAN CATHOLIC BISHOP OF GASpé (C.S.M. n° 110-06-000002-240)

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### **Object:**

On August 6<sup>th</sup> 2025, the Superior Court of Quebec authorized a class action against the Roman Catholic Diocesan Corporation of Gaspé and the Roman Catholic Bishop of Gaspé (hereinafter, « **the Defendants** ») and appointed the status of representatives to **Mr. Beaudoin Francoeur** and **Mr. Marc-Alain Marticotte**.

The class action undertaken by Mr. Francoeur and Mr. Marticotte was authorized on behalf of all persons whose situation matches that of the following class description:

All persons, as well as their heirs and beneficiaries, who were sexually abused by an ordained diocesan minister and/or lay employee under the responsibility of the Roman Catholic Diocesan Corporation of Gaspé or the Roman Catholic Bishop of Gaspé exercising authority over the Diocese of Gaspé, as the territory was defined at each of the periods concerned, during the period between May 5, 1922, and the judgment to be rendered.

Please note that the term “ordained diocesan minister” includes bishops, priests, deacons, and abbots, but excludes religious priests, meaning priests belonging to a religious congregation.

The representatives argue that the Defendants are liable to compensate Class members and themselves for the harm they suffered because of the alleged relationship between the Defendants and the ordained diocesan ministers and lay ministers. The representatives also accuse the Defendants of having been aware of the sexual assaults committed by some of its members against Class members and of having failed to take the necessary measures to prevent and stop these abuses.

The representatives are therefore seeking compensatory and punitive damages.

However, the allegations made by the representatives are disputed by the Defendants, and a trial will be held at a date to be determined to allow the parties to make their representations.

## **The Next Step:**

To determine whether the class action is well founded, a trial will be held **in the district of Gaspé**, during which the following questions will be addressed:

1. Were the Plaintiffs and Class members sexually assaulted?
2. Were the alleged perpetrators targeted by the class action, at the time of the alleged assaults, subordinates of the Defendants?
3. If so, are the Defendants liable, as principals, for the sexual assaults committed by their subordinates?
4. Are the Class members entitled to compensation from the Defendants for pecuniary and non-pecuniary damages resulting from these sexual assaults, and if so, what is the quantum of such damages that can be established at the class stage?
5. Did the Defendants commit direct faults against Class members?
  - a. Were the Defendants aware of the alleged sexual assaults?
  - b. If the Defendants were aware of the sexual assaults, did they cover up the alleged sexual assaults?
  - c. Did the Defendants fail to implement policies or take measures to prevent or stop the alleged sexual assaults?
6. Did Class members suffer an unlawful and intentional violation of their rights to personal security, inviolability, and safeguard of their dignity in contravention of the Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms?
7. Should the Defendants be ordered to pay punitive damages to Class members, and if so, what is the amount of such damages?

## **The Conclusions Sought**

In the event of a favourable judgment, the conclusions sought by the class action are as follows:

1. **GRANT** the plaintiffs' action on behalf of all Class members;
2. **ORDER** the defendants jointly and severally to pay each of the plaintiffs an amount to be determined as non-pecuniary damages, with interest at the legal rate plus the additional indemnity provided for in article 1619 of the Civil Code of Québec, effective from the date of service of the claim;

3. **ORDER** the defendants jointly and severally to pay each of the plaintiffs an amount to be determined as pecuniary damages, with interest at the legal rate plus the additional indemnity provided for in article 1619 of the Civil Code of Québec, from the date of service of the claim;
4. **ORDER** the defendants jointly and severally to pay each of the plaintiffs an amount to be determined as punitive damages, with interest at the legal rate plus the additional indemnity provided for in article 1619 of the Civil Code of Québec, effective as of the date of the judgment on the merits;
5. **DECLARE** that all Class members are entitled to compensation for all pecuniary and non-pecuniary damages suffered as a result of the direct faults of the defendants and their liability for the faults of their subordinates;
6. **DECLARE** that all Class members are entitled to punitive damages;
7. **ORDER** that the above damages be recovered individually;
8. **ORDER** the defendants to pay any other appropriate remedy deemed fair and reasonable;
9. **ORDER** the defendants to pay the costs and expenses related to the distribution of the amounts to Class members, as well as the legal costs, including the costs of experts and the publication of notices to members;

### **Your rights**

If you wish to remain a member of the class action, you have nothing to do. Indeed, all members whose situation matches that of the Class described above are automatically part of the class action and will be bound by any judgment or settlement to be reached in the class action.

As a Class member, you can ask to intervene in support of the representative's claim, in which case you will need to demonstrate, to the court's satisfaction, that your intervention will be useful to advance the proceedings. In addition, unless you intervene in the class action, you will not have to pay any legal costs nor appear in court in relation to this class action. As for the legal fees, they will be based on a percentage of the compensation paid to Class members, but they will first have to be approved by the Superior Court and will only be paid if the action is successful.

If you do not wish to be bound by the outcome of the class action for any reason, you must opt out of the class action by notifying the court clerk of the Superior Court of Québec in writing. Your letter must indicate that you wish to opt out of the class action, specify the class action's court

number (i.e. 110-06-000002-240) and be sent by email to the Class' lawyers at [litige@lambertavocats.ca](mailto:litige@lambertavocats.ca) or by mail to the court at the following address:

**Greffé de la Cour supérieure du Québec**  
124, route 132  
Percé (Québec) G0C 2L0

If you choose to opt out of the class action, you will not be bound by any final judgment or settlement agreement relating to the class action.

Any opt out request must be received no later than on January 17<sup>th</sup> 2026.

**For More Information:**

If you have any questions regarding this class action, you can contact the Class' lawyers at the following address:

Me Jimmy Ernst Jr Laguë-Lambert

Me Benjamin W. Polifort

Me Philippe Brault

Me Loran-Antuan King

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If you wish to be kept up to date of the progress of the case, you can subscribe to the class action's mailing list on the Lambert Avocats website at the following address: <https://lambertavocats.ca/en/diocese-gaspe-class-action/>.

**Warning!** A subscription to the class action mailing list does not constitute a claim. The claims process will be detailed in a subsequent notice if the action is successful.

You can also consult the Registry of class actions where all procedures must be published: <https://www.registredesactionscollectives.quebec/en/Consulter/RecherchePublique>.

**THE PUBLICATION OF THIS NOTICE HAS BEEN AUTHORIZED BY THE  
SUPERIOR COURT OF QUÉBEC**