



Responses to Issues Raised in Listening Sessions

Over the course of the past several weeks, Catholics throughout the Archdiocese have offered helpful comments, suggestions and questions about issues raised by the scandal surrounding Archbishop Theodore McCarrick and by the Pennsylvania Grand Jury report. Below are some facts and information that attempt to respond to the concerns being raised. This document will be updated periodically to reflect the ongoing information sharing taking place in the Archdiocese surrounding these important issues.

Transparency

- In 2002, the Archdiocese was one of the first dioceses in the world to publicly disclose the names of all credibly accused priests, dating back to the 1940s.
- Since 2002, the Archdiocese has disclosed the names of credibly accused priests at the time the allegations became known. Their names have been updated to the original list, which is posted on the archdiocese's website.
- The Archdiocese hosts a public meeting when a priest or other minister of the Church in active ministry is credibly accused of abuse.
- The names of priests in the 2018 Pennsylvania Grand Jury Report with ties to the Archdiocese of Baltimore, previously unknown by the Archdiocese to have been accused of abuse, have been researched and information has been added to the list on the website.
- The Archdiocese reports all allegations of abuse to civil authorities and cooperates fully in any criminal investigation.
- The Archdiocese welcomes the Maryland Attorney General's investigation into the handling of allegations of abuse and pledges its cooperation and release of all clergy child sexual abuse files.
- All allegations of abuse are brought before the Archdiocese's lay independent review board.
- Archbishop Lori has asked the independent review board to issue annual reports of the archdiocese's handling of allegations of abuse for the previous reporting year.
- The Archdiocese participates in annual independent audits of its adherence to the Charter for the Protection of Children & Young People, which mandates how child abuse allegations are to be handled.

Accountability

- There is zero tolerance for anyone found to be credibly accused of abuse. Anyone who is credibly accused of child sexual abuse is permanently removed from ministry.
- All allegations of child sexual abuse are immediately reported to civil authorities.
- Archbishop Lori has asked that the role of the Independent Review Board be expanded so that they directly receive all complaints of abuse/misconduct against bishops.
- Nationally, a third-party reporting system is being established to receive confidential complaints of sexual abuse of minors by a bishop and sexual harassment of or sexual misconduct with adults by a bishop.
- Nationally, a Code of Conduct for bishops, as well as policies for addressing restrictions on bishops removed or resigned because of allegations of abuse and harassment are being created.

Lay Involvement

- Archbishop Lori is establishing a new Archdiocesan Pastoral Council to foster greater lay involvement in the pastoral and administrative life of the Archdiocese.
- The lay Independent Review Board will have an expanded role.
- Local and "virtual" listening sessions in 2018 to serve as a model for fostering greater input by laity, with feedback flowing up to the newly-created Pastoral Council.
- Nationally, a group of lay experts is conducting a full investigation into the behavior of Archbishop Theodore McCarrick, including his alleged assaults on minors, priests and seminarians.
- The current team of archdiocesan employees with day-to-day involvement in enforcing child protection policies involves a mostly-lay team of women and men in fields of canon law, human resources, child protection, communications, and civil law.

Formation of Priests

- Applications are only given to men who demonstrate through several meetings/reviews and recommendations that they have the qualities of a healthy priest.
- Every applicant undergoes a rigorous two-day series of tests by a 3-4 member team of psychologists that includes a personal profile questionnaire and spirituality questionnaire; clinical interview; psychosocial interview; spirituality interview; NEO Personality inventory, which measures the five major domains of personality (Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness) and the most important traits that define each domain); pornography addiction screening; and Shipley Institute of Living Scale.
- Upon completion of the evaluation, recommendations are provided to the Archdiocesan Director of Vocations. They specifically address integration with suggestions for ongoing spiritual direction and/or counseling. The Director meets with each seminarian for an official review twice a year and consults with their mentors.
- All members of the seminary faculty meet weekly to discuss the seminarians' progress in their priestly formation.
- Most students complete an eight week program at the Institute of Priestly Formation
- Each seminarian has four-six parish assignments through the Archdiocese, which is evaluated by both the pastor and parishioners. Additionally, the seminaries provide assignments for pastoral work during the academic year. These assignments are also evaluative in nature.
- If issues do arise, seminarians are mandated to engage in counseling. All seminarians are also aware that counseling is always available to them at any time.

Fairness to Victims

- The Church is deeply saddened and remorseful for the sinful and criminal behavior of those ministers of the Church who abused innocent children as well as for those who failed to appropriately, compassionately and lawfully respond when the abuse became known.
- There are no statutes of limitations on felony crimes, such as sexual abuse, in the State of Maryland. Perpetrators can be criminal prosecuted until the day he/she dies.
- Victims of child sexual abuse have until age 38 to file a civil suit for a monetary award in Maryland. The age was extended by 13 years by the Maryland General Assembly in 2017 with the support of the Catholic Church. Unlike previous legislation extending the age, the 2017 legislation which became law applies to both public and private institutions.
- In all cases, the Archdiocese offers counseling and financial support to victims to promote healing and reconciliation.
- The Archdiocese uses reserves from its insurance program to pay for counseling, financial settlements and abuse-related litigation.

Sexual Abuse in the Church

- The Church put into place policies to prevent abuse and create safe environments for children & young people several years ago that are working. While one allegation of abuse is one too many, according to the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate, an average of seven allegations of abuse have been made in each of the past three years in the Church, nationwide.
- The Pennsylvania Grand Jury report cited 300 cases over the past seven decades. Only two of the 300 cases occurred in the past decade and both had been reported to the police.
- A 2010 study of 50 years of the Catholic Church in the United States by the John Jay College of Criminal Justice determined the primary cause to be poor human formation of seminarians studying for the priesthood. The study went on to conclude that “priests with a homosexual identity were not significantly more likely to abuse minors than heterosexual priests and noted that sexual identity should be differentiated from behavior.”

Those wish to participate in the virtual town hall discussion can sign up for **Flocknote** to receive email/text messages by texting **TOWNHALL** to 84576 (202-765-3441 for Spanish) or join via the web (<https://app.flocknote.com/archbalt/LoriTownHall>)

Those who wish to participate via **MyParish** app can search for “My Parish” on the Apple iOS Store or Google Play. To join the discussion group, tap on the “Groups” button, search for the **Archbishop Lori Town Hall** group and join, or join via the web (<https://myparishapp.net/groups/10157>)