ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF WHITEHORSE
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Ref.#: 110926

September 11, 2026

Dear parents and caregivers of students in Yukon Catholic schools,

As we begin the 2026–2027 school year, I would like to take this opportunity to write to you directly about the *Comprehensive Sexual Health Education* program taught in your Catholic school.

As parents, caregivers and guardians, you are the first educators of your children, and your role in shaping their education is foundational and irreplaceable. The Catholic Church affirms that families have both the right and the responsibility to guide the formation of their children in accordance with their beliefs and values.

Catholic schools exist to support you in this important vocation by providing an environment where faith, learning, and character development are rooted in the teachings of Jesus Christ and the tradition of the Church. In this partnership, the school acts as an extension of the home, offering a space where students are invited to grow in truth, virtue, and their relationship with God. At the heart of Catholic education is the conviction that Christ gives meaning to every aspect of life and learning, and it is through Him that we come to understand the dignity of the human person and our responsibility to the common good.

As Catholic schools in the Yukon operate within the publicly funded education system, they are also required to deliver the territorial curriculum as set by the Government of Yukon. This includes Physical and Health Education Curricular Competencies, which incorporates teaching *Comprehensive Sexual Health Education* (CSHE), a program and classroom resources developed and facilitated by the Yukon Department of Health and Social Services through their Health Promotion Unit. You may soon be informed by your school administration about the different units and content delivered in your child's grade. While these materials are part of the Yukon curriculum, it is important to note that they are not developed or endorsed by the Catholic Church and do not reflect Catholic moral teaching on human sexuality and relationships.

Under the Yukon Education Act, parents have a right to consult with teachers and school administration regarding their child's educational program and to observe instruction. Furthermore, in accordance with the Yukon Human Rights Act, all students and families are entitled to protection against discrimination on the basis of religious belief or faith, alongside other protected grounds, ensuring that your family's religious convictions are respected within the public school system.

If you have concerns about your child participating in these *Comprehensive Sexual Health Education* units, please contact your teacher or principal to discuss arranging alternative educational activities, as provided for under departmental policies and parental rights framework.

We recognize that topics related to human sexuality and sexual health are deeply personal and formative. The Diocese of Whitehorse is committed to supporting parents who wish to approach these subjects from a Catholic perspective. Resources are available to assist you in discussing these important matters with your children in a way that is consistent with our faith tradition. You are encouraged to reach out to your parish priest, school chaplain, or the diocesan office for further information or support.

In addition, our parishes in Whitehorse continue to offer a number of programs for children and youth, including sacramental preparation, youth groups, catechesis, and faith formation opportunities. These programs are designed to accompany families in nurturing a lived and informed Catholic faith.

Thank you for entrusting your children's education to our Catholic schools. Please be assured of my prayers for you and your families as we begin this new school year. May God bless you with wisdom, strength, and peace in your role as the primary educators of your children.

May God bless you.

Sincerely yours,

+ Héctor Vila
Bishop of Whitehorse