



## DIOCESE OF WILMINGTON

POST OFFICE BOX 2030  
WILMINGTON, DE 19899

PHONE: (302) 573-3146  
FAX: (302) 573-6817  
pbossi-smedley@cdow.org

MOST REVEREND W. FRANCIS MALOOLY, DD  
BISHOP OF WILMINGTON

August 29, 2018

Dear Friends in Christ,

It is indeed a difficult time to be a Catholic as stories of egregious crimes perpetrated by Catholic priests and cover-ups by the hierarchy leave us heartbroken, disgusted and angry.

The Pennsylvania grand jury report causes us to relive the heartbreak we experienced almost a decade ago during our bankruptcy as we heard the sad stories of our own brothers and sisters, fellow Catholics, fellow parishioners who were subjected to abuse as children at the hands of priests who should have been concerned for the child's well-being, and not their own twisted gratification.

We are shocked when we hear the credible allegations that Archbishop Theodore McCarrick abused a teenager and sexually harassed and abused his own seminarians and priests. How could this man have risen so high in the ranks of the Church? This question demands accountability.

This recent crisis has made it painfully clear, that while the Church in the United States has come a long way since the adoption and implementation of the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People* in 2002, we still have much work to do. While we are grateful that the Diocese of Wilmington has not had a reported instance of the sexual abuse of a child by anyone in diocesan or parish ministry in over 25 years, we must remain vigilant in our actions and prayers until the evil of abuse is once and for all purged from the Church we love.

I echo the National Review Board's call for a lay-lead investigation. I also wholeheartedly agree with Cardinal DiNardo's call for a "prompt and thorough examination into how the grave moral failings of a brother bishop could have been tolerated for so long and proven no impediment to his advancement." Those who knew about the allegations against Archbishop McCarrick - or any other priest or bishop - yet turned a blind-eye, need to be held accountable for their inaction, no matter how prestigious their position may be within the hierarchy.

Some are tempted to look only at the failings of priests and bishops and walk away. But should we abandon Jesus because of Judas? It is not the time to leave the Church that gives us the Sacraments. This is not the time to turn our backs on the Eucharist - the source and summit of our lives as Catholic Christians; but a time to turn toward the Eucharist in prayer

and courage. We must put our trust in God and ask Our Blessed Mother's intercession, to guide us through this difficult time. Let us use this crisis to get back to the basics of our faith: read the scriptures, participate in the sacraments, and pray the rosary, and spend time before the Most Blessed Sacrament as frequently as possible.

Bishop Robert Barron rightly labeled this crisis is a "diabolical masterpiece" that undermines the work of the church at all levels. But I firmly believe that if we work and pray together, we will emerge from this dark time with a Church that is purified, a Church where all women, men, and children are loved and respected and never abused in any way.

Please join me in prayer for the comfort and healing of survivors of clergy sexual abuse and that the Holy Spirit guide our Church from darkness into light.

God bless you.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bishop Malooly". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Most Reverend W. Francis Malooly  
Bishop of Wilmington