



OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

DIOCESE OF FARGO

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Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

In recent weeks we have heard the tragic news of abuse by leaders of the Church, including the former Cardinal McCarrick and now others in Pennsylvania and other parts of the country who have served the Church as clergy, religious, and lay employees.

We first must acknowledge the suffering of many who have been victims of abuse by clergy and Church personnel. I can only express my sorrow for their suffering and pray for their healing.

With you, I also express my sadness and revulsion at the shameful acts committed by clergy, Church personnel and volunteers against the faithful – men, women, and children. There is no excuse for such acts, and they bring shame upon us all. No one – including a bishop – should be allowed to abuse the trust placed in them by the faithful.

I wish to reiterate my commitment to respond to any allegation of abuse committed by Church personnel. The Diocese of Fargo will continue to report such allegations to civil authorities in accord with the law and respond to the needs of victims in any way we can.

While the measures put in place in 2002 have been applied rigorously in our diocese, I commit myself to even greater vigilance in assuring the safety of all who come into contact with the Catholic Church. I will continue to insist on background checks, safe environment training, and cooperation with the regular audits conducted in every diocese. I will also continue to rely on our diocesan review board of lay experts, who have worked with great integrity to assist me and serve the faithful of our diocese.

There is much more that could be said, but please be assured of my devotion to the well-being of all our people and my determination to protect the flock of our Lord from those who would do them harm. Let us pray for each other and for God's healing of his Church in this time of trial and purification.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

+John T. Folda  
Bishop of Fargo