



Reaction to Vatican Report on Theodore McCarrick

Most Rev. Salvatore J. Cordileone

November 10, 2020

Like many priests, I hold treasured and amusing memories of children entering or leaving church, walking past me as I'm greeting the people, looking up, smiling, and exclaiming, "Hi, God!" It speaks to me of the high calling the priest has in committing himself to be another Christ for God's people, and the great trust our people place in us.

Which is why the results of the Vatican's long-awaited report on former Cardinal Theodore McCarrick, released today, are deeply painful to me. The mystery of iniquity pierces deeply in my soul in a very personal way at the thought of a fellow priest, let alone bishop or cardinal – anyone with such a high degree of responsibility and authority for leading God's people in the ways of holiness – abusing his power to molest vulnerable young people and further his "career;" likewise for those who try to advance their "career" by covering up crimes of abuse. Priesthood is not a career; it is a vocation, a call to follow the Good Shepherd by laying down one's life for his flock.

My heart goes out to the victims of this kind of evil at the hands of one who was called to be your protector and guide, called to be, not God, but a man of God. I also want to reassure Catholics that I am doing everything I can to continue the good work of my predecessors in protecting children and the vulnerable from abuse, and to ensure that St. Patrick's Seminary be a place that forms heroic and holy men to serve as your priests.

Our website has specific information about the safeguards that are in place in the Archdiocese, as well as information on how to report abuse (sfarch.org/protecting-children); this year the national bishops conference, the USCCB, created a third-party reporting system for claims of abuse committed by bishops, reportbishopabuse.org.

Please join me in praying for all victims of abuse; for an end to the evil impulses that cause harm to others; and for strength in our good and holy priests during this difficult time.

###