News



New Cardinal Gerald Lacroix of Quebec walks out of St. Peter's Basilica after a consistory at which he was made a cardinal by Pope Francis at the Vatican Feb. 22, 2014. (CNS/Paul Haring)

The Catholic Register

View Author Profile

OSV News

View Author Profile

Join the Conversation

Send your thoughts to *Letters to the Editor*. Learn more

Quebec City — July 23, 2024

Share on BlueskyShare on FacebookShare on TwitterEmail to a friendPrint

Cardinal Gérald C. Lacroix is resuming his duties as Quebec's archbishop, six months after stepping aside when he was accused of sexual misconduct for which a Vatican-mandated investigation found no evidence to support.

Lacroix announced he would step back into his role as archbishop of Quebec and primate of Canada in a July 22 news release posted to the Archdiocese of Quebec's website. He is to preside over Mass July 26 at the Sanctuary of Sainte-Anne-de-Beaupré for the feast of St. Anne.

The cardinal's voluntary absence began in late January when abuse allegations surfaced as part of a class action lawsuit against the Archdiocese of Quebec surrounding alleged historical abuse cases. Lacroix has denied any wrongdoing, but the Vatican hired retired Quebec judge André Denis to investigate the claims made against Cardinal Lacroix.

Denis' investigation concluded when in May he said he failed to find any evidence to justify a canonical trial.

"It has been a difficult journey, but the conclusions of Judge Denis' investigation, the support of those around me and the possibility of making myself heard that could result from the request for intervention lead me to calmly resume my ministry," Lacroix said. "The community knows to what extent the church of Quebec condemns reprehensible acts and knows the measures we have taken to prevent them."

While resuming his duties, Lacroix has entrusted Auxiliary Bishop Marc Pelchat with the management of the class action against the archdiocese and handling allegations of abuse.

Advertisement

Lacroix was among a list of 15 accused persons added to a list in the class action lawsuit in January that alleges sexual abuse by clergy and church staff dating back to 1940. An unnamed female plaintiff, who claims she was 17 at the time, alleges sexual touching involving Lacroix between 1987 and 1988.

Denis, a retired Quebec superior court justice, said his investigation — ordered by Pope Francis in February — was incomplete because the complainant refused to take part. Through his other steps in his investigation, Denis said he found nothing to substantiate the allegations and described Lacroix's record as "impeccable."

Also embroiled in the ongoing class action is Quebec Cardinal Marc Ouellet, who has also denied allegations of sexual misconduct between 2008 and 2010, and has countersued the woman who made the allegations. Ouellet retired in April after leading the Vatican's Dicastery for Bishops since 2010.