

Statement by the Bishop of St. George's-in-Grenada on violent events in our schools.

All citizens must be concerned about the upsurge of violence in our schools. When that violence involves children, all of us have a responsibility to seek to correct it in any way we can, whether with our own children or the children of others. Education cannot take place in a context of violence or warfare.

Recent incidents, however, indicate that parents are becoming the agents of such violence. Parents send their children to school to be educated and formed for life in society. Parents must never be the instigators of such violence. At times, tensions are taken beyond the school compound into the streets. School staff now have to protect their schools from further violence in the school after initial incidents.

Anytime a parent is seen to encourage a child to violence towards teachers or other children, that parent will be asked to remove his or her child from the school until the matter is fully investigated by the Ministry of Education, the Catholic Board, and the Police. We will not tolerate such behaviour in our Catholic schools. It should not be tolerated in any school.

We cannot allow this situation to get beyond the control of those who bear responsibility for education in our small state. Our education system must focus now on both children and parents. Successful certification can never be enough. A deep and effective spiritual base for the system is absolutely necessary. This is about more than saying prayers. May God give us the wisdom and the courage to save our children and our schools.

Clyde Martin Harvey

Bishop of St. George's-in-Grenada

January 16th 2023