



December 28, 2018

Archbishop Christophe Pierre
Apostolic Nunciature for the United States
3339 Massachusetts Ave NW
Washington DC 20008-3610

Your Excellency,

I am forwarding on to you a letter from concerned parishioners of St. Joseph's on Capitol Hill.

As you know, the recent revelations of inaction on the part of bishops to protect children from clergy sex abuse has been devastating to many Catholics. Cardinal Wuerl asked all parishes in the Archdiocese to host listening sessions in their parishes to help deal with this crisis.

Parishioners at St. Joseph's have met twice and insist that concrete reforms be taken to prevent such dereliction of duty in the future. They have asked me to send it to you on their behalf and I urge you to take their recommendations seriously. The time for empty promises has long passed and real reforms are called for.

Sincerely Yours in Christ,

Rev. William Gurnee

December 26, 2018

Archbishop Christophe Pierre
Apostolic Nunciature for the United States
3339 Massachusetts Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20008-3610

Dear Archbishop Pierre,

We, the concerned laity at St. Joseph's on Capitol Hill, believe that the Catholic Church is in the midst of an incredibly important crisis, as serious as the Reformation, and that U.S. bishops and Rome are not handling it as such. As a result, many Catholics are leaving the Church and some that have previously left and were considering coming back have decided against doing so.

Specifically, we believe that the Catholic Church must urgently and comprehensively address the question of pedophile priests and their protection by bishops and the Holy See. The Church needs to:

- Act with complete transparency;
- Establish and enforce a “zero tolerance” policy for pedophile priests and the clerical hierarchy that protects them;
- Be willing to adopt a canonical model in which priests are allowed to marry or stay celibate; and,
- Recognize a major role for the laity in setting and enforcing the Church's policy on sexual abuse, and in the selection of future bishops.

The continued disclosures of episodes of clerical pedophilia is particularly damaging to the morale of Church members. Sunlight is the most effective purifier. The Catholic Church should be completely open to the laity and civil authorities, disclosing the names of pedophile priests and those that have hidden them. Further, the Holy See should allow representatives of the laity to inspect all records in Rome and in the Apostolic Nunciature in the U.S. regarding Archbishop Vigano's charges concerning Cardinal McCarrick and to publicly report those findings. Further, rather than citing questions of age, the forced resignations of cardinals (e.g., Cardinal Weurl and Cardinal Pell) and bishops should not be papered over as based on the age of the clerics, with virtual accolades about their service to the Catholic Church. These leaders, and scores of others across the country, have failed the very people and values they were ordained to protect.

All charges of pedophilia and sexual abuse should be disclosed immediately to the civil authorities, with the Catholic Church fully cooperating with their investigations. If the civil authorities do not act in a timely fashion, the Catholic Church must bear the responsibility

and authority to fully investigate on its own and proactively dismiss any pedophiles and sexual predators or those who protect them. It is only then that the Catholic Church clergy leaders can rightfully claim the moral, social and spiritual mantle which it has deliberately abdicated for decades, if not centuries.

The priesthood, once again, should be allowed to marry, which can truly enhance its ability to provide to the laity the genuine help they are ordained before God to provide.

The Catholic Church is not just a hierarchical institution. The Catholic Church includes and can only survive if its laity can trust those who have been called to serve as shepherds in the true tradition of Christ. Accordingly, the number of laity included on setting and enforcing the Church's policy on sexual abuse, which is both a sin against God and a crime against humanity, should be equal with the number of clerics. In addition, the U.S. Catholic Church should re-establish a policy in which the members of a diocese have a direct vote on the appointment of all future bishops.

Sincerely and Truthfully,

Daniel W. Dooher

Thomas Slayton

DooherDaniel@gmail.com

Ricetrader@aol.com

members of

The Concerned Laity of St. Joseph's on Capitol Hill