



JOINT STATEMENT

from the

**Diocese of Peterborough
and Archdiocese of Toronto**

Re: Charges are withdrawn against Fr. Neil Pereira

We wish to provide an update regarding Fr. Neil Pereira, a priest of the Archdiocese of Toronto who was on loan to the Diocese of Peterborough since July of 2022. In July 2023, Fr. Pereira was charged with sexual interference and sexual assault of a minor. When the allegation was received by the Roman Catholic Diocese of Peterborough in June of 2023, it was immediately reported to the Children's Aid Society and Peterborough Police Services.

Following diocesan protocols, Fr. Pereira was removed from pastoral ministry upon receipt of the allegation. The Diocese of Peterborough and the Archdiocese of Toronto worked closely throughout the process ensuring full co-operation with the authorities.

The Office of the Crown Attorney recently withdrew all charges against Fr. Pereira.

As the charges have been withdrawn and the criminal investigation and process have been concluded, the Archdiocese of Toronto will conduct its ecclesial investigation in accordance with its policy. A further update at the conclusion of this investigation will be provided by the Archdiocese of Toronto.

As noted in the Archdiocese of Toronto statement on July 26, 2023 statement, every accused is entitled to due process. We recognize that any allegation of misconduct against a priest is newsworthy. At the same time, it is essential to update stories and reports to reflect that the charges have been withdrawn to assist in restoring the reputation of Fr. Pereira.

Both the Archdiocese of Toronto and Diocese of Peterborough look upon any allegation of misconduct as an urgent matter that requires serious attention. The Archdiocese of Toronto's full "Procedure for Cases of Alleged Misconduct" policy can be accessed [here](#). In the Diocese of Peterborough, similar resources can be accessed [here](#).

We continue to pray for all those who are affected by this painful situation.