

Statement from the Diocese of Corner Brook and Labrador – December 5, 2017

Re: George Smith

Today George Smith was sentenced for a crime of sexual assault involving one victim during the years 1978 to 1981 from his time of ministry as a priest in the former Diocese of St. Georges.

Any allegation of improper conduct by a priest is an extremely serious matter. The Church feels intensely for the pain of the victims, their families and all those who have been affected by such crimes.

In March of 2013 George Smith pleaded guilty to 41 charges of sexual abuse and was sentenced to 11 years in prison. In January of 2014 His Holiness Pope Francis imposed upon him the penalty of Dismissal from the Clerical State.

The Diocese has developed extensive procedures to foster a safe environment for all the members of our faith community and has also developed a clear policy and procedure for replying to allegations of sexual misconduct. (This policy can be found on our diocesan website: www.rcchurch.com under the heading "Policies", the topic "Response to allegations of sexual misconduct".)

Our thoughts and prayers are with all those who have been affected by these crimes.