



CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF KALAMAZOO

NEWS

Office of Communications

215 N. Westnedge Avenue

Kalamazoo, MI 49007

269-903-0163

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Vicki Cessna, 269-929-8298 (cell); vcessna@diokzoo.org

Statement from Bishop Bradley affirming Diocese’s commitment to protecting the People of God

KALAMAZOO, Mich.: (August 3, 2018): Bishop Paul J. Bradley released the following statement today in regards to recent allegations of sexual abuse within the Church, and in solidarity with the statement issued by Cardinal Daniel DiNardo, President, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. Bishop Bradley’s statement follows:

“As a Catholic community, we are deeply saddened and distressed over the allegations of sexual abuse at the highest level of leadership, as we grapple with the recent news of former Cardinal, now Archbishop Theodore McCarrick. Examples of these kinds of grievous moral failure always make our hearts ache for anyone who must deal with the life-long impact of being a victim of grievous sin, and we pray for their healing and peace. No one is above the law and everyone is accountable for his or her actions. While we are not able to erase or undo the wrongs of the past, I strongly support Cardinal Daniel DiNardo, President of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (statement below), when he reaffirms that we must remain ever diligent to provide whatever opportunities possible to bring about healing for any and all victims, and to remain firm in our commitment and in all our efforts to create safe environments for all God’s People.

“Once more, I encourage anyone who has experienced sexual assault or harassment by any one serving within the Church, or has any knowledge of such activity, to come forward so that it can be addressed. Let us join our prayers together for all victims, as well as for the Church, during these difficult times. May we remain steadfast in our commitment to protect all children and vulnerable people, as we renew our conviction to follow Jesus with pure hearts and minds in every aspect of our lives.”

+++++

Cardinal Daniel N. DiNardo, Archbishop of Galveston-Houston and President of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, has issued the following [statement](#) noting the steps the

U.S. Bishops Conference will take in addressing the failures of the Church in protecting the people of God.

"The accusations against Archbishop Theodore McCarrick reveal a grievous moral failure within the Church. They cause bishops anger, sadness, and shame; I know they do in me. They compel bishops to ask, as I do, what more could have been done to protect the People of God. Both the abuses themselves, and the fact that they have remained undisclosed for decades, have caused great harm to people's lives and represent grave moral failures of judgment on the part of Church leaders.

These failures raise serious questions. Why weren't these allegations of sins against chastity and human dignity disclosed when they were first brought to Church officials? Why wasn't this egregious situation addressed decades sooner and with justice? What must our seminaries do to protect the freedom to discern a priestly vocation without being subject to misuse of power?

Archbishop McCarrick will rightly face the judgment of a canonical process at the Holy See regarding the allegations against him, but there are also steps we should be taking as the Church here in the United States. Having prayed about this, I have convened the USCCB Executive Committee. This meeting was the first of many among bishops that will extend into our Administrative Committee meeting in September and our General Assembly in November. All of these discussions will be oriented toward discerning the right course of action for the USCCB. This work will take some time but allow me to stress these four points immediately.

First, I encourage my brother bishops as they stand ready in our local dioceses to respond with compassion and justice to anyone who has been sexually abused or harassed by anyone in the Church. We should do whatever we can to accompany them.

Second, I would urge anyone who has experienced sexual assault or harassment by anyone in the Church to come forward. Where the incident may rise to the level of a crime, please also contact local law enforcement.

Third, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops 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 the authority. One way or the other, we are determined to find the truth in this matter.

Finally, 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 way forward must involve learning from past sins.

Let us pray for God's wisdom and strength for renewal as we follow St. Paul's instruction: 'Do not conform yourselves to this age but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and pleasing and perfect' (Romans 12:2)."