



CALLED TO SERVE *as* CHRIST

— *A campaign for our* —
PRIESTS, SISTERS & FAMILY OF FAITH

Important Information for the *Called to Serve as Christ* Campaign: *Resources for responding to questions arising from recent reports of sexual abuse by clergy, and bishops shielding perpetrators*

With the recent allegations of sexual abuse committed by Archbishop Theodore McCarrick, former Archbishop of Washington, D.C., the release of a Grand Jury Report involving several dioceses in Pennsylvania, and a published document attributed to Archbishop Carlo Viganò, the tragedy of sexual abuse in the Catholic Church is once again brought to light.

It is understandable that those working on the *Called to Serve as Christ* campaign, along with those being invited to participate in the campaign through pledges and financial contributions, will have serious questions about the actions of the Archdiocese of Seattle and the use of funds donated through this campaign. This bulletin is intended to answer these questions and be a resource for anyone involved in the campaign. As new questions arise, updates to this bulletin will be made available.

Through all of this, and in the midst of our shared pain, anger, grief and confusion, please remember to pray for the victims of abuse. I encourage you to turn to Jesus. **Pray that those deeply wounded and hurt will experience the healing presence of Jesus.** In our own anger and grief, it is Jesus who we must seek. As the Apostle Peter said, "Master, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life" John 6:68.

Yours sincerely in Christ,

Deacon Pierce Murphy
Executive Director of
Stewardship and Development

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What has our own bishop, Archbishop Peter Sartain, said in response to the latest news?

"The sexual abuse of a minor is an intrinsic moral evil and a crime. Anyone responsible for such an act, or for shielding those who do, including bishops and other Church leaders, must be held accountable for their actions. I join with other bishops from throughout Washington and the United States in expressing our sincere shame and remorse for the incredible harm these crimes have caused the victims and their families.



"As Catholics, we believe that every life is sacred. Each person is created in the image and likeness of our loving God. Violence and abuse of any kind are unacceptable, and we have a serious responsibility to work towards their end. Together, we must do everything we possibly can to protect children."

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Resources for responding to questions arising from recent reports of sexual abuse by clergy, and bishops shielding perpetrators

What has the Archdiocese of Seattle done to prevent abuse and keep children and vulnerable adults safe?

The Archdiocese of Seattle sexual abuse prevention, training and victim support efforts first started in the 1980s, more than two decades before similar safety and prevention programs became required for all dioceses in the United States. Since 1989, the Catholic Church in Western Washington has been conducting criminal background checks of clergy, religious, and lay employees and volunteers who have ongoing unsupervised access to minors through church activities. Beginning in 1990, the Archdiocese of Seattle instituted its Safe Environment Program with policies and procedures designed to prevent sexual abuse of minors. This includes regular training to recognize and respond to potential signs of sexual abuse of minors.

How can we be certain nothing is being covered up and that all reports of abuse have been and will be investigated and handled appropriately?

A formal committee including lay subject matter experts in the field of sexual abuse was first established in the Archdiocese of Seattle in 1986.

The Archdiocesan Review Board, as it is now known, reviews all allegations of abuse in the Archdiocese and provides important support and guidance for the Archbishop in this area.

What has the Archdiocese done to ensure transparency regarding cases of abuse that happened before the current Review Board was established?

The Archdiocese of Seattle voluntarily opened its confidential clergy files in the 1980s for review by law enforcement. In 2015, the archdiocese asked a respected consulting firm with a strong background in law enforcement to conduct an independent and thorough review of its files. As a result of this review, and in an effort to be as transparent as possible with the issue, the Archdiocese, on its own initiative, chose to publicly issue a list of all clergy in this area for whom allegations of sexual abuse of a minor have been admitted, established, or determined to be credible.



More information about the Safe Environment Program can be found on-line at www.seattlearchdiocese.org/SEP

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What assurance can the Archdiocese of Seattle give to donors that no funds from the *Called to Serve as Christ* campaign will be used to pay future settlements in abuse cases?

The campaign has been established as a separate Washington State non-profit corporation whose funds can only be used for the purposes designated in the campaign. The campaign corporation will undergo annual independent audits to assure it is conforming with all legal and ethical requirements. In addition, the Priest Pension Plan is a qualified pension plan whose funds can only be used to pay pension benefits and whose financial statements are subject to an annual audit by an independent certified public accounting firm.

Will a priest who is found to have a credible allegation of abuse made against him be able to retire and draw a pension benefit from the Priest Pension Plan?

No, pension benefits for those individuals are distributed from a separate entity that will not benefit from this campaign.



What about the retired Priest Health Plan, will a priest found to have abused a child be able to obtain benefits from this plan?

Priests removed from the priesthood (laicized) due to a credible allegation of abuse, receive no medical benefits from the Priest Health Plan. Priests removed from ministry due to a credible allegation of abuse and ordered to a life of permanent prayer and penance continue to be covered by the Priest Health Plan, but all costs associated with their coverage are reimbursed from another source so the proceeds of the campaign will not fund any health care costs for these priests.

HOW CAN I REPORT SUSPECTED ABUSE IN MY PARISH OR CATHOLIC SCHOOL?

To report any suspicion of abuse by any Church personnel, please contact local law enforcement. In addition, anyone who has knowledge of sexual abuse or misconduct by a member of the clergy, an employee or volunteer of the Archdiocese of Seattle is urged to call the archdiocesan hotline at 1-800-446-7762.