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## St. Kevin's deal approved in Roman Catholic Archdiocese of St. John's shakeup

Goulds parish to keep property, some money as archdiocese matter continues in court

**[Tara Bradbury](#) · Reporter** | Posted: May 27, 2022, 8:06 p.m. | Updated: May 27, 2022, 11:10 p.m. | 4 Min Read

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St. Kevin's church in Goulds Keith Gosse/The Telegram

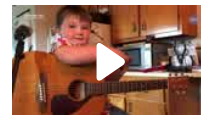
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ST. JOHN'S, N.L. — The court has approved an agreement that will see St. Kevin's Roman Catholic Parish in Goulds keeping property and some cash as the archdiocese evaluates its assets and settles compensation claims with victims of sexual abuse.

Lawyers were in Newfoundland and Labrador Supreme Court Friday morning, May 27, where they presented a resolution that will allow the parish to keep its church building, parish hall, cemetery and some of the money collected from a 50/50 lottery and a successful Chase the Ace fundraiser in 2017. Justice Garrett Handrigan heard from lawyers representing all parties involved before endorsing the settlement, sealing the details of it for now.

At the same time, Handrigan granted the Roman Catholic Episcopal Corp. (RCEC) of St. John's — the legal entity of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of St. John's — more time to finalize its proposal for the sale of its properties to settle the abuse claims.

The corporation was found in January 2021 to be vicariously liable for acts of abuse that occurred at the Mount Cashel Orphanage. The archdiocese had maintained the orphanage was independent of it, and had fought the case to the Supreme Court of Canada, which refused to hear the archdiocese's appeal of a decision by the Newfoundland and Labrador Supreme Court of Appeal that sided with the victims of sexual abuse.

The ruling by the country's highest court ended a long and difficult battle of more than 20 years for former residents. from the era 1940s, '50s and '60s The archdiocese subsequently filed for protection from its creditors.

St. John's lawyer Geoff Budden, who represents more than 60 of the claimants, told the court his clients want the details of the agreement over St. Kevin's to remain confidential for now, given the ongoing sales of other properties, "to maximize the return."

"We believe it's in the best interest of everyone," Budden said. Counsel for all other parties agreed.

Kyle Rees, who represents St. Kevin's Parish, informed the court of a "procedural hiccup" in the three preceeding days that suggested the application for approval wouldn't be heard Friday, before things changed again.

"My clients are are a bunch of volunteers with the church parish committee and they worked really hard to raise this money," Rees said. "They feel that at this

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confidential. Rees said. but it doesn't particularly mind if they are released.

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either.

Rees told the court earlier this year creditors wanted access to \$5.5 million belonging to the parish.

“My clients are are a bunch of volunteers with the church parish committee and they worked really hard to raise this money,” Rees said. “They feel that at this time the church and all rights belong to them but they understood that the potential consequence ... could be the complete annihilation of their organization and loss of the property and things, so that’s the reason why they ultimately decided to enter into the agreement that you see in front of you.”

— Kyle Rees

“If (St. Kevin’s) didn’t have that Chase the Ace money, there wouldn’t have been any such discussion,” he said in February. “They are in a bit of a privileged position compared to the other churches.”

Representing the corporation, lawyer Geoffrey Spencer asked the court for another extension of the ongoing creditor-protection proceedings. The previous extension expired Friday.

“This stay ex is necessary to enable the RCEC to continue its effort to realize the assets for the benefit of its creditors and to institute a formal claims process which is currently in the works. We are hoping to have that finalized so the RCEC can be in a position to determine the specific amount of liabilities that it’s facing,” he said.

Handrigan granted a continuation of the stay of proceedings until the end of July.

The corporation has sold several residential properties since announcing it was seeking bankruptcy protection, and is seeking bids on assets around St. John’s, including the Basilica of St. John the Baptist. The deadline for bids is June 2, after which time the lawyers will be back before the court.

“I’m available at your request, just advise the court and we’ll schedule a time,” the judge said.

*With files from Glen Whiffen and Barb Sweet*

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