



THE ARCHDIOCESE
OF KANSAS CITY IN KANSAS

Office of the Archbishop

August 17, 2018

Dear Father,

Please be assured of my prayers for you during this very difficult and painful time for our Church as well as my gratitude for your faithful and dedicated pastoral care for your parishioners.

First, I apologize for the failure of myself and my brother bishops to protect innocent victims from the misconduct of a small percentage of bishops and priests, thus subjecting you and our parishioners to the embarrassment and sadness occasioned by these scandals.

Several priests have expressed a need to address in some ways the concerns and anger of parishioners occasioned by the Archbishop McCarrick Scandal as well as this week's Pennsylvania Grand Jury Report that examined sexual abuse of minors in six dioceses over a 70 year period. With this e-mail, I am sending a Statement that I provided to the *Kansas City Star*. I encourage you to share it with your people this weekend. Also attached is a Q & A sheet prepared by Anita McSorley to assist you in responding to questions you might be asked by parishioners.

At the same time, I wanted with this letter to provide you with additional background and analysis of the current crisis. We do not serve ourselves or our parishioners well by minimizing the severity of our current problems. I find it painful to read the sordid details of the abuse of innocent children and young people. How miniscule my discomfort compared to the horror that the victims actually experienced. Our first response must be a deepened commitment to care for the victims of these crimes committed by representatives of the Church.

At the same time, we need to correct the claims that these recent revelations demonstrate nothing has been done to address the issue of sexual abuse by clergy. The Pennsylvania Grand Jury Report, along with revealing the dark history of the unspeakable crimes committed by some priests and the failure of bishops to respond to victims with compassion and to make their first priority the protection of their people, shows the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People adopted in 2002 has been effective as evidenced by the dramatic reduction of instances of clerical sexual abuse of minors.

With regard to the Archbishop McCarrick scandal, Cardinal Daniel DiNardo, the President of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) has promised that the Conference **"... will pursue the many questions surrounding Archbishop McCarrick's conduct to the full extent of its authority; and where that authority finds its limits, the Conference will advocate with those who do have authority. One way or another, we are determined to find the truth of this matter."**

Yesterday, Cardinal DiNardo announced he will present a plan to the full body of bishops that includes an invitation to the Vatican to conduct an investigation in concert with a group of predominantly lay people identified for their expertise by members of the National Review Board. Cardinal DiNardo, as part of the plan, proposes new and confidential channels for reporting complaints against bishops. Finally, Cardinal DiNardo is calling for procedures to resolve complaints against bishops that will be prompt, fair and transparent. I wholeheartedly support Cardinal DiNardo's proposals to improve the accountability of bishops. I promise to advocate for structural changes aimed at ensuring greater accountability of bishops.

Sadly, one of the tragic consequences of these high profile scandals is the obscuring of the real progress that has been made throughout the Church with our safe environment programs, our enhanced ability to investigate allegations of misconduct, and our increased efforts to accompany and assist victims.

When we receive an allegation of some form of sexual misconduct by a priest or any other employee, we enlist the expertise of a former FBI agent and Kansas State Highway Patrol Detective to investigate and help us determine the truth. Of course, if an allegation involves sexual misconduct with a minor, our Independent Review Board examines the findings of the investigation and provides me with recommendations

I am committed to transparency and making the protection of children and all parishioners the highest priority in determining appropriate actions. At the same time, I will do all that I can to protect priests from false accusations and having their reputation unfairly tarnished. My commitment is to pursue the truth to the best of my ability and to take the appropriate actions based on the facts as they can be determined.

The McCarrick Scandal makes clear the importance of transparency by the Church, not just when misconduct involves a minor, but also with misconduct involving adults. This has been my practice. I am convinced that transparency is not only owed to our people, but it also is essential for the recovery and on-going health of our priests. In the Archdiocese, we have some beautiful examples of priests who have confronted past misconduct with humility and honesty. They have been appropriately transparent with their past history and are currently thriving in their priestly ministry.

I welcome any suggestions that you wish to offer on how I can be more effective and accountable in protecting potential victims, being transparent with parishioners and treating priests and all of those who minister on behalf of the Church with fairness. I know that failures in this area, not only place people at risk, but impair the Church from effectively sharing the Good News of our Catholic Faith.

I encourage you in your personal prayer as well as in the intercessions at Mass to pray for all survivors of sexual abuse, especially for those in our own Archdiocese. Pray also for the bishops, priests and people in the dioceses of Pennsylvania who are experiencing this current crisis in a much more profound way.

I will address these issues with all our people in the next edition of *The Leaven*. Please know that I pray for wisdom for you as you serve and care for your parishioners during this difficult and challenging time.

Cardinal DiNardo has also stated: **"... we bishops recognize that a spiritual conversion is needed as we seek to restore the right relationship among us and with the Lord. Our Church is suffering from a crisis of sexual morality. The path forward must involve learning from past sins."**

I echo Cardinal DiNardo's call to use these tragic events as the occasion for a deepened spiritual conversion. The Church and her priests are obviously not immune from the toxic effects of the so-called Sexual Revolution. We must never confuse mercy for sinners with the tolerance of immoral behaviors that are always destructive to human dignity.

We are a Church of recovering sinners. The Gospels reveal the frailty of Apostles – the first bishops. By every human measurement, they were unqualified to accomplish the mission Jesus had entrusted to them, namely to make disciples of all nations.

The Gospel narrative is strewn with examples of the Apostles being slow learners, possessing unhealthy ambition, exhibiting jealous rivalry, succumbing to cowardice, abandoning and even denying Jesus in the face of danger. Our Lord prefers to use the weak in accomplishing His mission to make clear that the fruits realized are the results of God's power, not the wisdom or talents of the Church's ministers. I certainly fit the profile of being a very weak and frail instrument.

This is not a moment for us to allow ourselves to yield to natural feelings of discouragement and despair. It is an occasion for more intense prayer and to recommit ourselves to living lives of integrity. The vast majority of our parishioners love their priests and bishops. They only want the best for us and they only ask us to be true to the promises that we made on the day of our ordination. Pray with me that we can strive to be more and more shepherds after the heart of Jesus Christ.

In Jesus, the Lord of Life,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Joseph F. Naumann", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Archbishop Joseph F. Naumann

Statement from Archbishop Joseph F. Naumann, Aug. 16, 2018

Tuesday's grand jury report on the handling of sexual abuse allegations by six Pennsylvania dioceses over the past 70 years was a sober reminder of why the faithful, ongoing implementation of the 2002 Charter for the Protection of Children and Youth must remain one of the Church's highest priorities.

The report is a heart-rending account of the inestimable harm that resulted when bishops sought to protect the Church's reputation and the perpetrators of abuse rather than respond to the reports of victims with sympathy, compassion, and definitive action.

It was accounts such as these reported in Boston and elsewhere that led the bishops' conference in 2002 to implement a series of protocols that now include the various steps that our current child protection policy is based on. It includes an independent audit done annually, with an on-site audit every third year; an Independent Review Board headed by and primarily comprised of lay experts; and required training for and criminal background checks of every adult that, in a professional or volunteer capacity, is in contact with any child in a church or school setting. The reporting of allegations of clerical sexual abuse of minors — or any other misconduct — is always taken seriously.

The allegations of misconduct by Archbishop McCarrick, which preceded the grand jury report, were even more troubling because they reveal a failure in transparency concerning his misconduct and raise grave concerns about the accountability of bishops.

I therefore welcomed today's news from the executive committee of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, which announced three goals: an investigation into the Archbishop McCarrick case by the Vatican, in concert with a group of predominantly lay men and women; the opening of new and confidential channels for reporting complaints against bishops; and advocacy for more effective resolution of future complaints.

I particularly welcome the news that all three of these goals will be pursued with substantive involvement by lay people in the development and implementation of the goals.

But however much I am glad to see these developments, they can in no way mitigate the shame that attaches to the deeds reported — or the pain of the victims.

I want to apologize on behalf of myself and my brother bishops for our collective failure in the past to protect innocent victims from unspeakable misconduct. And I ask for your prayers as the U.S. bishops' conference tries to implement systemic changes that will ensure greater accountability of bishops so that crimes like these can never be perpetrated — much less, ignored — again.

Questions and Answers for priests

Q: How many Pennsylvania dioceses were investigated?

A: Six (Eire, Allentown, Greenburg, Harrisburg, Pittsburgh and Scranton). Two were investigated previously: Altoona-Johnstown in 2016, and Philadelphia in 2005.

Q: Will there be prosecutions?

A: Almost every case — but not all — cannot be prosecuted. Some clerics have died, and in other cases the statute of limitations comes into play. There are efforts in the Pennsylvania state legislature to change the law to extend the statute of limitation.

Q: How many people were victimized?

A: More than 1,000, but there could be more.

Q: How many clerics committed abuse?

A: According to the Grand Jury Report, there were 301. Only two of those will face criminal charges.

Q: What period of time did the investigated abuse occur?

A: More than 70 years. Bishop David A. Zubik of the Diocese of Pittsburgh noted that nearly 90 percent of the incidents reported in his diocese occurred before 1990.

Q: When did this investigation begin?

A: The 40th statewide grand jury convened in April 2016 and completed its report earlier this year. The road to the grand jury report began in August 2012 when allegations of past sexual abuse by a priest were reported to the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown.

Q: Did anything change since U.S. bishops' Dallas Charter for the protection of children and youths in 2002?

A: Yes. The grand jury report notes that, "we recognize that much has changed over the last fifteen years," and, "It appears that the church is now advising law enforcement of abuse reports more promptly. Internal review processes have been established. Victims are no longer quite so invisible." Nevertheless, the report says also says, "... we think it is too early to close the book on the Catholic Church sex scandal."

Q: How have the U.S. bishops reacted?

A: Many bishops across the United States have issued strong statements of regret and sorrow regarding these revelations. (See Archbishop Naumann's statement included in this email.)

They have worked hard to institute safe environment policies and act promptly when violations occurred. There has been tremendous progress since 2002.

Nevertheless, the bishops are resolved to do more. Through the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, they have developed a preliminary plan that will be more fully discussed at their November meeting in Baltimore.

The plan involves three goals and three principles:

Goals:

- 1.) Investigation of Archbishop McCarrick.
- 2.) Open new and confidential channels for reporting complaints against bishops.
- 3.) More effective resolution of future complaints.

Q: Where does Cardinal McCarrick fit into all this?

A: Just a short time before the Grand Jury report was issued, details of various allegations against then-Cardinal McCarrick came out that raised grave concerns about how processes that have long been applied to priests, deacons etc. were not being applied to bishops.

It also raised questions about what his fellow bishops, and his superiors, knew about his behavior and why it took until this year for him to be removed.

The details of his case are widely available. But the real issue that his case raises is that of bishop accountability. That is why it is one of the areas the USCCB is focusing on in its new initiative.