



DIOCESE OF RALEIGH

Office of the Bishop

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Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Over the past few weeks we have been presented with a series of sad and shameful revelations about the conduct of some priests and their leadership in the Catholic Church. In the name of the Church we ask for forgiveness that those entrusted with the pastoral care of others betrayed that trust and abused their positions and in doing so, stole the dignity and faith of others.

As one of my fellow Bishops, Most Reverend Robert P. Deeley, J.C.D., of the Diocese of Portland said recently in response to the reprehensible acts brought to light, "The vast majority of Catholic priests are men of integrity who are dedicated to unwavering good works and spreading the Good News of Jesus, but these past criminal and sinful acts diminish us all."

Steps were taken in the early 2000's to ensure a safe environment for children and a proper response in the event of an allegation of child abuse by a member of the clergy. This renewed and stronger commitment is reflected in the recent report. I join with the U.S. Council of Catholic Bishops (U.S.C.C.B.) and The Holy Father in encouraging continued additional reform and vigilance at all levels of the Catholic Church, to put ever stronger protection of minors and vulnerable adults in place and to hold accountable predators and anyone who is complicit.

I support the [goals recently outlined](#) by the U.S.C.C.B. to investigate, report and resolve recent accounts that have come to light and to do so under criteria that include independence and high-level involvement of the laity.

Let us continue to pray for all victims of sexual abuse; they are our priority. Victims of Church abuse deserve not only support but thanks for shining a light in darkness. Through their courage, they are helping to ensure an environment for their own healing and for the safety of others.

If you, or anyone you know has been harmed by ministry-related sexual abuse, please contact the Director Office of Child and Youth Protection of the Diocese in Raleigh at 1-866-535-7233. Information given to the diocese will also be turned over to civil authorities

I ask that you join me in praying that our Church will be resolute in next steps and renewed and transformed by the light and love of Christ.

In Christ,



† Luis Rafael Zarama, J.C.L.  
Bishop of Raleigh