

**PRESS RELEASE**

For immediate circulation

**STATEMENT OF THE CANADIAN RELIGIOUS CONFERENCE IN RESPONSE TO THE  
REPORT OF THE SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL AFFAIRS, SCIENCE, AND  
TECHNOLOGY ENTITLED: “THE SHAME IS OURS: FORCED ADOPTIONS OF THE BABIES  
OF UNMARRIED MOTHERS IN POST-WAR CANADA”**

Montreal, March 7, 2019 – The Canadian Religious Conference is the umbrella organization formed of heads of Roman Catholic religious orders of women and men in Canada. It serves as a communications network, but has no authority over its members. The CRC is aware of the tragic history of forced adoptions in Canada. While some religious orders of women in Canada did administer homes for “unwed mothers” as they were known, the Conference does not maintain records of the apostolates of its members. Further, we are not aware of the existence of any national register of Catholic organizations that ran such facilities.

That young vulnerable women were coerced into consenting to adoptions against their will was morally wrong. As the Senate Report states: “The treatment of unmarried mothers in post-war Canada may have been a product of the times, but it was cruel, nonetheless, from any perspective.”

The Canadian Religious Conference hopes that women who were coerced can now find support and healing. The Conference invites the religious orders who were directly implicated in running these facilities to consider implementing [Recommendation #4](#) in a way that respects the women and children separated at birth so many years ago.

**About the CRC**

The Canadian Religious Conference is a network that brings together the leaders of 240 Catholic congregations of women and men religious in Canada. The CRC’s mission is to encourage its members to live fully their vocation in following Christ and to support them in their prophetic witness to justice and peace in a Canadian context.

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